



# Chief Executives Board for Coordination

2 December 2003

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## Report of the High-Level Committee on Programmes at its intersessional meeting

(New York, 3 November 2003)

### I. Introduction

1. The High-Level Committee on Programmes (HLCP) held an intersessional meeting at United Nations Headquarters on 3 November 2003. The agenda of the meeting and the list of participants are attached, respectively, in annexes I and II to the present report.

2. The Chairman noted that the Chief Executives Board had just concluded a successful and productive session and that Executive Heads had expressed their appreciation for the preparatory work for CEB done by the Committee. He thanked and commended HLCP members for their hard work, team spirit, and for ensuring that the views of their Executive Heads were properly reflected in the work of the Committee. He stressed the importance of an effective follow up to CEB conclusions and achieving results on the ground.

### II. Chief Executives Board Guidance to the High-Level Committee on Programmes

3. The Committee reviewed the outcome of CEB discussions on programme matters and considered the follow-up actions required.

4. On **financing for development**, the Committee considered how it could best support CEB in the light of its decision to pursue actively consideration of the implementation of the Monterrey Consensus in the overall context of the integrated follow-up to conferences, particularly the United Nations Millennium Declaration. In this regard, the Committee noted the emphasis placed by CEB on the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development as a “call to action” for both developed and developing countries, and its assessment that developed countries needed to do much more to deliver on the commitments they had entered into in Monterrey, while developing countries should continue to make progress in creating an enabling environment for their own development. It also noted CEB’s conclusion that the United Nations system contribution to the effective follow-up to the Conference should continue to focus on enhancing advocacy and

advancing system-wide coherence, particularly by strengthening collective approaches to policy advice and programme delivery at all levels, especially the country level.

5. HLCP considered that one of the ways it should assist CEB in this regard was by ensuring that Executive Heads collectively maintained an overview of trends and developments in the implementation of the Monterrey Consensus, based on reliable data on official development assistance, trade and capital flows, as well as debt relief. CEB capacity to rely on common data was seen as an important precondition for the system as a whole to exercise an effective advocacy role and be able to speak authoritatively on what is being delivered compared to commitments made at Monterrey. **The Committee requested the Financing for Development Office of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs to prepare, in this light, a concise data-based state-of-play analysis, focusing on developments concerning resource flows, for presentation at the next meeting of HLCP. The United Nations Development Group was invited to supplement this note with an analysis of relevant developments concerning country-level coherence.**

6. HLCP expressed concern over the proliferation of special funds being established both within and outside the United Nations system. **The Committee requested that the Financing for Development Office prepare, in cooperation with interested agencies, a scoping note on such funds, so that the Committee may initiate an analysis of the issues involved for coherence in this area and on resource flows for development.** The Committee was also informed that, during the retreat, there had been a discussion among Executive Heads on the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, and understood that CEB may revert to the matter at its next session. The Committee requested that it be informed of the outcome of ongoing consultations on the matter, so that it could consider what contribution it could make to the CEB discussion.

7. On the issue of HIV/AIDS and its linkages with food security and governance, the Committee emphasized the key role that the engagement of, and close and active collaboration between, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and the whole range of agencies and organizations working in sectors impinging on the “triple crisis” would play in ensuring that the policy directions and actions in the Note endorsed by CEB would be effectively implemented and have the desired impact. **Noting that the actions endorsed by CEB included a request to the United Nations Development Group in coordination with the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, and in consultation with the Regional Inter-Agency Coordination and Support Office as appropriate, to take the lead on follow-up and to inform the CEB periodically on progress in implementing the 22 actions contained in the paper”, HLCP invited the United Nations Development Group to do so through the Committee, beginning with a progress report to the Committee’s session in February 2004.**

### **III. Review of the status of HLCP decisions and conclusions**

8. On the Follow-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the Director of the CEB secretariat briefed the Committee on the next steps for the implementation of decisions on inter-agency collaborative mechanisms in areas related to the Summit. He reported that actions had been initiated to implement the

decisions of HLCP in regard to freshwater and water and sanitation, oceans and coastal areas, as well as changing unsustainable consumption and production patterns. On energy, the Vice-Chairman of HLCP was continuing his consultations with HLCP members on an appropriate inter-agency collaborative arrangement for the follow-up to energy-related decisions at the Summit.

9. In the ensuing discussion, the hope was expressed that the secretariat would play an active role in the inter-agency consultations being initiated on the terms of reference and work programme of the Oceans and Coastal Areas Network, so as to ensure that the collaborative mechanism to be established reflects both the substantive requirements for coordination in this field, as well as the new dynamic, results-oriented approach to coordination called for by CEB. Emphasis was also placed on the importance of adhering to the deadline of the end of the current year for reaching conclusions on different aspects of the arrangements for inter-agency follow-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development, so as to ensure that the outcome was reported to the Commission on Sustainable Development at its April 2004 session. The Committee further underscored the importance of inclusiveness and transparency in moving forward in relation to these arrangements.

10. As part of its continuing role in overseeing coordination and coherence within the United Nations system, as requested by CEB, the Committee stressed the need for it to maintain an overview of progress in the work of the inter-agency arrangements on different aspects of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, so as to assist CEB in monitoring the coherence and effectiveness of the overall contribution of the system to the implementation of the outcomes of the Summit.

11. In relation to progress in preparations for the 2005 comprehensive review of the implementation of the Millennium Declaration, the convener of the HLCP task group reported that the International Labour Organization had agreed to take the lead on the subgroup on human rights, democracy and governance. Subsequently, the World Bank and UNDP had agreed to co-chair the subgroup on development and protection of the environment. On peace and security, the Committee noted that this would be taken forward by the Department of Political Affairs and that the CEB secretariat would consult the Department on the matter.

12. On the related issue of conflict prevention, the Committee **decided to invite the Assistant Secretary-General responsible for conflict prevention at the Department of Political Affairs to its next session** to exchange views on how best the Committee might advance its work on the issue of conflict prevention in the context of ongoing work in the system, in particular at the United Nations Executive Committees, the Transition Group and the United Nations Development Group-Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs Task Force.

13. The Committee agreed to actively pursue the subject of CEB communication strategy in the light of discussions at the CEB retreat on the future of multilateralism and the Board's conclusions on the follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development,

14. With regard to the United Nations system's interactions with civil society organizations, it was suggested that the Committee schedule a substantive discussion on the subject either at its seventh or eighth session, taking into account the report of the Secretary-General's Panel of Eminent Persons on Civil Society and United Nations Relationships. The Committee also agreed that it would be useful to receive

a briefing on the work of the Zedillo Panel, as well as the United Nations Development Programme Private Sector Commission.

#### **IV. Preparations for the spring 2004 session of the Chief Executives Board for Coordination**

15. The Committee had a first round of discussion on items to be taken up at the CEB spring session, held in Vienna, including the issues of curbing transnational crime and bridging the digital divide — the two main themes identified in the Road Map report for in-depth treatment in the 2004 report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration. The Secretary of CEB informed the Committee that consultations were ongoing with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime on the process and objectives of CEB deliberations on transnational organized crime. He expected that the Office would lead an inter-agency task group and that a note on the subject would be submitted to HLCP at its February 2004 session. With respect to the second theme — bridging the digital divide — it was suggested that the next HLCP meeting be devoted to preparing a first assessment by CEB of the outcome of the World Summit on the Information Society and related developments. A full report on the overall theme of the digital divide and the challenges it poses for the system could then be provided to CEB, through HLCP, at its autumn 2004 session.

16. On a related subject, the Director of the CEB secretariat informed the Committee of ongoing work to prepare the progress report on an information technology strategy for the United Nations system requested by the General Assembly. The Committee agreed that it would be important for HLCP to take up the issue from a programmatic perspective, supplementing the work of HLCM with respect to the managerial dimension of it.

#### **V. HLCP work programme, 2004**

17. The Committee reviewed its programme of work for 2004 in the light of the conclusions of the CEB autumn 2003 session and decided to include the following issues:

- HLCP work programme;
- 2005 review of the implementation of the Millennium Declaration;
- Curbing transnational crime;
- Bridging the digital divide;
- Multilateralism (the Committee was informed that CEB would revert to the subject at the next retreat in conjunction with its April 2004 session, in the light of an analytical summary of the Board's consideration of the issue at its last retreat);
- Follow-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development, including energy;
- Conflict prevention;

- CEB communication strategy;
- Follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development;
- Other issues: UNDP-United Nations Development Group; Africa-NEPAD; civil society organizations-Dialogue with the Secretary-General's Panel of Eminent Persons.

18. The Chairman indicated that he would give thought to ways of further streamlining the agendas of the Committee by clustering some of the above-mentioned items, and distinguishing more sharply between action and information items.

## **VI. Other matters**

19. The Committee decided to hold its seventh session on 26 and 27 February 2004 in Beirut, at the invitation of the Executive Secretary of ESCWA. It requested the CEB secretariat to initiate consultations with the Regional Commissions Office in New York on logistical arrangements for the meeting. The Chairman stressed the importance of maintaining in Beirut the retreat format of HLCP meetings, beginning with a dinner on the evening of 25 February, followed by two-day discussions in an informal setting.

20. At the request of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the Director of the CEB secretariat briefed the Committee on the budget of the CEB secretariat. He recalled the decision of CEB to consolidate the various secretariats of the former Administrative Committee on Coordination standing bodies into a single, unified secretariat with offices in New York and Geneva, to be financed entirely on the basis of assessed inter-agency contributions. The Executive Heads had also asked that the total budget for the new consolidated secretariat be kept within the level of resources that member organizations were contributing to the four separate secretariats (Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions/Personnel and General Administrative Questions and Finance and Budget, Consultative Committee for Programmes and Operational Questions and Information Systems Coordination Committee) and that the number of high-level posts be reduced. In the light of those directives, a budget, with a revised organizational structure had been prepared and shared with CEB members, through HLCM, at the end of 2002. This had been reviewed again at the HLCM meeting held in June 2003 before being presented to the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions. He noted that the review process for the consolidated secretariat's budget had drawn on previous practice, whereby the Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions/Finance and Budget vetted the budget proposal for all jointly financed entities, including the Joint Inspection Unit and the International Civil Service Commission; as HLCM had taken over the functions of the Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions/Finance and Budget, the CEB secretariat's budget proposal had been reviewed by that Committee. He added that HLCM had now activated a Finance and Budget Network which, in the future, would review all budgetary issues.

21. He noted that consultations were ongoing with the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization on sharing the cost of the CEB secretariat's

budget. At an appropriate time, a new cost-sharing formula would be developed through the Finance and Budget Network.

22. On the issue of secretariat support for HLCP, the Director noted that, in consultation with the Chairman, it had been agreed to fill the post of Secretary of the Committee in the New York office of the CEB secretariat to enhance synergies between secretariat support for CEB and substantive support for the work of the Committee. As part of that decision, the level of the HLCP Secretary's post had been set at P-5, as the incumbent would be working under the direct guidance of the Director of the CEB secretariat in New York, in consultation with the Secretary of CEB. All of the staff of the New York Office would be engaged in substantive support of HLCP, as well as CEB.

23. The Director of the CEB secretariat also informed the Committee that, upon completion of seven years of distinguished service in the inter-agency secretariat, the Secretary of HLCP, Mr. Eckhard Hein, would be returning to his parent organization, FAO, with effect from 1 January 2004. A job description for the post of Secretary of HLCP had been prepared and a vacancy announcement would be circulated shortly. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman would be consulted on the most appropriate and transparent modalities for the selection of the next Secretary of the Committee.

24. Members of HLCP took note of the briefing provided by the Director of the CEB secretariat.

25. Members of HLCP expressed their appreciation to Mr. Hein for his dedicated service to the work of the Committee and his important contributions to cooperation and coordination within the United Nations system, both as former Secretary of the Consultative Committee for Programmes and Operational Questions and as Secretary of HLCP.

## **Annex I**

### **Agenda**

1. CEB guidance to HLCP
2. Review of the status of HLCP decisions and conclusions
3. Preparations for the spring 2004 session of the Chief Executives Board for Coordination
4. HLCP work programme, 2004
5. Other matters

## Annex II

### List of participants

Chairman: Lennart Båge (IFAD)

United Nations	Patrizio Civili Marta Mauras
Regional commissions	Sulafa Al-Bassan
United Nations International Drug Control Programme	Nasra Hassaan
United Nations Environment Programme	Adnan Amin Maaike Jansen
United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (UN-Habitat)	Aximite Genre-Egziabher
United Nations Development Programme	Mourad Wahba
United Nations Population Fund	Mari Simonen
United Nations Children's Fund	Ado Vaher Anamaria Laurini
World Food Programme	Peggy Nelson
Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS	Renu Chahif-Graf
International Labour Organization	John Langmore Christophe Perrin
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	Florence Chenoweth Wendy Mann
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization	Omar Massalha
World Health Organization	Leslie Wade
World Bank	Clare Fleming
International Monetary Fund	Reinhard Munzberg Axel Palmason
International Civil Aviation Organization	Lise Boisvert
World Meteorological Organization	D. D. C. Don Nanjira
World Intellectual Property Organization	Orobola Fasehun
International Fund for Agricultural Development	Uday Abhyankar Vera Weill-Hallé
United Nations Industrial Development Organization	Irene Freudenschuss-Reichl
Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty Organization	Bernard Wrabetz



United Nations Framework Convention on Climate  
Change

Mukul Sanwal

United Nations System Chief Executives Board for  
Coordination secretariat

Shaukat Fareed  
Agerico Lacanlale

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