



**COMMENTS BY THE
REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF GUYANA
ON BEHALF OF THE RIO GROUP
AT THE INFORMAL CONSULTATION ON THE
REVIEW OF MANDATES: DEVELOPMENT ISSUES**

MAY 8, 2006

Mr. Co-Chair

The Rio Group wishes to thank you for convening this informal consultation on the review of mandates pertaining to development issues. Our Group attaches great importance to issues related to development. We are therefore pleased to share some perspective on the process on which we are embarked.

We take this opportunity to assure that the Rio Group is seized of the importance of the need to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the UN and UN system in the discharge of mandates in the area of development and accordingly is committed to participation in this exercise in a constructive and pragmatic manner. We believe that the analysis being undertaken offers great potential in this regard and we will play an active role in conjunction with colleagues in ensuring that the basic objective of securing the benefits afforded by concentrated focus on sustainable development make possible.

Mr. Co-Chair, permit me some preliminary comments on the review of mandates on the whole as it relates to and impacts on those related to development:

First, we have taken into account the Opening Statement of the Co-Chairs on April 25 and in particular the guidelines outlined therein. We take the guidelines you provided in your initial statements as a contribution to the debate. We think that, in any case, the overall approach to the process should be inter-governmentally agreed before we engage further on the concrete steps to be taken. In this regard, we wish to observe, especially:

- mandate review should not be a cost-cutting exercise
- politically sensitive mandates should be addressed carefully
- our continued interest in cross-linkages in the review of mandates relating to development in the various organs

Second, the Rio Group welcomes the exercise of reviewing mandates related to development and thinks it extremely beneficial. We believe there is need for the registry of mandates to be simplified to assist in the analysis. In this regard, the Group suggests for consideration the clustering of mandates on the basis of appropriate themes / organs / subjects etc. and the provision by the Secretariat of additional information basic information / details to allow for a better sense to be had of what prevented / obstructed / constrained the implementation of the mandate. The request for the provision of further basic details by the Secretariat is to be distinguished from an invitation for further analysis of the mandates by the Secretariat which we believe is correctly in the purview of member states.

Third, account must be taken of the distinction with respect to the Organs. It is important to consider in a comparative sense the authority /deference accorded to the work of each.

Mr. Co-Chair, I now wish to make some more specific comments related to the analysis of the development mandates:

- Fragmentation of discussions of reform relating to development. There are a number of concurrent processes with inter-linkages and implications. In addition to a number of processes, there is also reform occurring at different levels. It is critical to avoid the situation of mopping the floor while wearing muddy shoes. For this reason, there is need to determine how best to sort / work through the processes to allow for a comprehensive reform of the development architecture to take place and for the primary objectives to be achieved
- Duplication / Overlapping Question. With respect to development, overlapping is not necessarily always duplication.
- Resources for development. Preliminary consideration suggests that the gap between mandates and resources to execute the mandate is of significance in the area of development. We wish to underscore that the possibility of savings from development mandates seems remote and that should any such savings materialize, such savings should be reinvested / redirected in other mandates pertaining to development.
- It is critical to improve development mandates and the processes that produce them.
- The Rio Group believes that the General Assembly has a pivotal role in considering the follow-up / implementation of global development initiatives etc.
- We are convinced that a strengthened ECOSOC should have a central and leading place in the implementation of development mandates.
- On the development of Africa, the Rio Group wishes to reiterate its support for all development initiatives targeted at Africa in the context of continued efforts and the overall strategy to promote global development and building on the successes of NEPAD.
- With respect to the issue of timeframes, having regard to the different kinds of development mandates [some recurrent / some time-bound] and the necessity of treating with them in a differentiated manner, we need to consider what is achievable in the short versus long-term.

- Rationalization of reporting. We see the merit in addressing the issue. Nevertheless decisions should be made by member states on a case by case basis considering the substantive merits and circumstances in each situation.

Mr. Co-Chair, in concluding, we would simply request that the treatment of issues related to development should enjoy no less prominence or significance than any other in the reform process.

I thank you.