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Adoption of the report of the Committee on its forty-fourth session

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Addendum

Proposed strategic framework for the period 2006-2007

Part one: plan outline

(Item 3 (b))

1. At its 8th and 10th meetings, on 14 and 15 June 2004, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered part one: plan outline of the proposed strategic framework for the period 2006-2007 (A/59/6 (Part One)).
2. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced part one and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the document.

Discussion

3. It was noted that the proposed strategic framework for the period 2006-2007 had been prepared in compliance with General Assembly resolution 58/269 of 23 December 2003 and reflected the results-based approach to programme design. It was also noted that in accordance with that resolution, the Assembly would have the opportunity to review, at its sixty-second session, in 2006, the format, content and duration of the strategic framework in the light of experience gained.
4. While there may still be some "teething problems", the improvements made to the logical framework, reflecting clearer objectives, more meaningful expected accomplishments, more measurable indicators of achievement and their respective linkages, were welcomed. It was noted that the objectives were not limited to two-years, while the expected accomplishments reflected the anticipated consequence of products and services to be delivered by the Secretariat within a two-year period.

5. Part one: plan outline was welcomed as a succinct, clear and readable document, reflecting longer-term objectives and the values of the Organization. At the same time, it was observed that the plan outline was not as balanced as it could have been in terms of issues related to economic, social and cultural development. It was stressed that the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration and in the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and international agreements since 1992 represented the highest priorities of the Organization.

6. The view was expressed that while there was continuing need to address the many conflicts around the world and to combat international terrorism, it was necessary to recognize that the importance given those issues should not dilute or detract from the importance of development issues, in particular since the gap between the North and South and between the rich and poor was widening. In this connection, it was stated that the problems related to globalization had not been addressed sufficiently, nor had adequate attention been given to the role of the United Nations in dealing with those problems.

7. It was observed that while official development assistance should increase, the need for mobilization of domestic resources should not be ignored. The view was expressed that peace, security and stability were essential elements for the success of development programmes.

8. The view was also expressed that democracy and human rights were common values and directly related to respect for international law and international humanitarian law, as well as to the implementation of the Millennium Declaration Goals. At the same time, it was emphasized that while human rights and good governance remained as important as ever, observance of them applied as much to developed as to developing societies.

9. The view was expressed that the right to development, an integrated approach to growth and development and the elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance were essential components of an integrated, interrelated and interdependent approach to human rights.

10. The discussion on the environment was considered inadequate, focusing on symptoms rather than causes. Concern was expressed about the use of terminology that had not yet been agreed, such as “global public goods” and “global commons”.

11. The absence of reference to the crisis in the Middle East was regretted.

12. The view was expressed that the “collective responsibility” between the Secretariat and Member States should not result in a situation where no one would be responsible for achieving the objectives. It was also noted that legislative mandates were addressed by intergovernmental organs to the Secretary-General, Member States and other entities, all of whom need to work collaboratively to ensure that the programmes made a positive impact on the beneficiaries.

13. Efforts made by the Secretary-General to ensure that the Organization becomes more efficient and more results-oriented were welcomed. At the same time, it was stressed that there must be clear evidence of greater efficiency and effectiveness, not only within the Secretariat, but also at the intergovernmental level. The view was expressed that, given the scope and level of increasing demands placed upon the Organization, adequate resources must be made available. Concern was expressed

about the increasing burden in Member States in financing the expansion of activities and, in this connection, it was noted that a balance must be found between resources for peacekeeping and resources for development.

14. The view was expressed that reviewing the strategic framework on a line by line basis should be avoided and that it was necessary to focus more on policy direction and overall programme design, in particular with respect to the issues of overlapping and duplication.

15. The importance of views provided by the specialized intergovernmental bodies on the various programmes of the strategic framework was stressed. Information was requested on the review of part two: biennial programme plan (A/59/6 (Part Two)), by the relevant sectoral, functional and regional intergovernmental bodies. That information was subsequently provided to the Committee by the Secretariat (E/AC.51/2004/CRP.1).

16. With respect to the structure and format of the programmes in part two: biennial programme plan, improvements made to the articulation of objectives, expected accomplishments and indicators of achievement were welcomed. It was noted that the logical framework was presented in the same tabular format, as in the programme budget document, making it easier to determine the link between all the elements, namely, objectives of the Organization, expected accomplishments of the Secretariat and indicators of achievement.

17. It was also noted that major efforts had been made to formulate the objectives of the Organization that are succinct and reflective of what the subprogramme intends to achieve rather than what it intends to do. The view was expressed that it was noticeable that the indicators of achievement have become more measurable and better linked to the expected accomplishments. It was also noted that performance measures, namely baselines and targets, external factors and outputs, would be included in the programme budget document.

18. At the same time, views were expressed that some indicators remained somewhat abstract and that, without the inclusion of baselines and targets, it was difficult, when reviewing each programme, to assess its relevance and measurability. The view was expressed that some indicators of achievement measured the quantity of work rather than the quality of results achieved.

19. The continuing efforts to be made by the Department of Management, in collaboration with the Office of Internal Oversight Services, to improve data systems, establish standards, develop manuals and guidelines and conduct training programmes were welcomed and encouraged.

20. It was noted that the proposed priorities are still valid. It was also noted that the designation of priorities did not reflect an ordering of priorities.

Conclusions and recommendations

21. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly review part one: plan outline of the proposed strategic framework for the period 2006-2007 (A/59/6 (Part One)) at its fifty-ninth session.