



THE PRESIDENT
OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

23 March 2009

Excellency,

On 28 January 2009 I circulated the first draft General Assembly resolution on modalities for the United Nations Conference at the highest level on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and Its Impact on Development. The process of developing that draft included an extensive set of briefings by my staff to Members and groups. Although these were not intended to be consultations, numerous comments and suggestions were received and most were reflected in the first draft resolution.

After consultation with the General Assembly on February 12, I presented a revised draft on 18 February and named a facilitator, the distinguished Permanent Representative of the Republic of Namibia, H.E. Kaire Mbuende to lead the process of consultations among Members to build consensus for the procedural resolution.

By all accounts, the extensive process of consultations, drafting, and negotiations that Ambassador Mbuende has led through last week has helped to bring the Members toward a common understanding of the mandate, scope, and structure of the conference, and has helped to clarify and narrow differences on all other issues. I want to record here the many expressions of deep appreciation I have received from Member states for the outstanding leadership and perseverance of Ambassador Mbuende. Under his stewardship, the confidence of this body concerning the June conference has been palpably strengthened.

The work of preparing the procedural resolution for the June conference is not yet completed. Yet, after receiving Ambassador Mbuende's report on Friday, I am confident that the remaining issues are not the most difficult, and that with continued good will we can close this initial process by the end of the month.

Enclosed herewith is the latest compilation text, with double-bracketed headings indicating the purpose of each numbered paragraph. There are, as it seems to me, five outstanding issues:

All Permanent Representatives
and Permanent Observers
to the United Nations

(1) The Nature of the Outcome of the Conference: It is broadly agreed that the Conference should result in some form of "text" (to choose what I believe is the most neutral word), and that the text should be intergovernmentally agreed. This is in addition to a Conference Report. It is evident that Members also broadly agree that the form of the document should be appropriate to the occasion and intend that the document should be at once relatively brief and concise, and should reflect important decisions that will enable the assembled world leaders to present a common purpose and an agreed plan of action. I share this perspective and believe that we must strive for focus, coherence, and clarity.

The world expects the Conference to provide a sense of direction and a demonstration of leadership. Members must manage the preparatory process jointly so as not to disappoint these expectations.

(2) Participation in the preparatory process and in the Conference by non-Members: There is broad agreement that the preparatory process should be made open to civil society organizations, including the private sector organizations, UN system specialized agencies, including the Bretton Woods institutions, regional development banks, and the WTO under rules adopted for the Monterrey and Doha Financing for Development conference. There is also broad agreement that the heads of the key agencies should be invited to address the Conference in plenary session. Because of the pressure of time, and the expected participation by a large number of countries at the head of states or head of government level, there is concern among many members that the conference should be conducted under the standing rules of the General Assembly. I believe we can find language to accommodate these understandings and concerns.

(3) Preparation of the Information Note: Some Members have expressed concern that the Conference should be prepared by the Secretariat, which has the experience and resources and which can also be held accountable to the Members. Since it has already been agreed twice, in the Doha declaration of 2 December 2008 and GA resolution 63/239, that the conference shall be organized by the President of the General Assembly, it is only natural and highly desirable that the conference should be organized by the secretariat albeit in close collaboration with the President of the General Assembly.

(4) Economic and Social Council inputs: It is broadly agreed that the High-level Meeting of the ECOSOC with the Bretton Woods institutions, the WTO and UNCTAD is a vital opportunity for Members to interact directly with leaders of those institutions, and that the ECOSOC President's report of that meeting would be a valuable input to the conference preparation. Here I find the proposal of the European Union to be a solicitous expression of that shared view.

(5) Preparation of the first draft outcome text: The language of operative paragraph 7 (OP7) has attracted considerable attention in the consultation process. It is evident that at least two major points are held in common. First, all parties have agreed

that the process of preparing the draft should be open, transparent, and inclusive. And second, all parties have agreed that Member states should take the lead in developing the draft. Not stated in the text, but a clear expectation of all parties, is the view that facilitators should be named to lead the negotiating process. On all of these points, I want to clarify, I am in complete agreement. The outstanding issue seems to revolve around who should prepare the first draft. My view is that the manner of the preparation of the first draft of an outcome text is a matter that is normally left to the discretion of the President of the General Assembly. In the present case, it is evident that this process of drafting should be done in close collaboration with the facilitators, and that the initial draft should be jointly agreed between the President of the General Assembly and the facilitators, as has been the process in other sensitive areas, such as Security Council reform.

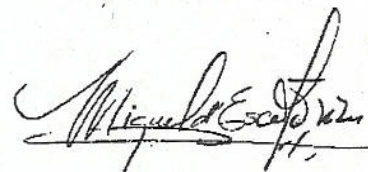
In order to accelerate the negotiating process, and to enable Members to begin the vital work of preparing for the June conference at the highest level, now scarcely more than two months away, I am convening an informal plenary meeting of the General Assembly at the Ambassadorial level tomorrow, Tuesday, 24 March, at 4:00 pm.

It is vitally important now that we finalize our plans to complete the work on the modalities resolution by March 31. In order to accomplish this, I wish to take the views of the Members on the remaining issues.

If we are in substantial agreement with the views I have expressed here, then it should be possible to allow the informal consultation process to continue for one or two more days, with the process completing no later than Thursday night. In the event that it appears we are not in substantial agreement, then it may be necessary to produce a Rev 2 and present that document in an informal consultation on Thursday. In either case, I intend to table a modalities resolution no later than Friday morning March 27, and to convene the General Assembly for its formal consideration on Tuesday afternoon, March 31.

I look forward to meeting with you tomorrow.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann', written over a horizontal line.

Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann