



# Chief Executives Board for Coordination

10 September 2007

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

(Geneva, 4 July 2007)

### I. Introduction

1. The High-Level Committee on Programmes of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) held an intersessional meeting on 4 July 2007 at the Headquarters of the International Labour Organization in Geneva. The agenda of the meeting is annexed to the present report.

### II. Chief Executives Board review

2. The Chairman briefed the High-Level Committee on Programmes on current developments and next steps in the review process. The Director of the CEB secretariat also considered the outcomes of the CEB spring retreat in terms of further steps in the review process.

3. The Chairman outlined various aspects of the ongoing review and emphasized that participation in CEB high-level committees needed to be undertaken by senior officials who had been mandated by their executive heads in order to further empower subsidiary bodies. The integration of the United Nations Development Group into CEB had also been further discussed and progress was being made in finalizing the modalities and framework for integration. Further attention was also being given to the functioning of clusters within the CEB framework. Messrs. Lamy and Somavia continued to be engaged in the review exercise and would be giving specific attention to the organization and functioning of CEB itself.

4. The need for a methodology for CEB to examine the issues of fragmentation, duplication, overlap and streamlining was raised. The High-level Panel on United Nations System-wide Coherence had indicated that further work was required in that regard; it was seen as providing an opportunity for the system itself to develop an approach to further coherence. In that regard, CEB had requested the High-Level Committee on Programmes to develop a methodology. Members were invited to share their ideas on the question of methodology with the CEB secretariat. The High-Level Committee on Programmes, at its next session, would consider the matter on the basis of proposals compiled by the secretariat as part of the



preparation of a full-fledged proposal for CEB in the fall. In addition, the CEB secretariat was preparing an inventory of inter-agency mechanisms and members of the High-Level Committee on Programmes were invited to provide relevant information in that regard.

### **III. Preparations for the fall 2007 session of the Chief Executives Board**

#### **A. Climate change**

5. As part of the preparation for the consideration by CEB of climate change at its fall session, the High-Level Committee on Programmes was briefed on the outcome of the informal meeting held in Rome at the invitation of the Chair of the Committee on 29 June, as well as on preparations for the High-Level Event on Climate Change that would be held on 24 September. The Committee agreed that an overview of what the organizations of the system were doing in the four thematic areas (mitigation, adaptation, technology and finance) was an essential contribution to the process. There was a need to provide a significant input into upcoming events with respect to climate change and, in particular, to provide a strong message to the United Nations Climate Change Conference being organized in Bali, Indonesia in December 2007 on the United Nations system's contribution on climate change. Political momentum was gathering around the issue and there was a recognition that the United Nations system had a central role to play, including in helping to define and support the implementation of the post-Kyoto agenda.

6. There was a general consensus that, owing to the multidisciplinary nature of the issue, the compendium document being prepared following the Rome meeting would need to provide an analytical perspective of the work of the organizations of the system, including with regard to the scientific assessment and monitoring aspects of climate change and policy implications. Members were invited to provide the Secretariat with further relevant inputs on the work of their organizations.

7. It was agreed that a policy-oriented strategic product would also be required in order to draw up a well-targeted initiative for CEB. In that connection, it would be important to start identifying key issues that should be included in the strategy through which CEB could project an action oriented approach.

#### **B. Energy**

8. The Vice-Chairman and Chair of UN-Energy briefed the meeting on the UN-Energy group meeting in Rome. While it was clear that progress had been made in following up on the Johannesburg agenda in the first two years after the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development, the next level of ambition in developing a collaborative mechanism had not been achieved. There were nevertheless indications that, working together, the system could produce relevant products of good quality that were in high demand. The Rome meeting had agreed that work would concentrate on the following areas: access; renewables; efficiency; energy security; and impact on Africa. Issues of working methods, governance and capacity were discussed. Those discussions needed to be taken further at a retreat scheduled for 27 and 28 August hosted by the United Nations Industrial

Development Organization and the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna. A note would be circulated in advance of the meeting which would form the basis of a report to the High-Level Committee on Programmes/CEB fall meetings for discussion and endorsement. Future leadership, secretariat and any other governance/capacity issues would also be addressed. The Committee welcomed the approach outlined by the Vice-Chairman.

9. In response to a question raised with respect to water and oceans groups, it was agreed that the Chairman would ascertain progress in these groups in respect of their issues and report back to the Committee.

## **C. Africa**

10. The Senior Adviser at the CEB secretariat provided a briefing on preparations for CEB, including information concerning where Africa stood in terms of achieving the Millennium Development Goals. He indicated that the recent discussions of the Committee on Programme Coordination in New York system-wide support to Africa, while striking a positive note, had underlined the need for moving from study and deliberations to action in support of New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) objectives. A series of consultations had been initiated on the manner in which CEB could best respond to the challenge of providing further impetus to system-wide support for Africa. In that connection, consultations had been undertaken with the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa and the Head of the Africa Bureau of the United Nations Development Programme. Similar consultations would be conducted with the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa, in his capacity as Chairman of the annual Regional Consultation Meeting of United Nations Agencies and Organizations working in Africa in Support of the African Union and NEPAD, on the basis of which a paper would be produced for consideration by the High-Level Committee on Programmes. The purpose of the exercise was threefold: (a) undertaking an assessment, based on available data, of the current situation of African countries with regard to achieving the Millennium Development Goals and their requirements on the basis of needs assessments; (b) defining a strategy for CEB on working better together to provide support to African countries, within existing resources, on the basis of the priorities of African countries, as defined by them; and (c) demonstrating greater coherence and effectiveness, including towards the donor community, in order to channel a greater share of aid flows through multilateral channels. The need for the greater involvement of African institutions such as the African Union/NEPAD and senior United Nations officials responsible for African development issues in CEB/High-Level Committee on Programmes deliberations was underlined, as was the need to develop a practical and realistic agenda for action.

## **D. Follow-up to Chief Executive Board/High-Level Committee on Programmes decisions**

### **Capacity development**

11. Following a briefing by the representative of Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the High-Level Committee on Programmes briefly discussed the request contained in General Assembly resolution 59/250 (para. 29) that CEB should

analyse the capacity development efforts of the United Nations system and make recommendations on measures necessary to enhance their effectiveness, including through the improvement of the assessment and measurement of results. That request had so far not been acted upon, but the 2007 analytical report of the Secretary-General on the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities of the United Nations (A/62/73-E/2007/52) informed the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council that reflection was currently under way within the High-Level Committee on Programmes concerning the request and that both bodies would be kept apprised of progress as that work proceeded. It was decided that the issue would be discussed during the 2007 fall meeting of the High-Level Committee on Programmes, but that further work on capacity development — to be implemented in close coordination with the United Nations Development Group — should await new guidance from Member States through the 2007 triennial comprehensive policy review.

## **Annex**

### **Agenda of the intersessional meeting of the High-Level Committee on Programmes Geneva, 4 July 2007**

1. Adoption of the agenda.
  2. CEB review.
  3. Preparations for the fall 2007 session of CEB:
    - (a) Climate change;
    - (b) Energy;
    - (c) Africa;
    - (d) Follow-up to CEB/High-Level Committee on Programmes decisions.
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