



Chief Executives Board for Coordination

20 May 2008

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First regular session of 2008

Bern, 28 April 2008

Summary of conclusions

I. Introduction

1. The first regular session of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) for 2008, chaired by the Secretary-General, was held at the Universal Postal Union (UPU) headquarters in Bern, on Monday morning, 28 April 2008.
2. Following the conclusion of the session, the Chief Executives Board held a private meeting on Monday afternoon, 28 April. A Chief Executives Board retreat was held on the evening of 28 April and on Tuesday morning, 29 April at the Bellevue Palace Hotel in Bern. Executive heads exchanged views on current developments, including the rise in global food prices, and staff security and safety. Following its deliberations on global food prices, the Chief Executives Board issued a communiqué on a unified United Nations response to the global food price challenge, which is attached as an annex to the present report.
3. The Chief Executives Board expressed its appreciation to Edouard Dayan, Director-General of UPU, for the excellent arrangements that he and his colleagues had made for the session.
4. The present report covers the outcome of the first regular session of 2008.
5. On behalf of the Chief Executives Board, the Secretary-General welcomed the Board's new Secretary, Thomas Stelzer. He also welcomed in absentia the new Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund, Dominique Strauss-Kahn. He regretted that the outgoing High Commissioner for Human Rights, Louise Arbour, was unable to join the session, and expressed appreciation for her dedicated service to the Organization. He underscored that Ms. Arbour had been instrumental in developing a more balanced approach to the whole range of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. Her legacy would be one of a stronger United Nations human rights system, focusing on justice and accountability. The Board expressed its deep admiration of the outgoing High Commissioner's service.



Agenda

6. The agenda of the first regular session of 2008 was as follows:
 1. Adoption of the agenda.
 2. Reports of high-level committees:
 - (a) United Nations Development Group;
 - (b) High-level Committee on Management;
 - (c) High-level Committee on Programmes.
 3. Other matters.

II. Reports of the high-level committees

A. United Nations Development Group

7. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Administrator and Chair of the United Nations Development Group introduced his briefing, underlining that it was the first time he was reporting to the Board since the Group had formally become part of the Chief Executives Board framework. The report covered the highlights of the ongoing work, as well as progress in operationalizing the integration of the Group as a third pillar into the Board framework.

8. After almost 18 months since the “delivering as one” pilots had been launched, initial results and remaining challenges had been extensively documented in the government reports of pilot countries and in the United Nations country team stocktaking reports.

9. One of the critical lessons learned was that government leadership and involvement were key to ensuring that the United Nations system as a whole was aligned with national priorities. The pilot country teams were effectively interacting with Governments, listening to national priorities and finding ways to draw on a wider range of United Nations assets.

10. An encouraging outcome had been the greater engagement of non-resident agencies, both in the programming process and in the resulting programmes. Clearer definition of roles and responsibilities and improved understanding of each others’ mandates and expertise had been valuable in team-building and cultivating mutual trust.

11. The issue of joint programming was one of the key gains emerging from the pilots: the United Nations country teams were truly exploring how the United Nations system could respond to national priorities by joint analysis, joint thinking and joint prioritization/planning. The critical remaining challenge was to translate that effort to create coherence into the implementation stage.

12. As for the way forward, the United Nations Development Group would focus on facilitating the application of the lessons learned from the pilots to all other countries as relevant, but especially in countries in which Governments were requesting more coherent and aligned United Nations programming, as well as in countries beginning a new United Nations Development Assistance Framework

programme. The mainstreaming of the lessons learned would continue as we learned more from the pilots and other countries that were making strides towards increased efficiency.

13. The United Nations Development Group, in coordination with the High-level Committee on Management, would increasingly focus on the harmonization of business practices and the support needed from Headquarters for the pilots and other United Nations country teams.

14. The work of the United Nations Development Group would continue along the directions already identified and within the framework of the triennial comprehensive policy review, which provided a solid and sufficient intergovernmental mandate for the work to be carried out at the country level.

15. Among the several positive developments in connection with the resident coordinator system, the United Nations Development Group Chair indicated that briefings for new resident coordinators by 16 agencies and departments had been held. Performance assessments were being done for all resident coordinators by the regional director teams. The teams were being further expanded to include most entities that had members on the United Nations country teams.

16. A particularly notable achievement was the growing involvement of United Nations agencies in the resident coordinator function. Currently, 29 per cent of resident coordinators were not from UNDP (up from 19 per cent in 2002). Of the candidates submitted to the Secretary-General in March 2008, 50 per cent were not staff members of UNDP.

17. Problems were being encountered, however, in finding a sufficient number of qualified candidates for the resident coordinator function. The reasons for such declining interest were twofold: first, the complexity and responsibilities for resident coordinator positions had increased, particularly in terms of the new security environment, without being matched by a corresponding growth in the authority and supporting resources; second, the success of the resident coordinator system depended to a high degree on the readiness of all agencies to put forward their best and brightest staff for the job, while a problem of competition between the resident coordinator function and internal career opportunities still persisted.

18. Difficulties were also being encountered in filling resident coordinator positions with women. The objective of gender balance should be maintained as a top priority. The organizations of the United Nations system had to vow to take collective responsibility for the resident coordinator function and make an increased effort to propose qualified female candidates for such positions.

19. Considerable progress had been made in the restructuring of the United Nations Development Group and its integration as a third pillar into the Chief Executives Board framework. In particular:

(a) The United Nations Development Group mechanism had been significantly streamlined with its working groups reduced from 19 to 5;

(b) The United Nations Development Group pillar regularly consulted with the other two pillars, the High-level Committee on Management and the High-level Committee on Programmes, and the workplans of all three pillars were currently being reviewed to ensure a clear division of labour;

(c) A secondment from the United Nations Development Group Office to the CEB secretariat had been realized to facilitate the integration of the Group into the Chief Executives Board and cooperation between the pillars;

(d) The name of the Development Group Office would be changed to Development Operations Coordination Office to better reflect its dual function as technical support unit to the Group, as well as its support of country-level coordination through the resident coordinator system.

20. The leadership of the United Nations Development Group would include a vice-chair at the Assistant Secretary-General level from one of the specialized agencies. Consultations on the matter were already at an advanced stage and the appointment of the vice-chair was expected shortly.

21. A key part of the agreed new approach was the establishment of a United Nations Development Group advisory group, composed of permanent and rotational members, which would be a more broadly representative group than the Executive Committee, while still being small enough to be an effective body. It would be a group that provided advice, not a decision-making group, as the United Nations Development Group decisions would be made by the full United Nations Development Group on technical issues and in the Chief Executives Board on policy issues.

22. While the criteria for membership in the advisory group had been defined and agreed upon following a process of extensive consultations, the exact membership in the group had still to be finalized. That would be done shortly, taking into consideration the need to recognize the analytical and normative input of non-resident agencies. In that respect, and to strengthen the linkages between the regional and country levels and promote coherence at the regional level, it was agreed that the regional commissions would be regularly informed of the agenda and a representative of the commissions would be invited to participate as a member of the advisory group when regional issues were planned for discussion.

23. In responding to the report of the Chair of the United Nations Development Group the Chief Executives Board acknowledged with appreciation the positive trend towards increased inclusiveness in the work of the Group, and encouraged it to progress further along that path.

24. Taking note of and endorsing the report by the United Nations Development Group, the Chief Executives Board asked to be kept informed of developments and challenges in the resident coordinator system, in recognition of the critical role it exercised in ensuring coordinated, coherent and successful delivery by the United Nations system organizations of programmes at the country level.

B. High-level Committee on Management

25. The Chair of the High-level Committee on Management briefed the Chief Executives Board on the recent activities of the Committee, which had focused on two concurrent, broad objectives:

(a) Refinement of the Committee's structure, procedures and functioning mechanisms;

(b) Formulation of its programme of work for the next two/three years, drawing on the conclusions of the High-level Panel on System-wide Coherence, on the latest triennial comprehensive policy review, and on any other relevant inter-agency mandates, with particular attention to needs emerging at the country level that required comprehensive consideration and guidance at the central level.

26. The High-level Committee on Management consolidated an expanded system of bodies and actors within its institutional framework: together with the three networks serviced by the CEB secretariat, namely Human Resources, co-chaired by the United Nations and by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO); Finance and Budget, co-chaired by the United Nations and by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA); and Information, Communications and Technology, chaired by the World Food Programme (WFP), the High-level Committee currently incorporates the newly established network of procurement chiefs, chaired by WFP and serviced by the UNDP Procurement Support Office in Copenhagen, as well as the network of legal advisers, chaired by the Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs and supported by his Office.

27. Concurrently with such structural refinements, and in an effort to break functional compartments in favour of more integrated management support of programmatic needs, the High-level Committee on Management dedicated a considerable effort to increasing its permeability both internally, promoting communication and coordination among its networks, and externally, strengthening its relationship and improving cooperation with other inter-agency mechanisms of the United Nations system, such as the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC), the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) and the representatives of Internal Audit Services of the United Nations system.

28. Continuing an established practice of information sharing and coordination, which had become even more critical following the integration of the United Nations Development Group into the Chief Executives Board framework, the three committees had started a process of regular consultations, inspired by the principle that, in the area of management, discussions leading to implications for the United Nations system would be coordinated through the High-level Committee on Management and its networks for comprehensive consideration and buy-in, while the United Nations Development Group would ensure guidance and support for piloting solutions in countries and, in general, for the requirements emerging at the country level.

29. Turning to the outcome of the fifteenth session of the High-level Committee on Management, held on 17 and 18 March 2008 at the headquarters of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in Rome, the Chair of the Committee thanked Jacques Diouf for the excellent hospitality and support provided by FAO during the meeting.

30. In addition to the discussion on the security and safety of staff, whose conclusions and recommendations were part of the agenda of the Chief Executives Board retreat, the High-level Committee on Management took up a number of other important issues. In particular, the Committee:

(a) Confirmed its support for strengthened institutional links between the High-level Committee on Management and the representatives of Internal Audit Services of the United Nations system, and approved the conceptual framework and

modus operandi of a partnership arrangement with the representatives aimed at promoting exchange of experience and knowledge in areas of common interest;

(b) Recommended that the representatives of executive heads at the upcoming Rome meeting of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board pursue, within the bounds of actuarial possibilities, proposals for:

(i) Changes that would promote staff mobility through improved portability of pension benefits;

(ii) Changes to the pension adjustment system to ameliorate the effects of the weakened United States dollar, pending an overall review of such structural adjustments as might be required in United Nations pension arrangements to respond to any long-term changes in the foreign exchange value of the United States dollar;

(c) Agreed to conduct a system-wide discussion with a view to developing a common recommendation on harmonized standards of air travel, taking due consideration of the specificity of the work and mandates of the different entities of the system, and building on the recommendations and conclusions of ICSC, JIU and medical doctors, as well as on a comparative analysis of standards applicable in Member States and in other international organizations;

(d) Encouraged organizations that had adopted the same enterprise resource planning systems to intensify the sharing of information and experiences on implementation challenges and process and business issues. That would provide an opportunity for organizations that were advanced in the setting-up of the enterprise resource planning systems to provide advice and support to those that were beginning the process and, therefore, possibly saving them time and costs.

31. The Chair of the High-level Committee on Management provided the Board with some details on the directions and next steps of the Committee's plan of action for the harmonization of business practices, whose components represented the building blocks for the Committee's programme of work for the next two/three years.

32. Following the positive response of executive heads to the Chair's letter of 5 March 2008, the High-level Committee on Management approved the launch of its plan of action for the harmonization of business practices in the United Nations system, packaged in a funding proposal for resource mobilization that would be submitted to Member States with a view to informing them about the initiative and soliciting extrabudgetary contributions.

33. The Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chair of the Chief Executives Board, would transmit the funding proposal to Member States. Concurrently, the Permanent Representatives of the United Republic of Tanzania and Ireland to the United Nations, currently serving as co-chairs of the General Assembly's consultations on system-wide coherence, had invited the Secretary-General to informally brief the Assembly on that initiative during the second part of the resumed sixty-second session of the Assembly in May 2008. That would present a valuable opportunity to provide Member States with greater detail on each project included in the plan of action and to raise awareness in as open and transparent a manner as possible.

34. The Chair of the High-level Committee on Management underlined that the scope of the plan was limited to functions and processes for which the executive

heads had responsibility, and that the Committee was engaged in an effort towards harmonization in areas that were the prerogative of executive heads.

35. The Chair recalled that the plan of action had been developed under the guidance of a steering group led by the Vice-Chair of the High-level Committee on Management, Denis Aitken of the World Health Organization (WHO), and comprising the chairs of the Committee networks, the Director of the CEB Secretariat and the Secretary of the Committee. Following the integration in the Committee framework of the networks of procurement chiefs and of legal advisers, and in recognition of the critical role that United Nations organizations with strong field presence had for the successful achievement of the objectives outlined in the plan, the steering group had been expanded, as of March 2008, to include the chairs of the two new networks and the Committee representatives of UNDP and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

36. It was noted that the staff representatives and ICSC had expressed appreciation of the work done by the Committee as an important step towards enhanced coherence for better programmatic delivery of the United Nations system organizations, and had assured their support and commitment to the implementation of that initiative.

37. The organizations of the High-level Committee on Management could voluntarily commit to participation in any of the proposed initiatives (the cluster approach). Working groups of interested organizations would then be formed around the lead agency, which carried ultimate responsibility for delivery of results and retained financial authority over, and accountability for, the resources allocated to the project for which it was responsible.

38. The CEB Secretariat would retain responsibility for central oversight, coordination and reporting for the complete package of projects included in the plan of action, thereby preserving unity of direction and the central accountability of the Chief Executives Board membership and the Member States providing financial support.

39. Once again, the Board acknowledged the value of the Committee proposal as a new level of commitment by the entire United Nations system for fundamental realignment and harmonization of business practices to respond to the new political demand for a coherent and effective United Nations system.

40. Recognizing the need to ensure a strong mandate by top management for the success of such a joint effort towards harmonization of business practices, executive heads reiterated their support for, and commitment to, the plan of action developed by the Committee.

41. The Board concluded by expressing its support and endorsement for the decisions and recommendations of the High-level Committee at its fifteenth session and, in particular, for the launch of the plan of action for the harmonization of business practices in the United Nations system.

C. High-level Committee on Programmes

42. The Chair of the High-level Committee on Programmes introduced the Committee's report on its fifteenth session, which was the first following the review

by the Chief Executives Board of its role and functioning. The Committee had undertaken an examination of its role following the outcome of the Board's review, including its role vis-à-vis the United Nations Development Group and the High-level Committee on Management, and it had also discussed its relations with the Secretary-General's Policy Committee. In order to further coherence, it was proposed that the chairs and vice-chairs of the three Chief Executives Board committees meet regularly to harmonize their agendas. The High-level Committee on Programmes would also hold an intersessional meeting in July 2008 to agree on its forward-looking workplan.

43. It was recalled that in 2007, the Chief Executives Board had endorsed the proposal of the High-level Committee on Programmes for the evaluation of the "one UN" pilot projects. The first step of that process, the evaluability study, was near completion. The longer-term evaluation process, which was ongoing and complementary to the immediate stocktaking exercise, would ensure a systematic means to measure targets and goals. The results shown thus far were encouraging, corroborating the positive messages that had emerged from the stocktaking exercise.

44. The key issue that the High-level Committee on Programmes had been focusing on over the past year was climate change, following the request of the Chief Executives Board for the Committee to prepare the United Nations system's contribution to the Climate Change Conference in Bali. The Chair noted that on no other matter had there been such committed engagement of the entire United Nations system. He thanked the Vice-Chair for his dedicated efforts in steering the process of consultations and all organizations for their contributions. The resulting paper on United Nations system coordination on climate change had been well received by the parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, creating expectations for further coordinated action by the system. The Committee's work had also formed the basis for the Secretary-General's overview report and inventory of United Nations system activities, which had been submitted to the General Assembly for the thematic debate on climate change that took place in February 2008. Views expressed by Member States on that occasion, along with a contribution by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change secretariat on how the system could assist in the implementation of the Bali Road Map, had informed the discussion by the Committee in March 2008. The Committee had prepared a draft decision for consideration by the Chief Executives Board; should the Board agree, the Committee would continue to oversee United Nations system coordination on climate change.

45. The Chair of the High-level Committee on Programmes thanked the Deputy-Secretary-General for her briefing to the Committee on progress made thus far by the Millennium Development Goals Africa Steering Committee and Group. He noted the range of issues that needed to be pursued to accelerate the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals in Africa, including with regard to agriculture and food security, and assured the Board of the Committee's commitment to remain engaged and to backstop system-wide efforts in that regard.

46. The Chair went on to say that the High-level Committee on Programmes had also benefited from a briefing by the Assistant Secretary-General on the implications of the integrated peacebuilding strategies. The Committee had examined how the United Nations system could best backstop that new function,

drawing on lessons learned from the first countries undertaking integrated strategies, Burundi and Sierra Leone.

47. He was pleased to note that the Committee had taken a number of its earlier efforts to conclusion. Those included the *Toolkit for mainstreaming employment and decent work*, led by the International Labour Organization (ILO), and the *Trade capacity-building inter-agency resource guide*, produced under the leadership of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO). Those products were examples that could be drawn upon to bring the system together as it addressed other key issues.

48. The Director-General of UNIDO thanked organizations for providing inputs to the *Guide*. He briefed the Chief Executives Board on the outcome of the Vienna consultation on United Nations system-wide coherence, held on 4 and 5 March 2008. The Director-General of ILO thanked those organizations that had completed the self-assessment and the *Toolkit on mainstreaming employment and decent work*, and reminded others to expedite that process in view of the requirement for him to report to the Economic and Social Council on progress made.

United Nations system-wide approach to climate change

49. The Executive Secretary of the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, briefed the Chief Executives Board on the outcome of the first meeting of the Ad hoc Working Group on long-term cooperative action under the Convention held in Bangkok from 31 March to 4 April 2008. As the secretariat of the Convention was not an implementing agency, it placed high priority on working with others to ensure that decisions taken by Governments led to action on the ground, especially in countries that needed support. In that connection, he thanked the Board members for their efforts in ensuring that the United Nations system delivered as one in meeting the challenge of climate change. He emphasized that the Copenhagen agreement in 2009 would determine what countries would need to do on the ground to limit their emissions and to adapt to climate change, and he noted in that regard the important role of the United Nations system at the country level, under the leadership of the resident coordinator.

50. He recalled that the United Nations Climate Change Conference, held in Bali, Indonesia, had formally launched negotiations, agreed to an agenda and set a deadline for negotiations. There were different views among countries regarding that outcome, which was finding its way back into the negotiation process. The Bangkok meeting had been comprised of the sessions of the two bodies forming the parallel negotiating tracks: long-term cooperative action under the Convention, and post-Kyoto Protocol commitments.

51. The Bangkok meeting had resulted in a work programme on long-term cooperative action that reconfirmed the 23 elements contained in the Bali Action Plan, grouped under five areas: shared vision; mitigation; adaptation; technology; and finance. In addition, the Ad hoc Working Group had made strong reference to linkages to the work of the other subsidiary bodies under the Convention, which provided a connection to the focus areas identified by the High-level Committee on Programmes (adaptation, technology transfer, capacity-building, reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, and mitigation and finance in support of developing countries on mitigation actions). The secretariat of the Convention was ready to work with others to take the issues forward and to play a convening role,

linking up to current and emerging mandates that related to specific work on the ground.

52. The Executive Secretary highlighted the significant progress that had already been made on adaptation. The Nairobi work programme on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change, initiated in 2007, had as its objective to assist all parties/countries to improve their understanding and assessment of climate change impacts, their vulnerability and the adaptation options open to them to make informed decisions on practical adaptation actions. Thus far, more than 100 organizations around the world, from large intergovernmental institutions to small non-governmental organizations, had committed to specific activities within the work programme.

53. He went on to say that the Bangkok work programme foresaw two points of entry in the negotiation process for the United Nations system: observer organizations (including United Nations organizations) were invited to provide additional information, views and proposals on the elements referred to in the Bali Action Plan, including the five areas identified by the High-level Committee on Programmes; and other intergovernmental processes were invited to take note of the work programme agreed in Bali so that the Bali process could be informed by the outputs of those processes.

54. The Executive Secretary added that the process under the Kyoto Protocol had a successful start to its second phase of work, which was aimed at revisiting the rules that govern and define emissions reduction commitments of Annex I Parties. Increased attention was paid to emissions stemming from international aviation and marine transport, where the Kyoto Protocol had foreseen work to be conducted in the framework of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the International Maritime Organization (IMO). There was a divergence of views on whether or not to include those two sectors under the Convention in the next phase. In his view, that was an issue that would benefit from wider discussion within the United Nations system, in support of Governments and in response to their mandates.

55. In summary, there were three important areas for the system to fulfil in moving forward in a well-managed way: (a) inputs to negotiations over the next two years; (b) response to mandates already provided by the negotiation process; and (c) coherent assistance at the national level on adaptation and mitigation.

56. The Vice-Chairperson of the High-level Committee on Programmes introduced the Committee's draft decision, noting that it reflected the need to be responsive to the evolution of the intergovernmental discussion, while at the same time offering proactive leadership in key emerging areas. He referred to a letter of 25 April 2008 from the Friends of the Earth on climate change to the Secretary-General, which welcomed the fact that the Chief Executives Board was taking forward further work on coordination of the United Nations system in response to the challenges of climate change.

57. The High-level Committee on Programmes had agreed that the coordinating mechanism to take that work forward should remain light and flexible and be focused on a number of major issues, which would evolve over time. Decisions regarding facilitation of the five areas set out in the draft decision would be arrived at on the basis of expressed commitments by participants. Coordination on key

issues would be strengthened, through existing mechanisms, such as UN-Energy, UN-Water and UN-Oceans, and special efforts made to respond to immediate challenges. Current mechanisms to support country and regional level work would be used to provide countries with the services and capacity that they required. As decided by the Chief Executives Board, work to deliver on a green United Nations would also continue. Finally, to support information exchange, engagement and results tracking, the current inventory of United Nations system activities would be evolved into a web-based tool.

58. Executive heads voiced their appreciation and support for the work undertaken thus far by the High-level Committee on Programmes. In relation to the draft decision and the work being undertaken by the United Nations system, as well as the outcome of the first meeting of the Ad hoc Working Group on long-term cooperative action under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, several observations were made:

(a) Climate change was a global challenge that required global, holistic and comprehensive solutions. Executive heads stressed the central role of the Secretary-General in leading the efforts of the United Nations to support a positive outcome in the climate change negotiations. At the same time, developing countries were requesting longer-term assistance with respect to a post-Kyoto regime; the United Nations system had a responsibility to respond to those requests in an integrated way;

(b) The importance of transformational leadership by the United Nations system was underscored and, in particular, concern was voiced that sectoral approaches to dealing with climate change risked segmenting problems and leading to trade-offs within sectors. The Chief Executives Board should aim to meet the expectations placed on the system, while also containing transaction costs in supporting the various coordination mechanisms on climate change;

(c) Transitions likely to occur in production and consumption patterns would have a large impact on a wide range of enterprises. What was important was for the United Nations system to look at the productive implications of climate change policy in order to ensure that energy prices did not have a severe impact on the poor, to deal with energy-intensive industry in a way that didn't cause jobs and capital to flee from one country to another, to design fiscal policies that could push low emission technologies into the market, and to use the carbon market to create new job opportunities. ILO was working to deepen its knowledge of the transition process and to apply its tools in the four areas of: social protection; social dialogue, including within enterprises at the national level; labour market analysis; and capacity-building. It had launched a green jobs initiative, along with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the International Trade Union Confederation and the Intergovernmental Organization of Employers. UNIDO was also spearheading a green industry initiative;

(d) UN-Energy was focusing on the centrality of the energy issue in discussions on climate change. It had divided its work into three clusters: energy access, led by UNDP and the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs; energy efficiency, led by IAEA, UNIDO and United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat); and renewable energy, led by FAO, UNEP and UNESCO. It expected shortly to elaborate a guide on who did what in the system;

(e) The important role of science, assessment, monitoring and early warning reflected in the draft decision submitted to the Chief Executives Board was highlighted. The World Meteorological Organization (WMO), together with UNESCO, would convene a knowledge-based network on adaptation and mitigation. The global network of observation would be enhanced by consolidating and improving scientific knowledge on the climate regime, and climate prediction would be made more accurate by strengthening local and regional capacities. The third World Climate Conference, to be held in Geneva from 31 August to 4 September 2009, would have as its theme climate prediction for decision-making, both with regard to climate change and climate variability. WMO was also in the final stages of implementing a network of regional climate centres to provide information through meteorological services; the network would also be of use in the area of food security;

(f) The information and communications technologies sector, including equipment, contributed approximately 2.5 to 3 per cent of greenhouse gas emissions, but such technologies could help all sectors achieve major reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and in energy consumption through the use of more energy-efficient technology. Remote sensing applications for global observatory systems were clear examples of how the United Nations system worked together to protect the environment. Looking ahead, there were several actions that the United Nations system could pursue in promoting a green culture: for example, move towards a paperless environment; establish more efficient telecommunications standards; and employ greater use of teleconferencing and videoconferencing;

(g) The intergovernmental consultative process had identified the scaling up of technology transfer to countries as an area of focus. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs was currently consulting with the Government of China on organizing a conference in November 2008 on climate change and technology cooperation innovation and transfer, to complement the fourteenth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Poznan, Poland in December 2008;

(h) With regard to the discussion at the Convention meeting held in Bangkok regarding international aviation and maritime transport, it was important to highlight the progress that had been achieved. Following the thirty-sixth session of the ICAO Assembly, in September 2007, ICAO established the Group on International Aviation and Climate Change. The programme of action of the Group, to be concluded in 2009, would be reviewed by a high-level meeting, taking into account the deliberations at the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties. ICAO had also developed a carbon calculator to estimate aviation emissions as part of the climate-neutral United Nations initiative and would be holding a two-day workshop on carbon markets and aviation emissions on 18 and 19 June 2008 in Montreal, Canada. The IMO Marine Environment Protection Committee, at its fifty-seventh session, held from 31 March to 4 April 2008, had agreed on amendments to Annex VI of the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, regulating ships' exhaust gas emissions, so as to limit further the level of air pollutants from ships. The amendments were due to be adopted in October 2008, with entry into force expected in February 2010. In respect of greenhouse gases, IMO had conducted a study in 2000 which had ascertained that shipping was responsible for some 1.8 percent of greenhouse gas emissions; six years later, the Stern review on the economics of climate change acknowledged that while the

transport sector as a whole contributed 14 per cent of the total greenhouse gas emissions, shipping contributed only a tenth of that, or 1.4 per cent. On that issue, IMO continued to work apace on the action plan it had previously adopted. Together with the scientific updating of the IMO study conducted in 2000, the three elements of the action plan were scheduled to be completed by July 2009, thus enabling the Organization to submit to the climate conference in Copenhagen, to be held in December 2009, a comprehensive and solid proposal, agreed by the member States of IMO, on how best to limit, control and reduce CO₂ emissions from ships. To that end, IMO had agreed to expedite the completion of two of the plan's three elements. As Annex I Parties under the Kyoto Protocol represented some 25 per cent of the world's shipping industry, in an effort to do more, not less, to ensure the widest possible environmental benefit, IMO considered that it should not limit itself to holding only those countries responsible for mitigating greenhouse gases from international shipping. The global control of greenhouse gas emissions from international shipping should therefore be regulated through IMO, by a single global regime affecting not just some ships, but all merchant ships, and remain outside the scope of negotiations towards a post-Kyoto regime;

(i) Climate change was having an impact in other areas. Tourism, for instance, was both a contributor, up to 5 per cent, to greenhouse gas emissions, as well as an industry that suffered from the impacts of climate change;

(j) With respect to work to deliver on a green United Nations, the Chair of the High-level Committee on Management had noted that the Government of Viet Nam would be establishing a green United Nations building. She had been asked to approach members of the Chief Executives Board for symbolic contributions to that worthy project. The Secretary-General also noted that on 5 May 2008, the groundbreaking ceremony for the renovation of United Nations Headquarters in New York would take place. He hoped that the original donor countries, along with others, would be willing to contribute to the refurbishment of the buildings.

59. The Chief Executives Board endorsed the report of the High-level Committee on Programmes on its fifteenth session and the draft decision before it. Board members agreed to continue all efforts to work together in a holistic and ambitious, yet pragmatic way, to support negotiations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, enhance awareness and galvanize political will.

III. Other matters

Dates of the fall 2008 and spring 2009 sessions

60. With respect to the second regular session of the Chief Executives Board in 2008, to be held at United Nations Headquarters, the Board confirmed the dates of Friday 24 and Saturday 25 October 2008.

61. The Board agreed to accept the invitation of the Director-General of UNESCO to host the first regular session of 2009 on 6 and 7 April 2009 in Paris. The Director-General of UNIDO invited the Board to hold its first regular session of 2010 in Vienna.

Annex

United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination

Press communiqué

A unified United Nations response to the global food price challenge

We consider that the recent dramatic escalation in food prices worldwide has evolved into an unprecedented challenge of global proportions that has become a crisis for the world's most vulnerable, including the urban poor. This crisis has multiple causes, including rapidly increasing energy prices, lack of investments in the agricultural sector, rapidly rising demand for food, trade-distorting subsidies, recurrent bad weather and environmental degradation, subsidized production of biofuels that substitute food production, and the imposition of export restrictions leading to hoarding and panic buying.

This challenge is having multiple effects, with its most serious impact unfolding as a crisis for the most vulnerable. Mounting hunger and increasing evidence of severe malnutrition are evident and the capacities of humanitarian agencies to meet these needs is under severe strain, particularly as pledged funding remains undelivered. This situation is increasingly resulting in social tension as Governments which find themselves powerless to address this global crisis come under mounting pressure. Inflationary pressures are rising and trade deficits are widening in a number of countries.

The Executive Heads of the United Nations specialized agencies, funds and programmes and Bretton Woods institutions, meeting in Bern on 28 and 29 April 2008 under the chairmanship of the United Nations Secretary-General, agreed on a common strategy in support of developing country governance to confront the global food crisis and have decided the following:

1. **First, we must feed the hungry**

The rapidly escalating price of food is severely impacting the poor in developing countries, resulting in heightened vulnerability, reduced levels of nutrition with serious health impacts, and rising social tensions.

The United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination calls upon the international community to urgently and fully fund the emergency requirements of US\$ 755 million for the World Food Programme and deliver on its pledges and provide maximum flexibility to target the most urgent needs. This extraordinary appeal, together with the World Food Programme voluntary funded budget and newly assessed needs must be urgently met. Without full funding of these emergency requirements, we risk again the spectre of widespread hunger, malnutrition and social unrest on an unprecedented scale.

2. **Second, we must ensure food for tomorrow**

Action must be taken to provide developing country farmers with the support required to ensure the next harvest. Escalating energy, fertilizer and input prices are

leading farmers to plant less in the coming season and will lead to even more severe food shortages in the coming year.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations emergency initiative on soaring food prices has called for US\$ 1.7 billion in funding to provide low-income food deficit countries with seeds and inputs to boost production.

The International Fund for Agricultural Development is making available US\$ 200 million to poor farmers in the most affected countries to boost food production by providing essential inputs.

The World Bank is exploring with its Board the creation of a rapid financing facility for grant support to especially fragile poor countries, and quicker, more flexible financing for others.

We need to address multifaceted challenges in the short, medium and long terms.

The short to medium term

The United Nations system will cooperate together in crisis response, the development of emergency safety nets and social protection of the most vulnerable, and rapid employment and income generation programmes.

The United Nations system will fully deploy its capacity in the monitoring, quick assessment and analysis of the rapidly evolving food price trends and their impact on vulnerability to support the response of affected national Governments.

At the country level, United Nations resident and humanitarian coordinators, heads of the World Bank missions, and the United Nations country teams will urgently meet also with the World Food Programme and other humanitarian agencies in affected countries to draw up support strategies for national Governments and vulnerable populations and seek international support for their implementation.

The International Monetary Fund will propose to its Executive Board additional financial support for countries facing serious balance of payment gaps as a result of higher food and oil prices.

The Chief Executives Board calls upon countries that have imposed export restrictions on food that have reduced supplies and contributed to price hikes to urgently reconsider those policies.

The medium to long term

The United Nations system will bring together its technical and analytical capabilities to fill research and knowledge gaps in order to support Governments with the best information for agricultural decision-making to boost production and productivity.

An assessment of the diverse impacts of the crisis, and the development of sets of tailored policy instruments and implementation capacity are required to underpin an effective policy response.

Domestic policy measures that correct distortions and do not jeopardize the supply response need to be put in place, together with budget support measures and balance of payments support for the most affected countries.

The Chief Executives Board calls for a rapid conclusion of the Doha Development Round resulting in scaling down trade-distorting subsidies that have damaged developing countries production capacity.

The long term

The Chief Executives Board underscores the urgent necessity to address the structural and policy issues that have substantially contributed to this crisis and the challenge posed by climate change to productive systems.

Further research must be undertaken on the impact of diversion of food crops to biofuel production and all subsidies to food-based biofuels should be reviewed.

We must make a special effort to address the specific needs of Africa as the most affected region, including through relevant African programmes such as the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme. To this end, we must put in place the requirements to realize the promise of a green revolution in Africa which the United Nations Africa Millennium Development Goals Steering Group has estimated will require US\$ 8 to 10 billion annually.

The World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, the regional development banks and relevant agencies of the United Nations system will collaborate to develop a long-term strategy, including the required macroeconomic measures for increasing productivity, production and marketing in agriculture and ensuring availability of and access to food.

Immediate action

In order to create a prioritized plan of action and coordinate its implementation, the Chief Executives Board has decided that a task force on the global food crisis be established immediately under the leadership of the Secretary-General and bringing together the heads of the United Nations specialized agencies, funds and programmes, Bretton Woods institutions and relevant parts of the United Nations Secretariat.

Forthcoming meetings

Forthcoming high-level gatherings, including the meetings of the Tokyo International Conference on African Development, the Economic and Social Council, the G-8 Summit, the September High-level Event of the General Assembly on Millennium Development Goals and the International Labour Organization International Labour Conference meeting on rural employment, all provide opportunities to strengthen political commitment to meet the challenge of this crisis.

In this regard, the United Nations Secretary-General calls on world leaders to make every effort to participate in the High-level Conference on World Food Security in Rome from 3 to 5 June 2008.