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**Executive Committee on Economic and Social Affairs  
5 July 2006 (3p.m. - 5p.m.)  
Geneva  
Chaired by Mr. José Antonio Ocampo**

**Conclusions and next steps**

**UN reform:**

**1. DESA will circulate to ECESA Members notes on the outcomes of the ECOSOC Round Tables on the Annual Ministerial Reviews and the Development Cooperation Forum.**

**General Assembly High-level Dialogue on Migration and Development:**

**2. DESA will revert on (i) modalities, through a conference room paper or other means, to inform more fully the GA High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development of on-going regional work on migration; and (ii) whether an event focusing on the regional dimensions of migration could be incorporated into the programme of the Dialogue.**

**Summary of discussions**

**1. United Nations reform**

**High-level Panel on System-Wide Coherence**

The Convenor invited Mr. Kemal Dervis to update the meeting on the work of the High-level Panel on System-wide coherence.

Mr. Dervis said that the Panel expected to finalize its recommendations at its fourth meeting in mid August. Panel Members share a common desire to strengthen the UN and their vision should carry political weight, as the Panel has the Secretary-General's backing and its Members are high-level political figures.

The panel has given much attention to country-level work. Two options were on the table on the management of the Resident Coordinator System. The first was to shift its management to the UN Secretariat. The second – which is likely to be adopted- is that UNDP would be asked to continue to manage the Resident Coordinator system on behalf the UN system. To avoid the impression of competition with the specialized agencies, UNDP would give up the management of individual projects within the mandate of different agencies in broad inter-sectoral areas such as governance and capacity-building, and would concentrate its operational role.

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On the whole, Mr. Dervis expected the panel to strongly reaffirm the role of the UN in development. Beyond constructing a more cohesive Resident Coordinator system, Mr. Dervis noted building coherence of action at the country level will require a major, parallel effort to improve policy coherence at the global and regional levels. It is also essential that ECESA contribute to supporting countries' development efforts. Ways in particular have to be found to enable UN country teams to tap the expertise of UN analytical entities and build on it in providing policy advice to countries.

Building a more coherent United Nations will also require changes in its fragmented governance structures. It is unlikely however that the panel will propose to merge Boards of Funds and Programmes. One possible option would be that Chairs of Agencies' Governing Boards and Heads of UN system agencies participate in Executive Boards' meetings. ECOSOC has an obvious role in the governance of the UN system. But Panel Members have different views on possible recommendations in this regard.

It is unlikely that the panel will go along with the proposal to merge funding sources. Instead, some limited supplementary "central" funding might be provided to support efforts to enhance coherence at country level.

Mr. Ocampo said that there are two options for building coherence at intergovernmental level. One is to create an intergovernmental structure similar to the CEB bringing together the Chairs of the agencies' governing bodies. The other is to ensure that ECOSOC really exercises its Charter role to coordinate the work of Funds, Programmes and specialized agencies. The Council could create for this purpose a Coordination Board at the highest level. The relationship between the UN and the Bretton Woods Institutions is a major component of the effort to enhance system-wide coherence. Although that relationship had improved significantly since Monterrey, there remains considerable scope for improving further improvements. This includes notably achieving greater reciprocity by giving UN representatives in BWIs meetings the same possibilities of participation and intervention as the BWIs enjoy in the UN.

Mr. Kim, speaking as Coordinator of the Regional Commissions, said that Regional Commissions had a fruitful meeting with Members of the Panel. He noted that the strengthening of ECOSOC should encompass strengthening the Regional Commissions, ECESA and secretariat support for ECOSOC. But this is not the view of all. On governance, he noted that the procedures for formulating and approving the budget are much stricter for the Secretariat than for Funds and Programmes.

In the ensuing discussions, the need to build greater coherence in the work of the various Boards was generally emphasized. The view was expressed that it would make sense to have a single Board of Funds and Programmes mirroring the single Resident Coordinator System. It was also noted that it is important that Funds and Programmes retain flexibility in managing resources.

Principals concurred that strengthening ECOSOC's coordination role was a mainstay of a more coherent UN system. Revitalizing ECESA was also an important means for

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improving coordination among UN economic and social bodies. ECESA could help strengthen support to ECOSOC and, for instance, propose solutions for ECOSOC in cases where intergovernmental bodies take diverging positions.

Principals underscored that it would be important that the panel looks at ways to improve coordination at regional level. They felt that the Regional Commissions should be key players in coordinating the work of the UN system in their region and that the regional coordination meetings created by ECOSOC in 1998 should be revived. But each region needs to find the type of coordination mechanism most attuned to its situation. It was noted that a very productive regional coordination meeting had been held in the ESCWA region. In all regions, a clear division of labour between UNDP Regional Centres and the Regional Commissions should be sought. In the same context, the importance of strengthening coordination between Regional Commissions and Resident Coordinators was stressed.

The view was expressed that it was important to assure not only coordination but also a sound division of labour among ECESA entities, for instance on trade capacity building.

The need to institutionalize cooperation with the Bretton Woods institutions, particularly in Africa in order to achieve meaningful coordination at the country level was generally emphasized.

Mr. Dervis said that UNDP was committed to ensuring that the partnership between ECESA and UNDG works well. Lack of adequate coordination impacts negatively on Member Countries and on the UN. Conversely, working better together would help maximize the impact of the combined resources and staff of the UN. UNDP could not fulfill its renewed mandate, and provide the needed support to the Resident Coordinator System, without the support of ECESA entities, individually and collectively. For ECOSOC to regain a real coordination role and for its decisions to have the necessary political weight, it could be envisaged that a group of Heads of States from ECOSOC Member Countries be established within the Council.

Mr. Ocampo saw the strengthening of cooperation between UNDP and other ECESA entities being pursued along two lines. The first has to do with the coordination of analytical work. The work of ECESA's thematic clusters, which is currently being reviewed, is key in this regard, and UNDP's systematic participation in their work will be very valuable. ECESA should work towards a truly concerted, UN whole programme on analytical work including a common publication programme. Research Centres – including UNDP research centres – should also be better used by the UN. Secondly, the link between ECESA entities and operational activities should be reinforced. This should include the collaborative development of toolkits to support policy development in countries towards the achievement of the MDGs and other IADGs. DESA is also looking with UNDP at how UNDP knowledge networks could be used to better inform UN Country Teams of expertise and capacities available in ECESA entities.

## **Mandate review**

Mr. Ocampo updated Principals on the status of the mandate review. He noted that discussions showed that there is generally strong support for UN work for development. Some industrial countries, are however questioning whether Regional Commissions and DESA should engage in operational work. Japan, for its part, proposed to add the regular budget's funds for technical cooperation to the Development Account. Given their mandate to support the implementation of the UN Development Agenda, ECESA entities need to be involved in providing advisory services and related technical cooperation work. At the same time, it would be important that each entity links closely its technical cooperation to its normative responsibilities, on the one hand, and to the work of the Resident Coordinator System, on the other.

Principals stressed that the regular programme of technical cooperation and its funding from the regular budget is an important instrument to enable Regional Commissions as well as global entities to respond quickly and flexibly to countries' request for policy advice, and, in turn, makes it possible for countries to tap directly the substantial technical expertise available in these entities. They concurred that ECESA entities should keep Resident Coordinators fully advised of their technical cooperation work. Resident Coordinators should become more familiar with the work of ECESA entities and other non resident agencies and should utilize their expertise much more systematically than is the case at present. At the same time, Regional Commissions should participate in Resident Coordinators meetings, so as to understand better and be more responsive to the needs of UN Country Teams.

### **Other developments**

Mr. Ocampo informed the meeting that the General Assembly had recently adopted the resolution on the follow-up to the World Summit's decisions on development. The resolution places emphasis on the need for stronger processes to follow-up and monitor progress in implementing the UN Development Agenda.

The resolution on ECOSOC will probably be discussed after the summer. While the format and outcomes of the Council's new Development Cooperation Forum and Annual Ministerial Reviews still need to be finalized, concerted support from ECESA entities, individually and collectively, will be essential to the effective performance of these two new Council functions.

UNEP said that the Co-Chairs of the General Assembly's informal consultations on environmental governance had submitted their report to the President of the General Assembly. The in-coming GA President would decide how to best pursue the consultations.

## **2. General Assembly High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development**

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Mr. Ocampo said that the 12 July Civil Society Hearings will be the last major preparatory event to be held before the High-level Dialogue. Preparations have included two General Assembly panels; a Forum with Governments and technical experts in Turin; and many regional, subregional and interregional processes. The main messages in the report of the Secretary-General are: (i) Migration is a central feature of globalization; (ii) Migration can bring benefits to both countries of origin and countries of destination; and (iii) International cooperation in this area needs to increase. The report proposes to create a global forum to share ideas and discuss best practices and policies. This would be a loose structure replicating the consultative fora that exist at regional level. Mr. Ocampo asked that ECESA entities rally around this proposal.

Mr. Kim said that the Regional Commissions feel that the SG report for the Dialogue does not present an adequate regional perspective. To draw attention to regional dimensions of migration, they are considering organizing a side event, possibly with the International Organization for Migration. They are also asking whether an addendum to the report or conference room paper could be produced on this issue. Mr. Machinea will consult with DESA on how to move forward.

Mr. Machinea, referring in particular to the proposed side event, suggested to select three or four aspects of migration for which the regional dimension was important, such as remittances or the braindrain, and point out the specificities of each region. This analysis could be entrusted to ECESA's thematic cluster on population.

Mr. Ocampo noted that the Secretary-General's report provided examples specific to each region. At the same time, it tried to convey the message that regional consultative processes are no substitute for a global forum on international migration.

In the discussions, it was noted that a deeper analysis of regional situations and of migration across regions, rather than detracting from the need for a world forum could in fact help strengthen the rationale for it. Principals also stressed that the importance of ensuring that the outcomes of preparatory events are drawn from in the discussions at the High-Level Dialogue. Issues suggested for further work and research included environmental triggers of international migration; and intraregional dimensions of migration.

Mr. Ocampo concluded that DESA would look into whether a conference room paper could be circulated on regional dimensions of migration, and whether an event on that topic could be incorporated into the programme of the High-level Dialogue. DESA would wish to co-sponsor such an event together with Regional Commissions.