

HIGH-LEVEL PANEL ON UN SYSTEM WIDE COHERENCE

Implications for UN operational activities at Country Level: What's new and what has already been mandated?

Existing mandates and progress report	HLP recommendations	Status
<p>(OP 169) <i>Inviting</i> the Secretary-General to launch work to further strengthen the management and coordination of United Nations operational activities so that they can make an even more effective contribution to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, including proposals for consideration by Member States for more tightly managed entities in the fields of development, humanitarian assistance and the environment (2005 World Summit Outcome).</p> <p>(OP13) <i>Recognizes</i> that strengthening the role and capacity of the United Nations development system to assist countries in achieving their development goals <u>requires continuing improvement in its effectiveness, efficiency, coherence and impact</u>, along with a significant increase in resources and an expansion of its resource base on a continuous, more predictable and assured basis (TCPR 2004)</p>	<p>We recommend the establishment of “One UN” at country level, with one leader, one programme, one budgetary framework and, where appropriate, one office.</p>	
<p><i>Stresses</i> that the purpose of reform is to make the United Nations development system more efficient and effective" and "<i>requests</i> the funds and programmes and specialized agencies" to implement "<u>the joint office</u>" (2004 TCPR)</p> <p>PROGRESS</p> <p><i>First Joint Office pilots rolled out in Cape Verde and Vietnam. UNDG agreement to roll-out 20 Joint Office pilots. While JOs are country specific, all pilots have several common features, including (a) a “common UN programme framework”, (b) an empowered leader of the UNCT, (c) rationalized support services, harmonized procedures and one office, where possible, and (d) either “one budget”, where sensible (e.g. Cape Verde) <u>or</u> “one budget framework” aligned with the common programme framework.</i></p>	<p><u>Milestone</u>: We recommend 5 One UN country pilots by 2007, and subject to satisfactory review, 20 One UN Country Programmes by 2009, 40 by 2010 and all other appropriate programmes by 2012.</p>	
“One Leader”		
<p>Management of RC system:</p> <p>(OP59) <i>Underscores</i> the fact that the RC system is owned by the UN development system as a whole and that its functioning should be participatory, collegial and accountable (TCPR 2004).</p> <p>(OP60) <i>Also underscores</i> the fact that the management of the RC system continues to be firmly anchored in UNDP, while recognizing that many resident coordinators, especially in countries with large country teams, complex coordination situations or in situations of complex emergencies, lack the capacity to address equally well all tasks inherent to their functions, and in this regard requests that in such cases UNDP appoint, within the existing programming arrangement, a country director to run its core activities, including fund-raising, so as to assure that resident coordinators are fully available for their tasks (TCPR 2004).</p> <p>(OP 61) <i>Requests</i> that, when raising funds, resident coordinators concentrate on raising funds for the whole of the United Nations at the country level (TCPR 2004).</p>	<p>Management of RC system:</p> <p>(HLP Recommendation) To ensure that there is no potential for, or perception of, a conflict of interest, UNDP should establish an institutional firewall between the management of its programmatic role and management of the Resident Coordinator system (including system-wide strategic and policy support).</p> <p>(HLP Recommendation) UNDP will consolidate and <u>focus its operational work</u> on strengthening the coherence and positioning of the UN country team delivering the One Country Programme. As manager of the Resident Coordinator system, UNDP should set a clear target by 2008 to withdraw from sector-focused policy and capacity work for which other UN entities have competencies.</p> <p>(HLP Recommendation) UNDP will develop a code of conduct, including a transparent mechanism to evaluate the performance of its country operations. This should be done in consultation with all relevant UN organizations and the</p>	<p>NEW</p> <p>NEW</p> <p>NEW</p>

<p>PROGRESS <i>UNDP committed to introduce Country Directors in 40 large/complex coordination countries (28 Country Directors fielded by November 2006)</i></p>	<p>agreed code of conduct should be formally approved by the UN Sustainable Development Board.</p>	
<p>Enhanced RC Authority: (OP 169) We support stronger system-wide coherence by implementing the following measures: [...] Implementing current reforms aimed at a more effective, efficient, coherent, coordinated and better-performing United Nations country presence with a strengthened role for the senior resident official, whether special representative, resident coordinator or humanitarian coordinator, including appropriate authority, resources and accountability, and a common management, programming and monitoring framework (2005 World Summit Outcome).</p> <p>(P40) The undg will finalize the strategy and workplan on strengthening the role of UN special representatives, resident coordinators and humanitarian coordinators and the resident coordinator system and country-based coordination systems by January 2006, for review by CEB. A report on progress will be provided through my yearly report to the Economic and Social Council in 2006 (SG Report on Follow-up to 2005 World Summit Outcome).</p> <p>PROGRESS <i>UNDG RC Issues Group; Vietnam pilot</i></p>	<p>Enhanced RC authority: (HLP Recommendation) Resident Coordinators should have the authority to lead the One Country Programme, including authority to negotiate and shape the “One Country Programme” with the government on behalf of the entire UN System and to allocate resources from pooled and central funding mechanisms. Authority to hold members of the team accountable to agreed outcomes and to compliance with the strategic plan.</p>	<p>NEW TCPR</p>
<p>Accountability: (OP58) <i>Requests</i> the Secretary-General, in full consultation with all agencies of the undg and the CEB, as appropriate, to develop, by the end of 2005, a comprehensive accountability framework for resident coordinators to exercise oversight of the design and implementation of the Framework, in a fully participatory manner, in support and under the leadership of national Governments; (TCPR 2004)</p> <p>(OP 55) [...] <i>urges</i> the members of the Executive Committee of the undg, in full consultation with the members of the Development Group, to develop a procedure for the common assessment of the performance of resident coordinators by all members of the United Nations country teams; (TCPR 2004)</p> <p>PROGRESS <i>Comprehensive accountability framework put into place, including a revised RC job description, RC scorecard, regional oversight system as first “line of oversight”; separate RC career review process at HQ level; and 180-degree RC/UNCT Performance Appraisal System introduced in 20 pilots with full roll-out in late 2006.</i></p>	<p>Accountability: (HLP Recommendation) Their enhanced authority should be matched by a clear accountability framework and an effective oversight mechanism to ensure system-wide ownership of the Resident Coordinator system.</p> <p>→ See also HLP recommendations on Development Policy and Operations Group (DPOG) and UN Sustainable Development Board (UNSDB).</p>	<p>TCPR NEW</p>
<p>Selection: (OP55) <i>Welcomes</i> the improvements in the selection process and training of the resident coordinators (TCPR 2004).</p> <p>PROGRESS <i>10-year experience with RC/HC competency assessment administered by external company; incentive system developed to attract the best and brightest from inside and outside UN system (revised by inter-agency Panel in 2002 and 2006 to ensure fairness and relevance to full UN system</i></p>	<p>Selection: (HLP Recommendation) Competitive selection of Resident Coordinator candidates, drawn from the best talent within and outside the UN system.</p>	<p>TCPR</p>

<p>needs) – evaluation in 2004 revealed serious weakness in agency willingness to “lose star staff” for RC positions; since 2002 increase of non-UNDP RCs from 17 to 36 (28% out of 130 posts), which is an increase of over 100 percent; rate of change increased with over 50 percent of new RCs in 2006 coming from agencies other than UNDP (11 out of 21); efforts undertaken to improve gender and geographic balance; training on mandates of agencies in UNCT introduced in November 2006; funds being mobilized to provide more systematic in-service training.</p>		
<p>Appropriate capacities/resources: (OP54) Urges the UN system to provide further financial, technical and organizational support for the resident coordinator system, and requests the Secretary-General, in consultation with the members of the UNDG to ensure that resident coordinators have the <u>necessary resources to fulfill their role effectively</u>. (TCPR 2004)</p> <p>PROGRESS <i>One national or international coordination officers fielded in RC offices; efforts underway to raise additional funds to provide increased level of coordination support, where needed; agreement to assign one national officer dedicated to enhanced support to non-resident agencies in all UNDAF countries in 2007 on pilot basis; agencies leading cross-cutting issues (e.g. human rights, gender equality) beginning to assign staff to selected RC Offices to support “mainstreaming”.</i></p>	<p>Appropriate capacities/resources: (HLP Recommendation) To perform this function, Resident Coordinators should have <u>appropriate competencies, capabilities and support capacities</u>.</p> <p>(HLP Recommendation) To deliver as one, UN country teams should also have an <u>integrated capacity</u> to provide a coherent approach to cross-cutting issues, including sustainable development, gender equality and human rights.</p> <p>(HLP Recommendation) The capacity of the Resident Coordinator’s office to <u>advocate, promote and broker partnerships</u> between government and relevant civil society organizations and the private sector should be enhanced to build stakeholder consensus and realize country-specific goals as embodied in the national development plans.</p>	<p>TCPR</p>
<p>“One Programme”</p>		
<p>(OP49). Reiterates that the <u>ownership and full participation of national authorities</u> in the preparation and development of the Framework are key to guaranteeing that it responds to the national development plans and poverty reduction strategies of the countries concerned, (TCPR 2004)</p> <p>PROGRESS <i>Common Country Assessments increasingly feeding into national analytical work; separate CCA not needed where UNCT convinced that “UN” issues not missing from national processes; UNDG guidance issued on role of UNCTs in supporting PRSp processes; UN results in UNDAF must be derived from national priorities established through national planning process (in full consultation with government); UNDG supporting national indicator monitoring system as basis for monitoring progress on results (DevInfo).</i></p>	<p>(HLP Recommendation) The “One Programme” should be <u>country owned</u> and signed off by government, responsive to the national development framework, strategy and vision, including the internationally agreed development goals.</p>	<p>TCPR</p>
<p>(OP49) [...] and requests the Secretary-General to develop the Framework and its results matrix where applicable, as the <u>common programming tool for country-level contributions</u> of the funds and programmes towards achieving the MDGs to be fully endorsed and countersigned by the national authorities; (TCPR 2004)</p> <p>(OP50). Notes the <u>potential of the Framework and its results matrix as the collective, coherent and integrated programming and monitoring framework</u> [...], bringing increased opportunities for joint initiatives, including joint programming, and urges the UN development system to fully utilize such opportunities in the interest of enhancing aid efficiency and aid effectiveness; (TCPR 2004)</p> <p>(OP51) Requests the Secretary-General, through the Executive Committee of the UNDG, in consultation with the CEB, to ensure that UNDG agencies with multi-year programmes as well as the entities of the Secretariat that carry out operational activities in pursuit of the MDGs <u>fully align their</u></p>	<p>(HLP Recommendation) The “One Programme” should build on the UN country team’s common country assessment or national analysis, and reflecting the UN’s added value in the specific country context.</p> <p>(HLP Recommendation) The “One Programme” should be <u>strategic, focused and results-based</u>, with clear outcomes and priorities, while leaving flexibility to reallocate resources to changes in priorities.</p> <p>→ See also HLP recommendations on Sustainable Development Board and consolidated funding.</p>	<p>TCPR</p> <p>NEW</p>

<p>respective programming and monitoring with the Framework, as well as take further steps to harmonize their programming cycles and to synchronize them as far as possible with the national programming instruments, in particular the national poverty reduction strategies, including poverty reduction strategy papers, where they exist; (TCPR 2004)</p> <p>PROGRESS Efforts undertaken to move beyond UNDAF as “framework” and towards a common programme for UN Country Teams: concept of enhanced UNDAF as common programme base accepted by full UNDG Programme Group, with heads of the UNDG Executive Committee agencies agreeing that UNDAF should become their agencies’ country programme; common way of assessing national institutional capacity to manage resources; HLCM/UNDG working on common country level concepts for results-based planning, budgeting, monitoring and reporting.</p>		
<p>(OP44) Calls upon the UN system to draw from its accumulated experience in all pertinent economic, social and other domains and to facilitate the access of developing countries to the services available. (TCPR 2004)</p> <p>(OP46) Stresses the importance of the common country assessment as the common analytical tool of the UN system at the country level, including the specialized agencies, the regional commissions and other UN agencies with no country representation or limited country-level presence, which should contribute their accumulated analytical and normative experience so as to enable the use of all capacities available within the UN system; (TCPR 2004)</p> <p>PROGRESS UNDG Working Group on involvement of NRA completed assessment report and now developing implementation workplan; discussions ongoing on including a special section in UNDAF covering UN’s normative work and assignment of full-time capacity in RC Office to assist non-resident agencies to participate fully in relevant national processes.</p>	<p>(HLP Recommendation) The “One Programme” should draw on all UN services and expertise, including those of non-resident agencies, in order to effectively deliver a multi-sectoral approach to development (with due attention to cross-cutting issues)</p>	<p>TCPR</p>
“One Budgetary Framework” and funding		
<p>(OP 61) Requests that, when raising funds, resident coordinators concentrate on raising funds for the whole of the United Nations at the country level (TCPR 2004).</p> <p>PROGRESS UNDAF Results Matrix shows projected core resources and resource mobilization targets for all programme components, by agency.</p>	<p>One “budgetary framework” (HLP Recommendation) At country-level, contributions to the One Country Programme should be consolidated within a single budgetary framework, which would not constitute a legal constraint on the spending authority of funds, programmes and specialized agencies. The one budgetary framework brings together all contributions to the One Country Programme.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transparency, management, and the effective implementation of the One Country Programme through One Budgetary Framework. • Funding should be linked to the performance of the UN Country Team preparing and implementing a strategic One Country Programme. • The budget should be completely transparent, showing clearly the overheads and transaction costs of the UN and all of its funds, programmes and specialized agencies in the country 	<p>NEW</p>
<p>PROGRESS Supplementary pooled multi-donor funding mechanisms being piloted at country level in Sudan, Iraq and Lebanon.</p>	<p>Pooled funding mechanisms (HLP Recommendation) To fund the One Country Programme through this single budgetary framework, the Panel recommends the following funding sources:</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The five pilots should be funded by pooled country-level funding. For donor contributions to each pilot, a country-level MDG Strategy Support Fund should be established, to be administered by the Resident Coordinator, in line with national priorities. In principle, funding from all sources for the One Country Programme should flow through these country funds. Donors would be strongly encouraged to contribute through these funds. ▪ A MDG Funding Mechanism should be established following the five pilots. This voluntary mechanism would coordinate overall resource flows enabling global oversight of funding available for contributions to the One Country Programme. The mechanism should be governed by the Sustainable Development Board under the supervision of the Development Coordinator. Donors are strongly encouraged to make funds available to this mechanism at the central or country level. UN organizations could also contribute core funding for the One Country Programme within the framework of this mechanism. 	<p>NEW</p> <p>NEW</p>
<p>(OP 24) <i>Requests</i> the Secretary-General, in consultation with Member States, to <u>explore various funding options for increasing financing for operational activities for development</u> of the UN system and to examine ways to enhance the predictability, long-term stability, reliability and adequacy of funding for the operational activities for development, including <u>through the identification of possible new funding sources</u>, as a follow-up to his report, while preserving the advantages of the current funding modalities, and to submit a report to the General Assembly through the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session in 2005; (TCPR 2004)</p>	<p>(HLP Recommendation) The UN should drive reform by channelling reform savings back into the system through mechanisms, such as an Empowerment Fund. This Fund would demonstrate to the world's poorest citizens, communities and local entrepreneurs that UN savings will be invested directly in their empowerment. It would be financed with minimal overhead through efficiency cost savings resulting from reforming, consolidating and streamlining UN functions and organizations, as recommended by the Task Force to be established by the UN Secretary-General. This Fund could redirect savings from efficiency reforms back to country-level strategies (One Country Programme) with a special emphasis on helping countries achieve the MDGs.</p>	<p>NEW</p>
“One Office”/One Team		
<p>(OP 34) <i>Invites</i> the governing bodies of all organizations of the United Nations system actively involved in development cooperation activities and their respective management to adopt harmonization and simplification measures, with a view to achieving a significant reduction in the administrative and procedural burden on the organizations and their national partners that derives from the preparation and implementation of operational activities; (TCPR 2004)</p> <p>(OP36) <i>Requests</i> the funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the UN system to examine ways to further simplify their rules and procedures and, in this context, to accord the issue of simplification and harmonization high priority and to take concrete steps in the following areas: rationalization of country presence through <u>common premises</u> and co-location of members of United Nations country teams; implementation of the joint office model; <u>common shared support services</u>, including security, information technology, telecommunications, travel, banking and administrative and financial procedures, including for procurement; harmonization of the principles of cost recovery policies, including that of full cost recovery; [...]; as well as further simplification and harmonization measures (TCPR 2004).</p> <p>PROGRESS <i>UN ExCom working on harmonized rules, regulations, policies and procedures for “core services” (finance, human resources and procurement) with Un Secretariat as basis for wider consultations</i></p>	<p>(HLP Recommendation) The “One Office” should include: <u>One integrated results-based management system</u>, with integrated support services; <u>joint premises</u> (where appropriate), and a <u>common security infrastructure</u> and clear lines of accountability</p>	<p>TCPR</p>

<p><i>under HLCCM. Objective is to prepare common field operations handbook reflecting harmonized procedures; common services initiatives for non-core services established in 61 countries; 60 officially designated UN Houses established worldwide.</i></p>		
“One UN” at regional level		
<p>(OP36) <i>Requests the funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the UN system to examine ways to further simplify their rules and procedures and, in this context, to accord the issue of simplification and harmonization high priority and to take concrete steps in the following areas: [...] <u>alignment of the regional technical support structures and regional bureaux at headquarters level, including their regional coverage</u> [...] (TCPR 2004).</i></p> <p>PROGRESS <i>Six regional Directors Teams established in five regions (with two teams in Africa) to provide technical support to UNCTs and oversight for RC/UNCT – focus on (a) provision of coherent technical and substantive policy support to UNCTs, (b) RC assessment, and (3) support to joint office initiative; one support person to be posted for each RDT in 2007; ExCom discussions ongoing on regional alignment/country coverage and regional co-location.</i></p>	<p>(HLP Recommendation) Regional offices of UN entities should be co-located and the definition of regions among all UN entities should be standardized to ensure consistency and coherence in the work of the UN at the regional level.</p>	<p>TCPR NEW</p>
“One UN” at Headquarters level		
<p>PROGRESS <i>Joint meetings of the Boards of ExCom agencies, albeit without decision making powers.</i></p>	<p>(HLP Recommendation) We recommend the establishment of a UN Sustainable Development Board to oversee the One UN Country Programmes. Reporting to ECOSOC, the Board would provide the decision-making and monitoring framework for implementation of One UN at country level. The Board would be responsible for oversight of the implementation of the pilot programme to create unified UN country programmes. Meetings of the UN Sustainable Development Board should supersede the joint meeting of the boards of UNDP/UNFPA/gender entity, WFP and UNICEF. After three years the effectiveness of the Board should be assessed. This assessment should include consideration of the scope for integrating the boards of UNDP/UNFPA and UNICEF as segments of the UN Sustainable Development Board, rather than maintaining them as standalone boards.</p>	<p>NEW</p>
	<p>(HLP Recommendation) The Secretary-General should appoint the UNDP Administrator as the Development Coordinator to chair the Development Policy and Operations Group that would support One UN at the country level. The Development Coordinator would report and be accountable to the UN Sustainable Development Board on the implementation of the One UN. A Development Finance and Performance Review Unit should be established to support the UN Development Policy and Operations Group.</p>	<p>NEW</p>

The General Assembly informal consultation on the UN system-wide coherence (human rights)

24 July 2007, 11:15-13:00

Conference Room 2

Briefing by the High Commissioner for Human Rights

Co-Chairs, Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,

I am honoured to brief this informal consultation on the recommendations of the High-level Panel on System-wide Coherence, with regard to human rights.

The essence of the vision put forward by the High-level Panel is that for the United Nations to be effective and relevant, its normative and analytic expertise, its operational and coordination capacities and its advocacy role need to be integrated more effectively and coherently at all levels.

At one level, this hardly seems a revolutionary proposition. Indeed, guided by member States, strengthened coordination and coherence have been at the front and centre of reform at the United Nations throughout the last decade or more. Yet the clarity and timeliness of the Panel's vision have added greatly to the impetus for a more effective and results-oriented Organisation, a goal to which I and my Office remain firmly committed.

Twenty years ago, the General Assembly adopted the Declaration on the Right to Development, in which the concept of development was described as following:

“[A] comprehensive economic, social, cultural and political process, which aims at the constant improvement of the well-being of the entire population and of all individuals on the basis of their active, free and meaningful participation in development and in the fair distribution of benefits resulting therefrom.”

This is the vision of development to which all States at the 1993 Vienna World Conference committed: an inclusive and holistic vision of development comprising all human rights – social, economic, civil, cultural and political – with self-determination and distributive justice at its heart, and duties at the international as well as national level. This is a vision in which Vienna rightly takes its place among the MDGs and other Internationally Agreed Development Goals.

I put it to you that the hard-won lessons of experience have confirmed the intuition of the Declaration's drafters: that 'development' without 'human rights' is an

impoverished and perhaps even utopian notion. The relevance of human rights principles such as equality, participation, accountability and the rule of law are now widely accepted as instrumental for development effectiveness. Information, voice, and the freedoms to organise and express views freely are vital for the feedback mechanisms and incentives needed for good policy making. Socio-economic rights are critical for the meaningful exercise of these freedoms. And gender equality is the biggest development multiplier that there is. Seen in this light, the increasing convergence between the UN's normative and operational work is not only desirable from the perspective of coherence, but is necessary for development effectiveness, ensuring equitable and sustainable development results.

Human rights are enshrined in the UN Charter as a fundamental purpose of our Organization. Every agency and organization under the UN system has its own unique mandate and focus, but all of us share a commitment to common values including human rights and gender equality enshrined in international law. Supporting your implementation efforts is chief among the concerns of my Office, but also, increasingly, of the UN system more widely.

The 2005 World Summit further reaffirmed that human rights, development and peace & security are three interlinked pillars of our Organization, and gave explicit support for the further integration of human rights within the UN system.

We have come a long way in terms of mainstreaming human rights within the UN system. An increasing number of agencies have adopted human rights-based approaches and integrated human rights into their policies and programmes, bringing a sharper focus to UN-supported national development efforts, and helping to reach the most marginalised and excluded. Many if not most of the UNDAFs developed by UN country teams and endorsed by the respective Governments in recent years have reflected 'nationally owned' and internationally recognised human rights within the framework of results sought, and strive to strengthen processes of analysis and implementation through the adoption of a human rights-based approach. While progress remains uneven, the achievements in recent years deserve recognition.

But human rights mainstreaming has sometimes also met with confusion and resistance, which in many respects, I would venture, may be unwarranted. Let me make a few points to address some of these concerns.

First, human rights are universal. All people, given a chance to be asked, share the same basic ideas about what is needed to live a dignified life, free from want and fear. All States represented here have ratified at least one, and frequently several, of the core seven human rights treaties, giving concrete expression to universality. While international law admits a necessary degree of flexibility in the implementation of human rights commitments, and while the successful promotion of human rights standards

requires sensitivity and adoption in many local contexts, the universality of the values and aspirations embodied in these commitments cannot be in doubt.

Equally ‘universal’ are human rights problems. No country in the world, large and small, developed and developing, is without its challenges. Extreme poverty, often symptomatic of human rights violations, exists in rich and poor countries alike. Backed by its universal membership and multilateral character, there is no room for double standards in terms of how the UN shoulders its own human rights responsibilities which include, at a minimum, the requirement to respect – and not violate – the human rights commitments of member States. Lending my voice and Office to this basic message remains one of my most fundamental and urgent priorities.

Secondly, the holistic and human-centred vision of development embodied in the Declaration on the Right to Development should not be confused with, or reduced to, ‘human rights conditionality.’ Neither must the obligation to respect the human rights commitments enshrined in partner countries’ laws.

We must all, no doubt, be vigilant to insincere attempts to load external policy preferences onto national development agendas. Genuine, broad-based ‘national ownership’ is indispensable for development. The universal principles and values of the United Nations Charter and the universal membership, objectivity and neutrality of our Organization are what give us a unique comparative advantage and legitimacy in these important respects.

Thirdly, States have the primary obligation to ensure that human rights are respected and protected in the country, just as they have the primary responsibility for their own development. International human rights law does not pretend to give ready-made policy prescriptions in the abstract. Rather, implementation should be country-driven.

While human rights law does stipulate some important process parameters and bottom lines, States enjoy a considerable margin of appreciation in establishing priorities and addressing the trade-offs that inevitably arise in the realisation of human rights and development goals, taking into account legitimate resource constraints.

Fourth, human rights bring a stronger notion of accountability and mutual responsibility into modalities for development cooperation. While States bear the primary responsibility for their own development, all States have a responsibility to create a just and favorable international environment for development.

In many cases, it must be acknowledged, donors’ actions have affected human rights outcomes in developing countries in negative ways. All development partners thus need to respect and promote fundamental human rights, equity and social inclusion, and

integrate human rights principles and safeguards systematically within their policies and programmes.

Finally, I would like to say some words about the important role Resident Coordinators play in weaving together and leveraging the normative and operational attributes of the UN system more effectively towards national priorities.

In my Plan of Action which I submitted to the General Assembly through the Secretary-General before the 2005 World Summit, I made it one of the priorities for my Office to support the Resident Coordinator system in meeting their human rights responsibilities under the UN Charter. The High Level Panel gave welcome endorsement to these aims. Resident and Humanitarian Coordinators have long laboured under the multiple demands upon them at the national level, reflective at least in part of the proliferating mandates within the UN system. Strengthened coherence within the UN, and ensuring an effective firewall between the RC's function and the operational work supported by different parts of the UN system, will go a long way towards addressing these issues, as the Panel recommended.

Equally critically, consistent with the Panel's recommendations, Resident and Humanitarian Coordinators need to have adequate knowledge of international human rights and the UN human rights mechanisms, in order to be able to represent and advocate effectively the core values of the UN with the legitimacy and impartiality that member States have a right to expect from the UN system. The UN's normative agenda can't remain at the level of abstract principles, but rather, meaningful partnership and dialogue must reflect an in-depth appreciation of national specificities and realities, a complex challenge for any individual however talented and well supported.

During my recent country visits, I was encouraged by the increasing number of Resident Coordinators who have been working diligently to ensure that the work of the UN country teams is grounded in national priorities and fundamental UN values.

I have also enjoyed frank and productive exchanges at induction briefings and other meetings with Resident Coordinators in recent months, but the UN system must do more to support them. If human rights mainstreaming is to have real meaning on the ground, it needs to be supported by clearer accountability and incentive mechanisms for the system, without which the notion of the system-wide coherence at country level may be rendered moot.

Guided by your deliberations, and taking into account the HLP's timely recommendations, I trust that we can renew our common commitment towards these important goals.

Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SECRETARY-GENERAL**

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**STATEMENT TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
CONSULTATIONS ON SYSTEM-WIDE COHERENCE
AND GENDER ARCHITECTURE****New York, 21 June 2007**

Distinguished delegates,

I am honoured to address this first intergovernmental consultation on the recommendations of the High-level Panel on System-wide Coherence on gender equality and women's empowerment.

Allow me to begin by commending the President of the General Assembly for establishing an intergovernmental process on the Panel report -- a process which has led to your consultations today. I take this opportunity to thank the President for her excellent stewardship in engendering this session of the General Assembly -- including the General Assembly informal debate last April, at which many delegations supported a stronger, more coherent and well-resourced United Nations gender entity.

I also pay tribute to the Moderators of this discussion, Ambassadors Christopher Fitzherbert Hackett of Barbados and Jean-Marc Hoscheit of Luxembourg. Excellencies, I am confident that your leadership and your diplomatic experience will guide discussions on this and other important system-wide coherence issues.

Distinguished Delegates,

As we open this consultation, allow me to share with you my own assessment of why we are here today, and what we have done so far in the UN to support your deliberations.

Achieving gender equality is a primary and enduring responsibility of every Government. It is therefore a pre-eminent area in which the UN needs to assist its Member States.

The Preamble of the United Nations Charter proclaims the equal rights of men and women. Over the past 12 years, this principle has been repeatedly re-affirmed in political and policy documents adopted by this Assembly, ECOSOC and the Security Council. These include the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the ECOSOC agreed conclusions 1997/2 related to gender mainstreaming, outcomes of UN major conferences and summits, Security Council resolution 1325 on women, peace and

security, the Millennium Development Goals, and the 2005 World Summit which reaffirmed that gender equality is essential to development, peace and security. This broad framework is complemented by normative work on gender equality in human rights under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, or CEDAW. The Convention sets legally binding obligations for state parties and the international standards for equality between women and men.

Despite these universally agreed mandates, the gulf between policy and practice remains vast. Continued gender inequality and discrimination hinder our global efforts to promote economic growth, sustainable development, peace and human rights. Around the world, women continue to bear disproportionate burdens of poverty, violence and HIV/AIDS. They are denied full access to credit, land and new technologies. They have fewer educational and employment opportunities. They are marginalized in decision-making.

In response to these challenges, the General Assembly, the Security Council, ECOSOC and its Commission on the Status of Women are working hard to fill the gaps. As their efforts reflect, gender equality and the empowerment of women are now recognized as key cross-cutting issues that affect all main areas of the UN's work, encompassing peace and security, development, environment, human rights and humanitarian assistance. Most UN entities are integrating gender into their mandates or functions: from DPKO in peacekeeping and UNESCO in girls' education, to UNFPA in reproductive health, ILO in labour and employment and WHO in health care.

These are encouraging developments. So why do we need a new architecture? To put it bluntly, the current one has not kept up with the times. If we are to meet our goals for peace, development, human rights and gender equality, our capacity to support Member States in this area needs to evolve, so that it better addresses the needs of women around the world, and the new global challenges they face. This is particularly true at the country level.

Consider the core of our gender architecture today:

- the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI);
- the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW);
- the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM);
- and the International Institute for Research and Training for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW).

Clearly, there are several fundamental problems with this arrangement.

First, it is fragmented and ill-equipped for system wide-work on gender mainstreaming.

Second, with a combined annual budget of less than 65 million dollars, it is woefully under-resourced for its broad mandates.

Third, none of the existing entities has either the mandate or resources to lead the UN system in gender equality and women's empowerment.

Taken together, our gender-related efforts suffer from an absence of strategic leadership.

As a result, we lack system-wide coherence on gender equality policies, measurable goals and timelines, coordinated capacity building, accountability systems for senior managers, and efficient use of inter-sectoral synergies.

We all recognize that institutionally, gender analysis and mainstreaming are central to the mission of the Organization. And yet, 12 years after Beijing, these functions are not fully understood, nor adequately developed and integrated into UN programmes.

→ Gender units are under-funded and under-staffed. Gender theme groups at the country level exist only in a small number of UN country programmes. Resources are wasted and priorities neglected.

Clearly, our gender architecture is in desperate need of a complete overhaul. It needs to bridge the gap between policy and implementation. It needs to deliver better on gender equality at the country level, and thus deliver better on development. And it needs to give effect to the declaration by leaders at the 2005 World Summit, that "progress for women is progress for all."

The High-level Panel on System-wide Coherence provided some useful proposals. As you know, the Panel recommended consolidating OSAGI, DAW and UNIFEM into one entity for gender equality and women's empowerment. The Secretary-General and I agree with the Panel's vision of a new UN gender architecture as "a much stronger voice" tasked with ensuring that gender equality and women's empowerment are taken seriously throughout the United Nations system, and that the UN works more effectively with Governments and civil society.

But let us remember that the Panel did not consider the new entity as simply the sum of current mandates and resources. It stressed that the new entity should

- combine normative and operational functions;
- provide advice on system wide policies on gender equality and women's empowerment;
- monitor and evaluate system-wide performance in gender mainstreaming;
- enjoy strengthened support from Member States;
- provide focused assistance to Member States, upon their request; maintain close links with Resident Coordinators, Country Teams and Theme Groups;

- and enjoy a significant, stable and predictable funding base financed from both assessed and voluntary contributions.

Against this backdrop, and without prejudging your deliberations, the UN system has given some thought to how we can strengthen the UN system's gender capacity, enhance the accountability and focus of individual UN entities within their specific mandates, and improve inter-agency coordination.

What came out of a series of broad and thorough consultations in late 2006, involving all UN gender entities and interested Departments, Funds and Programmes, was the outline of a hybrid model entity which would:

- combine operational and normative activities;
- act as catalyst, advocate, coordinator and interlocutor with Member States on policies and strategies;
- report to the Secretary-General directly on normative and analytical activities funded from assessed contributions, and through an executive board or another inter-governmental body on operational activities financed through voluntary contributions;
- be closely associated with and service intergovernmental policy making processes;
- be equipped with real capacity on the ground at both the country and regional levels;
- have the mandate and capacity to provide technical assistance to Member States upon their request, and finance gender-related activities, in a manner that is country-driven, in partnership with Government, civil society and the private sector;
- be capable of promoting system wide gender mainstreaming and enjoy operational flexibility and autonomy;
- participate in major interagency coordination bodies, including CEB and the Policy Committee;
- and finally, be provided with sufficient and predictable resources, for the effective implementation of gender-related mandates.

The last point is particularly salient. For too long, gender-related activities have been seen as an add-on responsibility to intergovernmental mandates, and were expected to be met within existing resources. Experience has shown this to be unrealistic. To have effect and meaning, this work must be provided with appropriate and secure resources.

Of course, many of these ideas have yet to be fully developed. We look forward to your guidance. To ensure we are ready to support your deliberations, I have decided to reactivate an inter-agency Gender Task Force bringing together 15 entities of the UN system. Its first meeting will take place later today. We stand ready to assist you in any way you deem necessary. M

Distinguished Delegates,

This Assembly is faced with an historic opportunity: a chance to equip our Organization to adequately respond to the needs of the world's women. For their sake, and for the sake of all humankind, let us seize the day.

Thank you very much.

ERC John Holmes' Address for the Informal Intergovernmental Consultations on the
High-Level Panel on System-wide Coherence
20 June 2007

Introduction

1. Distinguished co-chairs, distinguished delegates, thank you for this opportunity to bring you up to date on the humanitarian aspects of the high-level report.
2. "Delivering as One", last November's report of the SG's High-Level Panel on System-wide Coherence, addresses coherence among three key areas of the UN system: development, humanitarian issues and the environment.
3. The report suggests in general that by improving system-wide coherence, the UN's analytical expertise, its operational and coordination capabilities, and its advocacy role would be more effectively brought together at country, regional and global levels.
4. In April, the SG signalled his broad support for this principle of a stronger, more coherent United Nations and for the recommendations contained in the report.
5. Most of the recommendations are for the development arm of the UN, but significant recommendations are for the humanitarian side too. Of course the need for coherence and better coordination in the humanitarian area has long been recognized, just as it has been recognised that this goes wider than just the UN and its agencies. That was of course why DHA was established in 1991, and subsequently became OCHA.
6. Moreover further reform of the humanitarian system had already been launched in 2005, aimed at greater coherence, more predictability, timeliness, and effectiveness. This stemmed from the 2005 Humanitarian Response Review, in the height of the proliferation of actors, host government demands for more structured responses, and greater public and media scrutiny of the humanitarian performance. This reform aims to make the system more accountable to populations in need and better supportive of overall government efforts.
7. Against this background, the Panel's report makes eight basic recommendations on the humanitarian side, many of which pick up this already launched reform agenda. Simplest to go through where we stand on each of these.

Recommendation 1 -- stronger partnerships

8. National and local governments, UN agencies, international organizations such as the International Organization of Migration, Red Cross/Red Crescent Societies, NGOs and affected communities, are all important actors in humanitarian response; the resources and expertise of all are essential. But all need to work together very closely. Constantly working as ERC at global level, and the HCs at field level, to strengthen this

coordination and coherence. Making good progress. Good partnerships at all levels key to this.

9. National and local institutions are the first and most important responders, but sometimes lack adequate capacity to address humanitarian emergencies, in particular in times of crisis or disaster. UN humanitarian agencies are therefore working with governments to strengthen such capacities and improve the predictability of response. In any case local government/authority assessments, data, and knowledge are critical in ensuring that beneficiaries receive adequate aid. Working with governments is our standard footprint, wherever possible.

10. The UN is also working to improve regional operational and logistics support during humanitarian emergencies. The European driven International Humanitarian Partnership is one such example. The Asia-Pacific Humanitarian Partnership, comprised of Australia, China, Japan, The Republic of Korea, New Zealand and Singapore, was formed following the Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami and was deployed in 2006 to provide logistical support to the Yogyakarta earthquake in Indonesia and in 2007 to the Solomon Islands tsunami. Efforts are also underway to establish a similar arrangement in Latin America and the Caribbean.

11. More widely, in 2006, 40 leaders of UN humanitarian organizations, NGOs, the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement, the IOM and the World Bank attended a meeting on “Dialogue between UN and Non-UN Humanitarian Organizations on Enhancing the Effectiveness of Humanitarian Action”. They now have come together in the Global Humanitarian Partnership to have a broad based forum for strategic dialogue on urgent humanitarian issues. Next meeting is next month. Principles of partnership, first of which is equality.

12. **Another facet of partnerships -- cluster approach:** The cluster approach is based on the concept of a lead organization in particular sectors, which encourages improved performance and stronger partnership between humanitarian agencies, UN, Red Cross/Crescent Movement and NGOs.

13. At the global level, 11 clusters¹ established each headed by a lead agency. This will strengthen system-wide preparedness and technical capacity to respond to humanitarian emergencies. It will avoid time consuming search for a lead agency when disaster strikes (examples Darfur 2004, Tsunami 2005). Example: there is a UN World

¹ Global clusters/sector working groups (and their respective chairs/co-chairs) are agriculture (FAO), camp coordination and management (UNHCR and IOM), early recovery (UNDP), education in emergencies (UNICEF and Save the Children-UK), emergency shelter (UNHCR and IFRC), emergency telecommunications (OCHA/UNICEF/WFP), health (WHO), logistics (WFP), nutrition (UNICEF), protection of conflict-displaced (UNHCR), protection of nonconflict displaced (UNICEF/OHCHR/UNHCR) water/sanitation (UNICEF). Sectors, areas of activity and population categories where leadership and accountability among international humanitarian actors are already clear are not included among the nine clusters at global level. These include, for example, food, led by WFP; and refugees, led by UNHCR.

Food Programme, but no special UN agency for Water and Sanitation or Nutrition, or education in emergencies, or management of IDP camps.

14. At the country level², the cluster approach, again based around lead organisations, serves to strengthen the coordination and effectiveness of humanitarian action between agencies, NGOs and non-UN organizations. It means gaps and duplications are avoided. It allows a more structured dialogue with national authorities (i.e. line ministries), and local institutions in managing humanitarian crises.

15. “Provider of last resort” is a key part of the concept. Initial confusion over the meaning of this term has been clarified. Cluster lead agencies are expected to act as “provider of last resort” in their respective areas, subject to the availability of funds, access and security. Where they are unable to carry out their responsibilities as “provider of last resort” because of lack of funding access/security problems, they are still expected to explain the constraints to stakeholders, and to try to mobilize resources.

16. As already suggested, by designating clear focal points for all key areas of activity, the cluster approach should help governments and local authorities know who is in the lead, and who to approach for cooperation and support. And it is our experience that where clusters have been implemented, national authorities have recognized their value in bringing more predictability, accountability and professionalism to response. The latest example being our response to the floods in Mozambique, or previously the major earthquake in Pakistan.

17. The cluster approach is clearly proving its added value. Clusters at the both global and country levels are resulting in much stronger partnerships between UN and non-UN actors; roles and responsibilities are being defined much more quickly in emergencies (e.g. in Lebanon lead organisations were designated for all sectors within the first 48hrs, compared with Darfur where it took months); there is more attention to “gap” areas (e.g., in DRC, the neglected Wat/San sectors is now well funded, and in Uganda and Somalia there is now more attention to Protection).

18. An external evaluation of the clusters, to be completed in 2008, will evaluate performance based on its ultimate aim: delivering a more timely, predictable and effective humanitarian response to populations in need. The impact on national authorities and capacities is a key aspect of this study.

Recommendation 2 -- fully fund the CERF to its target of US\$500 million

19. To date, donors (75 countries mainly, few corporations and individuals) have pledged around \$346 million to the CERF, compared to around \$299 million in 2006. The Fund has multi-year commitments of \$133 million, leaving the Fund with a shortfall of \$317 million against the goal of \$450 million for 2008. Reasonably optimistic.

20. During the first six months of 2007, the CERF has committed \$171.8 million to 188 projects in 33 countries. A total of \$86.9 million went for rapid response grants, while \$84.9 million were allocated to under-funded emergencies. The ratio between the rapid response window and the underfunded window should normally be around two thirds to one third. I am confident this will be the case by the end of the year.

21. Since its launch on 9 March 2006, the CERF has committed \$431 million for over 513 projects in 45 countries.

22. Since the endorsement by the GA of the upgraded CERF on 15 December 2005, several oversight mechanisms have been put in place to evaluate and monitor the progress of the Fund. The SG has issued 2 reports on the Fund's operations; the latest is with Member States for discussion in this year's GA session.

23. An Advisory Group has been established by the SG, comprising donors and beneficiary representatives to provide policy guidance and advice on the use and impact of the Fund.

24. OCHA has also undertaken an independent interim review to take stock of the CERF's first year of operations and to provide feedback on performance (effectiveness) and management (efficiency) to CERF stakeholders. This review is to serve as a baseline for independent and external evaluation of the CERF. The first full external evaluation will be commissioned in 2008, at the end of the CERF's second year of operation. The report will be submitted to the GA in 2008.

25. The upgraded CERF has demonstrated its value as a *shared tool* of the humanitarian community in sudden-onset and rapidly deteriorating crises and under-funded emergencies.

26. Experience to date suggests that the Fund has been most effective where *country-level leadership* is the strongest and decision-making is coordinated and broad-based. In the 45 countries where CERF funds have been allocated since March 2006, HC/RCs and country teams have played an increasing role in identifying response gaps, prioritizing the most urgent life-saving needs, and determining how to best use CERF funds.

Recommendation 3 -- mandate clarity and cooperation on IDPs

27. Constant effort to ensure mandates of agencies are clear and to reduce overlaps.

28. Case of UNHCR mentioned specifically by Panel. The world has an estimated 25 million IDPs globally -- yet no specialized agency to support Governments in assisting them. In the past, IDP support has been provided by several agencies, collaboratively, but inadequately. To be more effective, we have had to strengthen our collective response to IDPs by identifying UNHCR as the clear lead agency in previously under-covered areas in conflict situations: Camp Coordination/Management, Emergency Shelter, and IDP Protection.

29. The original UNHCR mandate for refugees is of course not being touched in any way, and funding for that is continuing as normal. Remains vital as we can all testify today, World Refugee Day, when we see that the number of refugees in the world has increased to 10 million. UNHCR is discussing all these issues with the membership of its Executive Committee and is seeking necessary clarity on mandate issues in this representative forum.

Recommendation 4 -- UNDP repositioning to become coordinator for early recovery

30. Take recommendations 4 and 5 together.

31. Widely recognized that there is an issue here: the infamous transition gap. The typical problems of transition and early recovery include lack of funding in the gap between life-saving and life sustaining activities; lack of hand-over of coordination structures and planning for recovery while the humanitarian response is still ongoing; and a consequent phase when the humanitarian relief effort has wound down, but the development effort is only just beginning.

32. Clear that the earlier in the humanitarian phase, the planning and work on recovery begins, the sooner national institutions can move forward providing basic services and assuming governance functions to stabilize affected areas.

33. Within the framework of the humanitarian reform and the cluster approach, there is a Working Group on Early Recovery set up and led by UNDP. The group currently has 19 UN and non-UN members from the humanitarian and developmental communities³. Efforts to encourage a larger participation of NGOs and international financial institutions are continuing.

34. This early recovery group played a major and useful role in several recent major emergencies. In the Pakistan Earthquake, 2005, an Early Recovery Cluster was set up within weeks of the earthquake. Similarly Yogyakarta/Indonesia earthquakes, cyclones in Philippines, Mozambique, Madagascar, crisis in Lebanon. Similar groups are now in existence or being set up in a limited number of long standing conflict emergencies: DRC, Liberia, Uganda, Somalia, and Ethiopia.

Recommendation 5 -- adequate funding for the UN's role in early recovery

35. On the funding side, while there are established mechanisms for humanitarian, reconstruction, and development programmes, it is true that formal or predictable inter-agency mechanisms for mobilizing quick and timely resources for (early) recovery programmes are still lacking. That is why early recovery is usually included in Flash Appeals and CAPs.

³ FAO, ICRC, IFRC, ILO, IOM, ISDR, OCHA, OHCHR, UNDGO, UNDP, UNEP, UNFPA, UN-HABITAT, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNOSAT, UNV, WFP, WHO.

36. UNDP's thematic trust fund for crisis prevention and recovery (TTF CPR) has therefore been reorganized and a dedicated early recovery window established which allows donors to provide unearmarked funding for early recovery or to fund early recovery activities in a particular country. This is a very recent development and it remains to be seen how it will operate and how donors will respond.

37. The PBF with its USD\$250 million ceiling is for the time being only being for 2 countries, although the SG can declare a country which is not before the Peacebuilding Commission as eligible for support under the PBF.

38. The PBF's greatest utility value is in the early stages, immediately following the signing of a peace agreement. It is meant to operate as a catalyst and prepare for a more sustained investment by bilateral and multilateral donors. It is a valuable extra tool not least to strengthen political efforts, but cannot by itself meet all the needs.

39. Report acknowledgement of the problems here. Working hard to find new ways of addressing them.

Recommendation 6 – Rome-based agencies to build long-term food security (esp, in sub-Saharan Africa)

40. There is already substantial cooperation among the three main Rome agencies. WFP, FAO and IFAD have jointly established Food Security Theme Groups at the country level. They are designed to improve collaboration and coordination in support of countries' own development efforts in the interrelated areas of food security, agriculture and rural development. Mozambique is an active example, also being a "One UN" pilot.

41. Comprehensive regional approaches to addressing food insecurity are also being developed. In particular, WFP and FAO are working on a multi-country consultation on food security in the Horn of Africa. It involves country level workshops in six countries (Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Somalia and Uganda) culminating in a high-level meeting in Nairobi June 25-26, under the chairmanship of former Norwegian Prime Minister Bondevik, to reach consensus on practical measures that can be scaled up to better address long-term vulnerability to food insecurity in the region.

42. The Sahel Agricultural and Rural Development Initiative (SARDI), launched in March 2007, is another example. The Sahelian food and nutrition crises in 2005 demonstrated that conditions in many rural areas are characterised by high levels of poverty, food insecurity, malnutrition, and a growing rural exodus. The aim of the SARDI is to address the structural causes of food insecurity in Burkina Faso, Chad, Mauritania, Mali and Niger.

Recommendation 7 -- UN's efforts on risk reduction enhanced

43. Disaster risk reduction is a cross cutting issue, which requires active participation by a number of sectors, in particular in the humanitarian, development and environment fields, under the framework of sustainable development. Its cost effectiveness is increasingly accepted.

44. The Hyogo Framework for Action, negotiated and endorsed by Member States in January 2005, clearly identified the roles and responsibilities of different actors to implement disaster risk reduction at all levels, both in the UN and beyond.

45. At the country level, the Hyogo Framework called for the active participation of the RC system, and UN Country Teams, to facilitate and support Governments, who have the primary responsibility for national implementation of the HF. In this context UNDP has an important contribution to make, in particular to assist in the mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction into all UN programmes as well as national development plans and programs (in particular in collaboration with Ministries of Planning).

46. The recent First Session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, which took place in Geneva (5-7 June), - and was attended by more than 1200 participants, including 120 governments - reiterated the importance of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction system in implementing the Hyogo Framework for Action. Proposal for study of cost-benefits launched. Many specific proposals were made but it was not a decision-making forum in itself.

47. Major priority of UN system at all levels. But still a long way to go, more resources required, and need for more political and media attention.

Recommendation 8 -- UN continue to build innovative disaster assistance mechanisms

48. Need to keep working at new ideas and procedures.

49. The experience/lessons learned of the World Food Programme's pilot humanitarian insurance policy in Ethiopia to provide coverage in the case of an extreme drought during the country's 2006 agricultural season is currently being evaluated by Agency and its Executive Board. To date, Ethiopia remains the only place where WFP has piloted this approach.

50. The ERC and OCHA continue to be in discussion with WFP and others on innovative mechanisms which could potentially help provide contingency funding for natural disasters. Lot of scope here for innovations which could benefit us all.

Conclusion

51. So overall I believe reasonable progress is being made in all these areas. As I said at the beginning, I believe UN system coherence has come a long way in the humanitarian area since 1991 and the creation of OCHA. But I also accept there is still a long way to go. Key is working with all actors on equal partnership basis but particularly with national governments. We need even more emphasis on this and on building national (and regional capacities) in future.

OCHA/22/06/07

16 April 2007

**Statement of H.E. Ms. Sheikha Haya Rashed Al Khalifa,
President of the 61st Session of the General Assembly,
at the Debate on the Recommendations of the High Level Panel on
System-Wide Coherence of United Nations Operational Activities**

Secretary-General,
Excellencies,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you all to the General Assembly today to discuss the important issue of the coherence and effectiveness of the United Nations operational activities.

Before the Secretary-General briefs us on his report on the Recommendations of the High-Level Panel on System-wide Coherence, I would like to offer a few thoughts of my own.

Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,

All Member States have an interest in a more effective United Nations; a United Nations that can better deliver on its promises to the world.

The promise to achieve the Millennium Development Goals is central to delivering our broader development agenda. It is part of our collective duty to ensure global economic stability and prosperity, but also, to guarantee that we live in a fair, just and safe global community.

But as we approach the halfway point to 2015, I think we can all agree that urgent action is needed.

The United Nations - more than any other body - is uniquely placed to take a leading role in achieving these goals. But in order to do so, and like any other organization, it must strengthen itself to make sure that it is equipped to respond to new global challenges.

Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,

The report of the High-level Panel on the System-wide Coherence of the United Nations operational activities presents us with an important opportunity to do so.

Since it was received by member states on 9th November 2007, I know that there has been much informal discussion of the report and its recommendations. I have also had the opportunity to talk to many of you about your views.

What has struck me is that both donor countries and developing countries agree that;

the United Nations system has a critical role to play in development;
that the United Nations must remain at the heart of the multilateral development system;
that its development activities need to be strengthened; and,
that the UN can deliver more and better development assistance.

In his report, the Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, has expressed his broad support for the recommendations in the Panel's report.

The Secretary-General also emphasizes the need to take urgent steps to enhance the overall coherence and effectiveness of the United Nations operational activities.

Nationally owned pilot schemes are already underway to test the 'One country' approach. The outcome of these pilots will be an essential element for the intergovernmental consultations on the operational effectiveness of the UN.

Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,

At the recent informal thematic debate on gender equality and the empowerment of women many member states highlighted the importance of this issue to the development agenda.

You also expressed strong support for a more coherent, better coordinated and better resourced United Nations gender architecture to strengthen the impact of gender equality and the empowerment of women at the country level.

It is my hope that through the consultation process on the Secretary-General's report, this desire for action can be translated into results that have a positive impact for women.

In order to move forward, the constructive and collective effort of the UN system, and, of Member States will be necessary.

Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,

Being strong on development is a core strategic objective of the United Nations. It is an objective common to all Member States, and the Funds, Programmes and agencies involved in operational activities at the country level.

The report invites us to deal with challenging issues, such as finance and governance of UN activities. I look forward to the in-depth intergovernmental consultations on these issues.

We need to deal with these and, other issues with the common objective of strengthening the United Nations.

So I appeal to all of you, to offer your views and suggestions on the substantive issues that we must discuss and on the process to move this agenda forward.

Based on your views and on the consultations that I will shortly conduct, I am hopeful that I can outline a process for considering all the issues before us that require your collective support.

We have an important and timely opportunity to build on our shared objective to strengthen the UN system; so that it remains at the heart of the multilateral development system; so that it is fit to deliver on the goals that we cannot afford to miss.

I therefore appeal to you all not to shy away from dealing with the issues at hand, and, to work together to build broad consensus on how to address them.

Thank you very much.



THE PRESIDENT
OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

14 September 2007

Excellency,

I would like to inform you that our collective efforts have not succeeded in reaching an agreement on the follow-up of the Report of the Secretary-General entitled “Recommendations contained in the Report of the High Level Panel on United Nations System Wide Coherence in the Areas of Development, Humanitarian Assistance and the Environment: Report of the Secretary-General”. It is in this context that I intend to propose to the General Assembly for adoption on Monday 17 September 2007 an oral decision, which will ensure that the ongoing consultations among member states on this issue shall continue in the sixty second Session of the Assembly.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Haya Al Khalifa". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke extending to the left.

Haya Rashed Al Khalifa

All Permanent Representatives and
Permanent Observers to the United Nations
New York



THE PRESIDENT
OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

2 August 2007

Excellency,

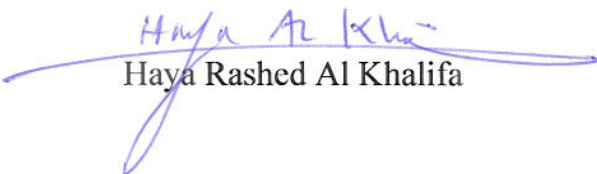
I have the honour to bring to your attention the attached letter from the Deputy Secretary-General including a concept note on the Secretariat's proposal for a strengthened gender equality architecture.

The concept note was prepared at my request following the briefing by the Deputy Secretary-General on June 21 2007, to respond to Members States need for further clarity and additional information on the recommendations of the High Level Panel on System-wide Coherence on gender equality and empowerment of women.

The Co-Chairs will advise you on further steps to carry the consultations forward on this important matter.

I sincerely hope that the information provided in the concept note will enable Member States to have an informed and focused discussion with a view to achieving concrete progress that will strengthen the United Nations' gender equality architecture. I am confident that all Member States will continue to extend their full support to the Co-Chairs in the ensuing consultations.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.


Haya Rashed Al Khalifa

All Permanent Representatives and
Permanent Observers to the United Nations
New York



Permanent Mission of Barbados to the United Nations

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REPRESENTATION PERMANENTE DU
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TEL: (212) 935-3589 / FAX: (212) 935-5895

June 19, 2007

Excellency,

We refer to our letter dated June 11, 2007 as well as the letter from the President of the General Assembly dated June 14, 2007. The Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Sir John Holmes, will brief Member States at our informal consultations on "Humanitarian issues and recovery" at 3pm on 20th June. The Deputy Secretary-General, Dr. Asha-Rose Migiro, will brief Member States at our informal consultations on "Gender" at 10am on 21st June.

On 21st June, at 3pm, we have the pleasure to inform you that the Deputy Permanent Secretary from the Ministry of Planning of Tanzania, Ms. Joyce Mapunjo and the Head of the Department for Strategy and donor coordination from Albania, Ms. Albana Vokshi, will brief us on the progress being made on the ground in their respective pilot countries. Two Resident Coordinators from the pilot countries will share their experiences in the field with us. The Administrator of UNDP, Mr Kemal Dervis, will also make some brief remarks. We hope to have an interactive and lively discussion.

Finally let us reiterate our willingness to meeting with individual delegations or groups of countries to receive your views and suggestions. We look forward to your continued support and cooperation.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of our highest consideration.

Christopher F. Hackett
Co-Chair

Jean-Marc Hoscheit
Co-Chair

All Permanent Representatives and
Permanent Observers to the United Nations
New York



THE PRESIDENT
OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

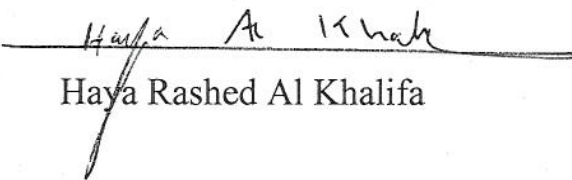
14 June 2007

Deputy Secretary-General,

As you are aware I recently appointed Ambassador Hackett, the Permanent Representative of Barbados and Ambassador Hoscheit, the Permanent Representative of Luxembourg to Co-Chair intergovernmental consultation on System-wide Coherence. The Co-Chairs recently set out a program of work to deal with the issues contained in the Secretary-Generals Report on the recommendations of the High Level Panel on System-wide Coherence.

In this context, have the honour to invite you to brief Member States and at the informal consultations on 'Gender' at 10:00am on 21st June. I believe that you are best placed to inform member states of the current status of this issue within the United Nations system and the rationale for any potential reform as you lead the efforts of the inter-agency task force on gender equality.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.


Haya Rashed Al Khalifa

Deputy Secretary-General

cc: Secretary-General
All Permanent Representatives and
Permanent Observers to the United Nations
New York



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June 11, 2007

Excellency,

We refer to our letter dated June 1, 2007 and to the first meeting of the informal consultations of the General Assembly on United Nations System-wide Coherence, held on June 6, 2007.

We wish to extend our sincerest gratitude to all delegations for the constructive and positive manner in which you engaged during our first meeting. We were particularly encouraged by your reaction to our proposal on a work programme based on eight components or main themes as contained in the High-Level Panel's report on United Nations System-wide Coherence, namely - delivering as one at country level, humanitarian issues and recovery, environment, gender, human rights, governance and institutional reform, funding and business practices.

To assist delegations in their preparations for our subsequent meetings we have attached a paper which tries to summarize the relevant recommendations of the High-Level Panel's report, as related to each component of the work programme. We will organize a number of briefings and informal consultations. A copy of the initial work programme is also attached.

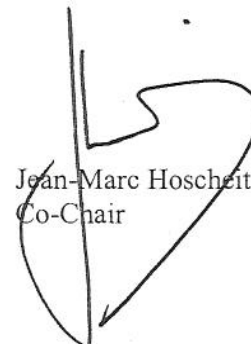
You might be aware that officials from the eight pilot countries as well as the respective UN Resident Coordinators for these countries will be in New York during the week of June 18, 2007. We believe that we can utilize this opportunity to be briefed on the progress being made on the ground in the pilot countries. We believe that this briefing will enrich our future discussions under the various components.

Finally let us reiterate our willingness to meeting with individual delegations or groups of countries to receive your views and suggestions. We look forward to your continued support and cooperation.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of our highest consideration.



Christopher F. Hackett
Co-Chair



Jean-Marc Hoscheit
Co-Chair

All Permanent Representatives and
Permanent Observers to the United Nations
New York

Annex A

Informal consultations and briefings of the General Assembly on United Nations System-wide Coherence

Tentative programme of work

(Please check the UN Journal for the exact venue times and locations)

Wednesday 20, June at 3pm
Humanitarian issues and recovery

Thursday, June 21, 2007 at 10am
Gender

Thursday, June 21, 2007 at 3pm
Briefing on Delivering as one at country level

Friday, June 22, 2007 at 10am
Governance and institutional reform

Friday, June 22, 2007 at 3pm
Business practices

We shall inform you as soon as possible on the exact date and time of our meetings on the following components: environment¹, human rights and funding.

¹ Please note that the option-paper on strengthening international environmental governance will be presented on the 14 June.



Permanent Mission of Barbados to the United Nations

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REPRESENTATION PERMANENTE DU
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June 1, 2007

Excellency,

We refer to the letter of the President of the General Assembly dated May 25, 2007. The letter indicates that, following extensive consultations with individual Member States and groups of Member States to establish a transparent, inclusive and open process on the consideration of the High-Level Panel's report on United Nations System-wide Coherence as well as the report of the Secretary General on its recommendations, the President wishes to begin, without further delay, the inter-governmental process. In this context, she has appointed us as co-chairs to guide the process on her behalf.

Following the debate that took place during the plenary meeting of the General Assembly on April 16 and 17, 2007, and now that Member States have had time to reflect further on these two reports, and to receive guidance from their respective capitals, we intend to convene a first informal meeting of the General Assembly on Wednesday, June 6, 2007 at 10 am (Trusteeship Council Chamber), in order to consider the Report in a result-oriented manner.

Since not much time remains between now and the end of this current session of the General Assembly, we look forward to your active and constructive participation, and we would urge all delegations to display the pragmatism and flexibility that will lead to meaningful results at the end of the process.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of our highest consideration.



Christopher F. Hackett
Co-Chair



Jean-Marc Hoscheit
Co-Chair

All Permanent Representatives and
Permanent Observers to the United Nations
New York



25 May 2007

Excellency,

On April 9, 2007, I transmitted to the Membership, the Report of the Secretary-General entitled "Recommendations contained in the Report of the High Level Panel on United Nations System Wide Coherence in the Areas of Development, Humanitarian Assistance and the Environment: Report of the Secretary General" (A/61/836).

The General Assembly subsequently debated the Secretary-General's Report and the Report of the High Level Panel on the 16th and 17th April, 2007. Since then, I have undertaken extensive consultations with individual Member States, and groups of Member States to establish a transparent, inclusive and open process that will allow us to consider the Report in a result-oriented manner. After listening carefully to your views, I believe that the time has come, without further delay, to begin the intergovernmental process on System-wide Coherence.

In this context, I have decided to appoint Their Excellencies, Ambassador Hackett, the Permanent Representative of Barbados and Ambassador Hoscheit, the Permanent Representative of Luxembourg, to Co-Chair, on my behalf, the consultations in an open, transparent and inclusive manner. I would like to thank both Ambassadors for accepting this important task. The Co-Chairs will report to me on a monthly basis, beginning the end of June, on the progress made in these consultations.

I am hopeful that all Member States will enter into these consultations in good faith, bearing in mind the concerns of all, in a pragmatic, constructive and flexible manner. I am confident that delegations will extend their full support to the Co-Chairs in order to ensure a positive outcome to these consultations. I will personally continue to follow this important issue very closely and look forward to your continued support.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.


Haya Rashed Al Khalifa

All Permanent Representatives and
Permanent Observers to the United Nations
New York



9 April 2007

Excellency,

I have the honour to bring to your attention the attached letter from the Secretary-General concerning his Report on the 'Recommendations contained in the report of the High-level Panel on United Nations System-wide Coherence in the areas of development, humanitarian assistance and the environment' (A/61/836). The report will be available tomorrow in all official United Nations languages.

A plenary meeting will take place at 4:30pm on 16th April 2007, so that as far as possible it does not coincide with the Special High-level Meeting of the Economic and Social Council with the Bretton Woods institutions. The Secretary-General will introduce his report, which will be followed by a general discussion.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Haya Rashed Al Khalifa'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Haya Rashed Al Khalifa

All Permanent Representatives and
Permanent Observers to the United Nations
New York



THE SECRETARY-GENERAL



5 April 2007

Dear Madam President,

I would like to take this opportunity to convey to you and to Member States my views on the Report of the High-level Panel on United Nations System-wide Coherence (A/61/583) outlined in the annexed Report of the Secretary-General. My report will be officially released as an official General Assembly document on Monday, 9 April 2007. My views and suggestions are based on my own assessment of the Panel's Report, as well as on consultations with Member States and other stake holders.

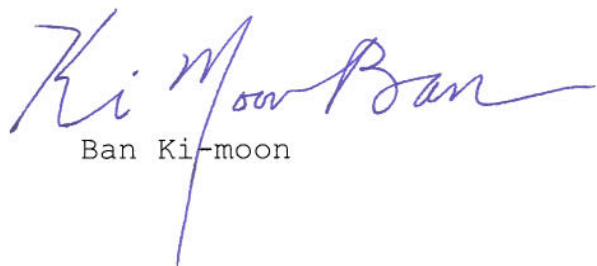
As I state in my Report, I believe that the conclusions of the Panel present us with an important opportunity to address issues of coherence in a comprehensive and consistent manner. They can serve our shared objective of ensuring that the United Nations responds to the global challenges of the twenty-first century, including the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. My Report underscores the United Nations system's recognition of the need to urgently take steps to enhance overall coherence and effectiveness. We are equally aware of the need to ensure that efforts to act on the Panel's recommendations are guided by and respectful of the inter-governmental consideration of the Panel's Report. At the same time, I hope that Member States will be able to reach soon a decision on how to move the process forward.

Her Excellency
Sheikha Haya Rashed Al Khalifa
President of the General Assembly
New York

On the part of the United Nations system, progress has been made towards implementation of those recommendations building on existing inter-governmental mandates. For the recommendations that require further discussion, I intend to work and consult closely with you, Member States, and the relevant intergovernmental bodies which will play a critical role in moving the report forward. In this regard, I have asked the Deputy Secretary-General to oversee and support the implementation of the system-wide coherence reform agenda. The Deputy Secretary-General will work closely with relevant senior United Nations officials who will be at the disposal of Member States to facilitate discussion in their respective areas of responsibility.

I look forward to working with you and the Member States in what I trust will be a fruitful collaboration.

Please accept, Madam President, the assurances of my highest consideration.


Ban Ki-moon