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Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

Letter dated 3 January 2007 from the Permanent Representatives of Cuba and South Africa to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

We have the honour to address the present letter to you on behalf of the Joint Coordinating Committee of the Group of 77 and China and the Non-Aligned Movement.

Let us at the outset express the gratitude of the members of the Joint Coordinating Committee for your tireless and successful efforts to facilitate the work of the General Assembly during its sixty-first session.

The Joint Coordinating Committee would like, in the context of its decision related to extending the process of mandate review until the end of the sixty-first session, to reiterate its firm position, which has been stated since the beginning of the process. We believe that mandate review is a unique opportunity to strengthen the United Nations and increase its effectiveness. In this context, the members of the Committee expressed their willingness to become engaged in the process of reviewing mandates older than five years and not renewed to address some of the waste and redundancy that permeates the United Nations system.

After concluding that phase, during which the Joint Coordinating Committee played a leading and constructive role, our group agreed on becoming engaged in a second phase of the process, reviewing mandates older than five years but renewed, in a spirit of flexibility and responsibility towards realizing the aims and objectives of the Organization. However, the members of the Committee affirmed, in the context of the informal plenary meeting held on 24 November 2006, that their engagement in this phase of the process will be governed by certain guidelines, which were not contested or challenged in any way by any of the other groups or Member States. Those guidelines, which will still govern the engagement of the Committee in the process up until the end of the sixty-first session, are as follows:



1. The exercise shall be undertaken in a transparent, open and all-inclusive manner that would respect the equality of Member States, as enshrined in the Charter.

2. The objective of the exercise is to strengthen the programme of work of the Organization, including by providing for additional financial and human resources, if required.

3. The mandate review is not a cost-cutting exercise and is not aimed at reducing the budget levels of the Organization.

4. All decisions pertaining to this exercise shall be based primarily on the principle of consensus, without prejudice to the rules of procedure of the General Assembly concerning decision-making.

5. Politically sensitive mandates, which include mandates in the areas of maintenance of international peace and security, development and others, fall outside the scope of this exercise. No mandate shall be discontinued except with the consent of the parties concerned.

6. The scope of the exercise is limited to mandates older than five years at the date of the adoption of the World Summit Outcome, 16 September 2005.

7. Any resources that might be freed up from the review of mandates shall be redirected to the same issue area, unless otherwise agreed by Member States.

8. The informal working group at the expert level shall be the appropriate mechanism to undertake the substantive review of mandates and submit a report to the informal working group of the plenary. In undertaking this task, the expert-level working group shall entrust the Main Committees of the Assembly with the substantive review of mandates that fall within their respective purviews.

9. The Security Council and the Economic and Social Council are invited to follow the same principles referred to above in their respective reviews of mandates.

The Joint Coordinating Committee is willing to continue working actively and constructively in the context of the process of mandate review, as long as there is a common understating that it will take into consideration the interests and concerns of all Member States and as long as the final aim is to strengthen the effectiveness of the Organization and increase its ability to address the challenges it faces, rather than trying to cut down its expenditures and reduce the level of its budget.

The Committee reiterates its support to you in this and the other processes the General Assembly, under your able leadership, is carrying forward. Likewise, we renew our commitment to multilateralism and the values and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

Finally, we kindly request that the present letter be circulated to all Member States as a document of the General Assembly.

(Signed) H.E. Mr. Dumisani Shadrack **Kumalo**
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative of the Republic
of South Africa to the United Nations

(Signed) H.E. Mr. Rodrigo **Malmierca Díaz**
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
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