**Chief Executives Board
for Coordination**

24 March 2006

Report of the High-level Committee on Programmes at its eleventh session

(Paris, 27 February to 1 March 2006)

1.   The High-level Committee on Programmes (HLCP) held its eleventh session in Villiers-le-Mahieu, France, from 27 February to 1 March 2006. The agenda of the meeting and the list of participants are contained in annexes I and II, respectively.

I.   The system's response to the 2005 World Summit Outcome: review of developments since the sessions of the High-level Committee on Programmes and the Chief Executives Board for Coordination in the second half of 2005; and preparations for the joint meeting with the High-level Committee on Management

2.   In his introductory remarks, the Chairman noted that the United Nations system faced an opportunity to shape and advance its collective future that was in many ways unprecedented, except perhaps for the late 1960s and early 1970s, which had also witnessed a strong commitment to and real increases in official development assistance (ODA). The past year had been eventful in many ways: in the commitment to multilateralism manifest in the 2005 World Summit Outcome; in pledges to increase ODA and provide debt relief; in the realization that we are not on track to reach the Millennium Development Goals; and in terms of natural disasters that had an impact on people's lives in record numbers. In tandem with these developments there was, on the part of donors and developing countries alike, a new sense of urgency in expecting the potential of the United Nations system to be translated into more coherent and effective action.

3.   He sensed a stronger appetite for reform now than had been seen in very many years. It was critical that the system should be seen and act as a full partner in change, so that its collective strength could be fully tapped in meeting the challenges ahead. The Secretary-General's High-level Panel on United Nations System-wide Coherence in the Areas of Development, Humanitarian Assistance and the Environment was a key opportunity for generating proposals on how the United Nations system could work better. For this opportunity to be realized, broad consultations would be essential; as ex-officio member of the Panel, he asked

Committee members to share with him the expectations and thinking of their organizations on how best to capture this initiative's great potential for progress and change. The system's aspirations as well as the commitments established in "The Way Forward" chapter of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) publication entitled "One United Nations — Catalyst for Progress and Change" provided a useful starting point in this regard.

4. The Vice-Chairman noted that while the reform agenda seemed so far to be largely focused on modalities for the system to deliver development support, such support was only a subset of the larger drive for economic and social progress being pursued by nations with a multitude of actors, in a web of interactions across the world. In order to get the reforms right, the system should be seen as a full partner in this broader effort as well. While he was optimistic with regard to the progress being made by the organizations of the system in working together and becoming true partners of countries in their development efforts, he was less optimistic with regard to the way in which the international community was approaching global issues management. Such issues need addressing, even if substantive progress is made in eradicating poverty. He expressed the hope that the Panel will face these broader challenges head on and with a sense of responsibility towards the future not only of the United Nations but of the world at large.

5. The Executive Director of the Panel provided a comprehensive briefing on the context in which it would be carrying out its work and on the initial feedback he had received from Member States on the directions of the exercise. He stressed the importance of an inclusive consultative process that would engage Member States, both donors and developing countries, organizations of the system, and academia and civil society. He recalled the experience of two previous high-level panels, the Panel of Eminent Persons on United Nations-Civil Society Relations and the Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change. Both had generated excellent proposals but their impact had suffered, in different ways, from an insufficient engagement or commitment of stakeholders. He was confident that the Panel would be sensitive to its responsibility to build on the system's own perspective and aspirations. The inclusion of the Chairpersons of the High-level Committee on Programmes (HLCP) and the United Nations Development Group as ex-officio members was meant to advance that objective.

6. In the 2005 Summit Outcome, Governments underscored the importance of multilateralism and the uniqueness and centrality of the United Nations as an inclusive and universal body that lends legitimacy to international action. There was also a strong agreement that the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, define the economic and social mission of the United Nations. Furthermore, the Outcome clearly recognized the interrelationships that exist among the key issues — peace and security, development, humanitarian action and the environment — with which the system is concerned. The challenge remains of how to leverage all the strengths that exist within the system so that it may live up to its legitimacy and, at the same time, maximize its effectiveness in helping Member States to meet their goals.

7. A starting point for the Panel might be to look at the new international environment the system is facing: what are the new challenges, in terms of, inter alia, political legitimacy and financing? What are the operational challenges in terms of capacity, of new competitors and new perspectives? What are the new

challenges arising from the evolution of the international economy? For instance, what are the needs of middle-income countries? And what is the impact on the mandates and structures of the United Nations system of the political context that has been evolving since the end of the Cold War?

8. There has been a tendency, when looking at the issue of system-wide coherence, to focus on operational activities and overlook policy matters. Yet the 2005 World Summit Outcome brought forward three key policy-related requirements: strengthening linkages between the normative work of the system and its operational activities; coordinating representation of Member States on governing bodies; and ensuring that the main horizontal policy themes, sustainable development, human rights and gender, are taken into account in decision-making in the United Nations. There is a need to find mechanisms for bringing normative and analytical work more systematically to bear on operations, and for addressing the problem of fragmentation among Member States in the intergovernmental system, and there is a need to look into architectural issues in the system to mainstream cross-cutting policy challenges.

9. With respect to approaches to the task of bringing about more tightly managed entities in the fields of development, humanitarian assistance and the environment, there were different strands of thinking. The one that advocated the realignment of the system around three pillars of activity, very clearly demarcated institutionally and functionally, while providing for interrelationships in the three areas, was only one of many under consideration. Another was the concept of three polarities around which the system has to realign itself to better deliver. The third was more simply that development, humanitarian assistance and the environment are three important areas in relation to which tight management needs to be advanced.

10. The Chairman recalled that, meanwhile, a number of other important reform-related processes were underway in the United Nations. He referred, in this context, to the two ongoing consultations in the General Assembly on development and Economic and Social Council reform, and to the review of environmental activities referred to in paragraph 169 of the 2005 World Summit Outcome, which will soon be underway, under the co-chairmanship of the ambassadors of Mexico and Switzerland. There had been some positive developments in the area of humanitarian assistance, such as the Central Emergency Revolving Fund and the Peacebuilding Commission. A great deal, however, remained to be done in terms of interfaces between humanitarian assistance and development.

11. The Chairman expected that the Panel would address reforms in the areas within its purview, distinguishing between what was achievable in the short, medium and long terms. There were a number of managerial actions that organizations could take quickly and that could make a substantial difference. For the medium term, the Panel might address issues of architecture focusing on the United Nations and its funds and programmes, while structural issues in relation to the system as a whole might be addressed in a longer-term perspective.

12. While he hoped that the Panel's approach to its mandate would be broad and comprehensive, the organization of the development cooperation work of the system will undoubtedly figure prominently on its agenda. Here, progress towards rationalizing modalities of operations and enhancing their effectiveness, chiefly through the United Nations Development Group, has been significant, but somewhat haphazard. The system's field structures remain unwieldy. A clear consensus on the

way the system should operate at the country level and on the basic principles that should guide its country-level work, does not yet exist. A key concern in this regard is the role of the resident coordinator system, how it should be organized, managed and financed, and the conditions that would make it possible for the Resident Coordinator to truly serve as the representative of the system as a whole at the country level.

13. Preparatory consultations held so far with Member States, both in groups and individually, were geared up to promoting engagement of both developed and developing countries, and between both donors and recipients, including bringing in the perspective of middle-income countries. They revealed a remarkable level of convergence among countries in terms of the end results of the process. A number of countries remarked that the work of the Panel would represent the best opportunity of a generation to reform the United Nations development system and strengthen it to tackle current challenges.

14. Donors are indicating a renewed intention to engage seriously with the United Nations, not least because of the volume of additional resources being made available for development cooperation. They are increasingly aware that the exponential growth in earmarked non-core funding risks destabilizing the system and distorting its priorities. Developing countries feel that the growth of non-core resources is constraining the system's ability to deliver on the priorities agreed in the relevant intergovernmental forums. They feel that country-level instruments and plans are yet to deliver on their promise in terms of country ownership and in helping to align the system's resources with genuine country strategies. They believe that there cannot be positive reforms for the development work of the system without the issue of financing being dealt with comprehensively. They have expressed appreciation for the expertise that has been provided by specialized agencies on specific issues at the country level, but consider that this support needs to be strengthened and made more coherent, an important part of the problem being the difficulties that countries perceive in interfacing with different agency frameworks, information and communication technology platforms, administrative procedures, etc. A common view is that there is a need to simplify and make the country structure more efficient, while preserving the neutrality and independence of the United Nations system.

15. The Panel will be holding its first meeting before the CEB session in April to establish its lines of work: its first interaction with stakeholders would thus be with CEB. The Chairman expected that it would meet again in mid-May. The Panel would then have, in early July, a substantive interaction with the Economic and Social Council with a focus on the Council's decision-making vis-à-vis the operational system. There could perhaps be a third meeting late in July and, if required, one in August or September to finalize the report. As part of consultations with individual agencies or groups of agencies, he expected that there would be a special consultation with the Bretton Woods and other financial institutions.

16. Concluding, he indicated that he saw the main contribution of the Panel as helping to enhance the legitimacy of the United Nations by ensuring that an organizational and institutional structure is in place that is coherent, flexible, responsive to needs, effective and well financed.

17. The Committee had an exchange of views, seeking to develop some common orientations as to the direction of inter-agency work in the period ahead and the

stance of the system vis-à-vis the work of the Panel. The following were among the points made:

(a)   The system should take a proactive approach to what was called in the introductory remarks the opportunity of a generation. Otherwise change, and possibly change that may not be conducive to genuine progress, may well be thrust upon it;

(b)   Reform means different things to different constituencies; all parties proffer a commitment to strengthening the system but each has its own agenda and perspective. The first contribution of the system to the Panel should be to offer an approach to reform that will genuinely strengthen the system's capacity to fulfil its mission. In the same context, the system should define the notion of development in a way that captures the totality of its contribution, in its normative and analytical as well as its operational dimensions;

(c)   As a prelude to discussion at the retreat, executive heads may wish to share with each other what responses are being reached in their individual organizations to the drive for reform. This will reveal the extent to which, inter alia, management reforms and decentralization are advancing throughout the system. It will also, at the same time, help bring out some common threads concerning Member States' priorities in the reform process, as they are perceived not only at the centre, but also at the level of individual agencies;

(d)   Efforts should be made to build on success stories and successful innovations. For instance, the system rose to the challenge of developing new approaches to resource mobilization and unity of response in Afghanistan and Iraq;

(e)   Many of the ideas for United Nations reform are not new; what is important is choosing among them, acknowledging that the time is now ripe for implementation and ensuring that all stakeholders are actively engaged in the process;

(f)   To drive the process of reform it is critical that there be a vision of the future evolution of the role of the system. While some thought it feasible to project the system in ten years' time, others saw the risk, in so doing, of engaging in a largely theoretical exercise, given the rapidly changing environment in which the system is operating. In general, it was felt that an incremental approach, based on a clear strategy, was the best way to proceed;

(g)   The concept of the United Nations in development, now and in the future, must embrace functions at the global, regional and operational levels. Effectively integrating them, avoiding the establishment of a centralizing bureaucracy, was a key challenge of reform;

(h)   In the three areas of work included in the terms of reference of the Panel — development, humanitarian work and the environment — neither the three superagencies formula nor the à la carte approach are likely to work or indeed advance effectiveness. One approach, which would maintain the concept of a pluralistic system while avoiding an à la carte approach, might be that of establishing networks of organizations, each clearly defined in terms of what it delivers best as a centre of excellence, with certain shared or linked services. Under this approach, each organization would need to accept a larger or lesser supportive role in contributing to a broader system-wide effort. Even under this approach, the

challenge would be to avoid compartmentalization and ensure integration of cross-cutting themes. In relation to the environment, for example, the integrative concept of sustainable development should not be sacrificed;

(i) There is a need for a resident coordinator system owned by the whole system; this cannot be achieved if the Resident Coordinator is too closely associated with a single entity within the system;

(j) The amount of resources that the system brings to the country is quite small; harmonization within the United Nations system, however desirable, will have little impact unless it is accompanied by harmonization across the spectrum of all external assistance providers. The joint assistance strategies are a good step forward in this regard;

(k) The challenge, operationally, is to align the system at the country level behind a genuine, nationally constituted development strategy in a way that truly advances that strategy's own goals. How can country-level instruments and plans evolve to become genuinely country-owned instruments to these ends? How can the system pool its resources, capacities and knowledge to advance the broader development agenda? If this can be achieved, much of the gap between the normative and operational will disappear. But is this feasible under present governance structures?

(l) It is important to take into account the history of the evolution of the United Nations system, which accounts for the richness and diversity within it. Such wealth of experience and knowledge should not be compromised as the system seeks to enhance coherence in its work;

(m) The various secretariats across the system need to establish communities of practice and knowledge networks and find ways to feed shared knowledge into the intergovernmental process, so as to contribute to policy coherence while maintaining the advantages of a pluralistic system;

(n) There is a growing need to look at programmatic and management dimensions of reform in a holistic way. The joint meeting of HLCP and the High-level Committee on Management (HLCM) will provide an important opportunity to advance in this direction. For instance, a system-wide culture cannot be developed when there is no real mobility of staff among organizations;

(o) There are many good examples of horizontal cooperation that are not widely known. The system is still doing too little to share them not only externally, but also internally. Analysing and replicating good practices should be an integral part of an effective reform process.

18. Commenting on the exchange of views, the Executive Director of the Panel remarked that it was increasingly clear that the unity of the system was in some ways an aspiration. However, in other ways it was a political reality to reckon with: the success of one was, ultimately, the success of all and, conversely, the failure of one would be the failure of all. However, management systems are not currently aligned to this political reality.

19. It was important for the organizations of the system to provide the Panel with the full benefit of their experiences and perspectives. With respect to consultations with governing bodies, one idea was to bring together the bureaux of the governing

bodies of three or four agencies at a time and organize interactions between them and the Panel.

20.   In addition to providing the Panel with the "One United Nations" report, the Chairman suggested that each organization could prepare a short fact sheet containing pertinent information. He would develop a template for these fact sheets.

21.   The Chairman noted that the challenges that the system faced were truly extraordinary. Over the last 10 to 15 years, it had been striving to address global issues emanating from very rapid global integration and to meet development challenges — all in an environment of stagnating resources. While the impact of the system has been powerful in normative areas, particularly through the conferences and summits, the capacity of many organizations to operationalize these normative advances has been hampered by zero nominal growth or even declines in resource flows. Thus, in spite of these advances, the risk of the system's marginalization remained very real. It was important that CEB clearly articulate a commitment, as well as a sense of urgency and a genuine desire to seize the opportunities for progress that the 2005 World Summit Outcome and, now, the Panel offer. The question has been asked whether we are indeed a system; he believed that we have the elements of a system but that it is necessary to further develop the vision of a true system and take the necessary steps to realize it. He looked forward to a further discussion of these and related issues at the joint meeting between HLCP and HLCM, and welcomed the initiative of any members interested in working to elaborate specific proposals for action.

II.   Preparations for the Spring 2006 session of the Chief Executives Board for Coordination

A.   Implementation and follow-up to the World Summit on the Information Society

22.   The Tunis phase of the World Summit on the Information Society in 2005, along with the earlier phase in Geneva in 2003, established the United Nations system as a central actor to address the many issues surrounding the goal of bringing the fruits of the information revolution to everyone. The Summit demonstrated how information and communication technologies, when properly harnessed, can have a powerful effect on reducing poverty through broadening access to educational, medical and financial opportunities as well as on increasing environmental sustainability and improving the quality of life. Among the many proposals for follow-up embodied in the Summit's outcome, the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society requested the Secretary-General to establish within CEB a United Nations group on the information society. In response, the United Nations Secretariat, the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) developed a proposal, for consideration by HLCP, addressing the establishment of such a group and how this initiative would relate to, and interact with other strands of follow-up and implementation initiated by the Summit.

23.   The Committee received briefings from the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and ITU regarding the Summit's outcome, the background to the

creation of the United Nations group on the information society and the proposed operating modalities of the group. These briefings highlighted the complexity of the issue of the information society, which cuts across many, if not most of the programme and policy issues before the system. The presentations especially stressed the unprecedented engagement of the private sector, civil society and technical communities in the Summit and its outcome. Recognition of the crucial importance of a truly multi-stakeholder approach to follow-up and implementation was a main leitmotif of the Tunis Agenda. Another was the view that implementation of and follow-up to the World Summit on the Information Society should be an integral part of the follow-up to major United Nations conferences (see General Assembly resolution 57/270 B), hence the Summit's request that the Economic and Social Council oversee system-wide follow-up and review modalities for strengthening the Commission on Science and Technology for Development.

24.   The Committee's discussion focused on the basic purposes and functioning of the United Nations group on the information society. Members noted that the purpose of the group was to link multiple stakeholders, at global, regional and country levels, as an information and coordination nexus for the inter-agency activities associated with both the implementation of the action lines contained in the Tunis Agenda, and the follow-up processes in the Economic and Social Council and other bodies.

25.   With regard to operating modalities, it was noted that the group would function similarly to other inter-agency networks (such as UN-Oceans and UN-Energy), without mandated reporting to HLCP, but consulting with HLCP, as necessary, to resolve specific cross-cutting policy issues. The presenters and many Committee members stressed the desirability of light operating methods and of providing an example to other inter-agency bodies by maximizing the use of videoconferencing and other technology-based modes of interaction. The representative of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) stressed the need to avoid duplication of effort with other inter-agency and multi-stakeholder entities and multiple reporting, and emphasized that these requirements should be fully taken into account in acting on the terms of reference for the United Nations group on the information society. It was pointed out in this regard that follow-up to the World Summit on the Information Society is essentially a policy rather than a technical matter, to be dealt with at the inter-agency level as called for by the Summit; the Information and Communication Technology Network and its working groups are addressing largely technical issues, in response to a request from Member States to develop a United Nations system strategic framework on information and communication technologies.

26.   The Committee decided to approve the report (CEB/2006/HLCP/CRP.2) before it with a few amendments concerning the composition of the Bureau of the Group and its reporting requirements. The Committee commends the report, as amended, to CEB for its endorsement.

B.   Gender mainstreaming and women, peace and security

27.   The Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women introduced a background note on gender mainstreaming and women, peace and security (CEB/2006/HLCP/CRP.3), which contains a number of recommendations for the

consideration of both High-level Committees. She also provided a briefing on the outcome of the Inter-agency Network on Women and Gender Equality, which met in New York from 22 to 24 February 2006.

28. The Special Adviser thanked the Committee for having identified gender mainstreaming as a priority area in its work programme, and referred to the 2005 World Summit Outcome, in which Member States reaffirmed the importance of a full and effective implementation of the goals and objectives of the Beijing Platform for Action. She also recalled the letter of 16 January 2006 from the United Nations Secretary-General to CEB members, in which HLCP and HLCM were asked to develop, in cooperation with her, a system-wide gender mainstreaming policy and strategy. The background note before the Committee identified elements for such a policy and strategy, including both elements common to all organizations of the system and those that would be tailored to individual mandates. Regarding the process ahead, her office was expected to draft the actual policy and strategy in consultation with members of the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality. Progress being made in this regard, including the views that might be expressed by CEB at its session in the first half of 2006, would be reported to the Economic and Social Council in July. Thereafter, her office would work closely with organizations of the system to ensure an effective implementation of the policy and strategy.

29. Although the importance of gender mainstreaming was widely recognized within the system, progress in including a gender perspective in the policies and programmes of organizations of the system remained uneven. To redress this, there was a need for stronger accountability at the highest levels within organizations and supporting action in terms of training and capacity-building. There was an equal need for capacity-building on the ground and a more effective monitoring of projects and programmes.

30. Members of the Committee thanked the Special Adviser for her presentation. Commenting on the note before the Committee, members advocated a stronger focus on the human rights aspects of the issue; on strengthening partnerships with non-governmental organizations, civil society and academic institutions, and more generally, on the importance of a participatory process in which all, women, men, girls and boys, would be included; on the empowerment of women in decision-making structures; and on the critical role to be played by Member States. It was stressed that gender mainstreaming should not only be reflected in the priority programmes of an organization's work, but also in its overall strategic plans and budgets.

31. The Committee endorsed the need for a system-wide policy and strategy on gender mainstreaming and recommended that the background note, amended in light of the comments made by both HLCP and HLCM, serve as input for the discussion that will be held in CEB in April 2006. The Special Adviser was requested to help identify the key elements for consideration by executive heads at the forthcoming session.

III. Follow-up to Chief Executives Board for Coordination and High-level Committee on Programmes decisions

A. Employment

32. In introducing this item (CEB/2006/HLCP/CRP.4) the representative of the International Labour Organization (ILO) noted that the Committee had been forward-looking in identifying employment as a priority issue at its retreat at the Greentree Foundation in Manhasset, New York, in July 2005. The 2005 World Summit Outcome had subsequently identified the goals of full and productive employment and decent work for all, including for women and young people, as a central objective of national and international policies as well as national development strategies to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Governments had also resolved to ensure full respect for fundamental principles and rights at work.

33. The significance of employment in pursuing the wider development agenda was underlined further when Member States agreed that the theme of the high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council in July 2006 would be on creating an environment at the national and international levels conducive to generating full and productive employment and decent work for all, and its impact on sustainable development. In addition, the Commission on Social Development had chosen the theme of promoting full employment for its work in 2007/08.

34. Progress in promoting full and productive employment, a central objective of the 1995 World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen, has been disappointing. Some 1.37 billion women and men work for and live on less than two dollars a day, the same number as 10 years ago. This represents half of the global workforce. While there has been economic growth in many countries, this has not been matched by a decrease in the unemployment rate. This was a major concern not only for the sustainability of growth and the viability of the labour market, but also for trade, social cohesion and security.

35. The ILO representative underscored the need for strengthening national and local capacities to address the linkages among work, growth and poverty reduction, as well as between poverty and discrimination. She suggested that the poverty reduction strategies and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework experience have helped to further discussions on coordination and harmonization of priority-setting processes; this should now be extended to the content of policies.

36. Ensuring productive employment is both an end in itself and a means by which other objectives, such as sustainable development, peacebuilding, health, food security and gender mainstreaming, would be reached. In that sense, employment should cut across the programmatic and sectoral interventions of the organizations of the United Nations system.

37. The representative suggested that HLCP could develop a tool to guide the management of actions by the system in support of country efforts. It should facilitate the assessment of the potential of the policies, strategies, programmes and activities of organizations of the system, individually and collectively, in terms of employment and decent work outcomes. Its overall objective would be to help enhance the employment impact of United Nations system activities. HLCP might

consider inviting ILO to lead a group of interested organizations to develop such a tool, for review at its session in the second half of 2006, taking into account the processes leading up to and following the high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council.

38. In the ensuing discussion, members of the Committee expressed agreement with the analysis and recommendations of the paper. With regard to the development of such a tool, it was noted that it should serve to enhance the coherence of the system in dealing with a host of interrelated issues. It would, as such, be an excellent example of horizontal cooperation within the system. It was pointed out that a fully consultative process had already been launched in the preparations for the Council's high-level segment, including in the drafting of the report of the Secretary-General and the convening of round-table discussions in April.

39. It was recalled that Member States must determine how best to promote growth and investment policies to ensure a beneficial impact on employment. The tool being proposed would help to facilitate a greater understanding of the labour market; for instance, the unemployment rate is a key statistic in developed countries but this information is often lacking in developing countries. Further, there was a need for enhancing understanding within country teams themselves of the links between employment and poverty reduction. It was also suggested that the connections between employment and education, employment and sustainable tourism, as well as between employment and the fight against crime, could be made more explicit.

40. It was proposed that, for starters, organizations may wish to assess their activities at the country level to identify the key components involved in building capacity and knowledge on decent work issues, as well as systems and instruments to help monitor, report and evaluate performance on employment creation.

41. Some participants requested further clarification regarding the proposed tool in the period ahead. It was agreed to revert to this agenda item at the HLCP session in the second half of 2006, in the light of the outcome of the consultations to be led by ILO.

B. Migration

42. The Committee considered this item in the light of two papers — a scoping note prepared by ILO on the elements for a work programme (CEB/2006/HLCP/CRP.5), and an information note by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs on developments relating to the follow-up to the report and recommendations of the Global Commission on International Migration, and to the preparations for a high-level dialogue of the General Assembly in September 2006 (CEB/2006/HLCP/CRP.6).

43. The representative of the Department recalled that when the Committee identified migration as a priority issue for its work programme, at its meeting at the Greentree Foundation in July 2005, the report of the Global Commission had not yet been released. That report, entitled "Migration in an Interconnected World: New Directions for Action", was presented to the Secretary-General in October 2005. One of its recommendations related to the strengthening of inter-agency cooperation arrangements to ensure a more coherent and effective institutional response to the

opportunities and challenges presented by international migration. In response to this recommendation and at the request of the Secretary-General, the Geneva Migration Group has submitted a proposal to him, which was currently under his review, to establish a global migration group, with terms of reference as set out in the note and with a membership that would include, in addition to members of the Geneva Migration Group (ILO, the International Organization for Migration, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime), the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, UNDP, the United Nations Population Fund and the World Bank. The Group may invite other organizations to its meetings, depending on the topic under consideration. The representative of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs also briefed the Committee on preparations underway for the September 2006 high-level dialogue, which were detailed in the background note.

44.   The representative of ILO noted that consideration of this agenda item was a timely opportunity for HLCP to set the stage for the responses that will be required from organizations of the system and external partners to the decisions to be taken at the high-level dialogue in the General Assembly in September 2006. The Committee was well placed to seek to improve the coherence of the policies and programmes of the system relating to migration with the system's overall economic and social policies and activities, and to help to manage the knowledge base required to enable the system to further substantive progress across the many dimensions of migration.

45.   Members of the Committee acknowledged that migration cuts across the mandates of most of the system's organizations, and has an important regional as well as country-level dimension. They cited the manifold factors affecting migration, including environmental as well as economic and social factors, and noted that migration touches on the very core of human security. Issues discussed ranged from the tightened immigration policies being adopted in Europe and the United States of America, to the economic benefits of migration, the impact of remittances, educational issues, implications of the brain drain, the impact of migration on peace and security in Africa, South-South migration, the impact of migration on food security, the protection of refugees, the rights of migrants and their integration and treatment, the cultural and social dimensions of such integration, trade and information and communication technology issues and criminal activity linked to migration. The picture in relation to each of these issues was a complex one. For instance, while there were legitimate concerns about the effects of the brain drain of migration, there were instances where migrants obtained skills and training and then returned to their native countries bringing back the benefit of their experiences abroad. As for remittances, the impact varied: in some cases, the funds involved tended to be funnelled towards consumption rather than production; in others, particularly in rural communities, remittances benefit community development substantially and directly. With regard to the migration of skilled personnel, such as physicians and nurses, it was noted that the World Health Assembly had asked for the development of a code of practice to determine the fiscal responsibilities of the receiving country.

46.   Following an exchange of views, the ILO representative agreed to expand the scoping note to reflect the points made by the Committee. In line with the proposal contained in paragraph 13 of the ILO note, HLCP invited a group of its members to

undertake, under the leadership of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and ILO, the collection and consolidation of information across the system to obtain an overall view of migration-related areas where policies interact and activities intersect, and to detect gaps and emerging areas requiring further research and data collection, policy-development, normative frameworks and legislation, as well as knowledge management and the sharing of good practices on linkages to development, peace and security, social cohesion and cultural, health and environmental concerns. This exercise would be coordinated with the work of the Geneva Migration Group, as well as with the activities being undertaken in preparation for the high-level dialogue. Following the event in the General Assembly, the group will be entrusted with the analysis of the implications for the system and develop proposals for possible action by HLCP and CEB.

C. Science and technology

47. At its last session, HLCP invited UNCTAD to prepare a note on possible next steps that the Committee could take in the area of science and technology. In response to that invitation, the Committee had before it an issues note (CEB/2006/HLCP/CRP.7/Rev.1), intended to stimulate discussion and generate inputs from members on the development of a work programme in the area.

48. The item provided the occasion for members to share information about relevant developments in their organizations, as well as for an initial reflection on whether and how best to reflect the broad theme of science and technology in the Committee's work programme. On the latter point, it was suggested that two considerations, not necessarily convergent, might be borne in mind: one is the desirability of HLCP engaging in a discussion on how the system might best respond to the renewed international attention being given to science and technology and technology transfer, as reflected in the 2005 World Summit Outcome; the other is whether science and technology or, better, technology applications are a suitable approach to ensure that the priorities of the technical agencies find an adequate reflection in the CEB and HLCP work programme. Across these two considerations, the view was expressed that the specific dimensions of science and technology that would feature in the work programme would have to be clearly specified to ensure that the Committee's future work in this area would be duly focused.

49. In concluding the Committee's consideration of this item, the representative of UNCTAD stated that the observations provided, as well as further comments that members were invited to present in writing on how they perceive their contributions to joint initiatives and work on science and technology in the context of the CEB work programme and implementation of the 2005 World Summit Outcome, would be taken into account in a revised version of the paper, to be submitted to the Committee at its next session. He requested members to provide their comments to him by the end of May 2006, to allow sufficient time for analysis and further consultations among the relevant entities.

IV. Relations with inter-agency bodies

A. United Nations Geographic Information Working Group

50.   The Committee was briefed on the United Nations Geographic Information Working Group (UNGIWG) by the two Co-Chairmen of the group, Mr. Jeff Tschirley (FAO) and Mr. David Kaatrud (World Food Programme (WFP)). It was explained that UNGIWG was a voluntary network of specialized United Nations agencies, programmes and funds, that included FAO, WFP, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, UNDP, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), UNHCR, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the United Nations Office for Project Services, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Bank. UNGIWG was established in March 2000 to: (a) facilitate technical collaboration and formulate policies concerning geographic information in the United Nations system and together with Member States; (b) address common geospatial issues — maps, boundaries, data access and exchange, adherence to international standards, naming conventions and location; and (c) provide a forum to discuss emerging technologies and experience with applications, and to coordinate actions.

51.   Responding to queries from the Committee during the question and answer session that followed the briefing, the two Co-Chairmen indicated that UNGIWG was open to all interested United Nations system agencies. They stressed that the group worked on spatial presentation of data and therefore was complementary to databases such as DevInfo, developed by UNICEF to monitor global and national commitments to sustained human development. They added that UNGIWG had in fact helped DevInfo in the production of certain maps.

52.   Members of the Committee expressed appreciation and interest for the briefing. Some representatives of organizations that were not members of the Group indicated that they would pursue the possibility of participating in relevant aspects of its work. In response to a question concerning the relationship between inter-agency groups such as UNGIWG that did not operate in the framework of the CEB and HLCP, the Secretary of CEB recalled that since the reform of the inter-agency coordination mechanism in 2000, no reporting requirements were placed on any of the inter-agency networks, whether established at the initiative of CEB or otherwise. While the CEB secretariat should, to the extent possible, survey and bring emerging policy issues of inter-agency concern to the attention of the Committee, it was up to the networks themselves to determine whether there were issues that they would wish to bring to the attention of HLCP for policy guidance, and it was up to the Committee to decide on the desirability or otherwise of including them in its agenda.

53.   On the broader issue of the United Nations statistical system, some members of the Committee expressed the view that coordination in the area was still far from satisfactory. At the same time, reference was made to products such as the 2005 Millennium Development Goal Report that testify to the substantial progress being made by the system to use a common set of data and indicators. The Secretary of CEB noted that it would be useful, at some appropriate time, for the Committee to have a dialogue with the Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities that had succeeded the Subcommittee on Statistics. It was a very active and

inclusive network, and interaction with users could only benefit both. He also encouraged UNGIWG to provide the Committee with a briefing similar to the one that it had offered to HLCP.

B. United Nations Ocean and Coastal Areas Network

54. The Chair noted that the Committee would be looking at the work of UN-Oceans for the first time since its establishment in October 2003. This was one of three networks — the other two being UN-Energy and UN-Water — that HLCP has been responsible for launching in the aftermath of the Johannesburg Summit. The Committee had received a briefing on UN-Energy at its session in the second half of 2005 and would be taking up UN-Water at its next session.

55. Ms. Anne Rogers, Deputy Coordinator of UN-Oceans, introduced a paper summarizing the network's accomplishments (CEB/2006/HLCP/CRP.9). Mr. Serge Garcia (FAO) provided a brief on the web-based United Nations Atlas of the Oceans, noting that it was designed for use by policymakers who need to become familiar with ocean issues, and scientists, students and resource managers who need access to underlying databases and approaches to sustainability. The system brings together data on ocean and marine sustainable development and management issues and trends, and related maps produced by the United Nations system and selected partners. The Atlas software was developed by FAO, which still heads the project and maintains it on behalf of and under the supervision and editorial responsibility of UN-Oceans. In addition to a grant from the United Nations Foundation, some funds and contributions in kind were provided by a core group of United Nations organizations and substantial support was also provided by national partners. The available funds were now exhausted and, without a minimum cost-sharing arrangement by the United Nations system, the future of the Atlas is in jeopardy. HLCP support in this regard is therefore urgently being sought.

56. Members of the Committee expressed their appreciation for the work of UN-Oceans, and noted that the United Nations Atlas of the Oceans project was an excellent demonstration of horizontal cooperation which should be supported by organizations of the system. They regretted that inter-agency collaboration, which enhanced the collective delivery of the system in key areas, was often not adequately acknowledged and backed up with requisite financing. The Chairman urged the organizations most directly concerned to see to it that the project is provided the necessary financial support to ensure its continuation.

V. Work programme of HLCP

57. The Committee took up the issue of its programme of work for the remainder of 2006 in the light of its review, under agenda item 2, of the system's response to the 2005 World Summit Outcome, of developments that had taken place since the Committee last met, and of the discussion held between itself and the High-level Committee on Management on preparations for interaction between CEB and the Panel of the Secretary-General on System-wide Coherence. It had before it a matrix showing the relevant decisions in the Summit Outcome, the corresponding challenges in the "One United Nations" report, the priority issues identified at the

second retreat at the Greentree Foundation and the listing of decisions it had taken in recent years (CEB/2006/HLCP/CRP.10).

58.   It was acknowledged that, with the Panel about to launch its work, interacting in the first instance with CEB at its forthcoming session, HLCP will, in all likelihood, be called upon to play an active, dynamic role over the next few months, including in supporting its Chairman, as an ex-officio member of the Panel. There was therefore a need for reflection and stocktaking, following the CEB session in April 2006, to determine how the work programme of HLCP can be of most assistance to CEB in the months ahead.

59.   Taking up this item following the joint meeting with HLCM, the Committee considered that the meeting had proved extremely useful. The working groups that brought programme and management specialists together to discuss cross-cutting themes were found to be especially beneficial in advancing towards a One United Nations. It was suggested that such meetings should continue on a regular basis. It was mentioned that links should also be strengthened with the United Nations Development Group, which had reflected, in its priorities for 2006, the concept of one programme/framework, one leader and one team.

VI.   Other matters

A.   United Nations System Staff College

60.   The interim Director of the United Nations System Staff College briefed the Committee on the proposals for the development of a core curriculum for the Staff College contained in a note (CEB/2006/HLCP/CRP.11), which was prepared in consultation with all concerned parties of the United Nations system. He recalled that members of the Board of Governors had requested that the curriculum, which should be clearly linked with the ongoing reform processes, should be presented, through the High-level Committees, to CEB for commitment on both content of the curriculum programmes and their financing.

61.   The interim Director noted that, while some of the College projects, such as the Resident Coordinator and the early warning and preventive measure projects, were generally appreciated and continued to attract funding, there remained, also within the system itself, a degree of scepticism about the College and its future directions.

62.   The core curriculum being presented to HLCP focused, much as it does in national Governments, on life-cycle training. This would include induction training for new staff, mid-level training for staff at the P-4 and P-5 levels, with a particular focus on the smaller organizations without such programmes; and senior management training for those at the D-1 and D-2 levels. He noted that the latter training would serve to enhance system-wide coherence and may be tailored along the lines of the section on the way forward of the "One United Nations" report. He added that, if a shared culture and sense of common purpose is wanted, it surely could not be only on management issues. The proposed curriculum thus suggested pilot programmes on one or more of the key themes covered by the Millennium Summit Declaration in order to see how best to proceed in that respect.

63. The interim Director further informed the Committee that HLCM, which had just concluded its consideration of this issue, had concurred in principle with the approaches underlying the proposals, subject to the development of a business plan to be presented to the Staff College Board of Governors at its next session. The business plan, which would cover a minimum period of two years, would likely be completed in the next few weeks.

64. HLCP agreed with the approaches endorsed by HLCM. It was noted that the contribution of the Staff College to creating a common system-wide culture was potentially extremely important but had not as yet been sufficiently exploited. It was further observed that the senior management training could prove a valuable vehicle also for gender mainstreaming.

B. Updates on avian flu

65. The Committee had before it two progress reports, for January and February 2006, by the United Nations System Influenza Coordination (UNSIC) (CEB/2006/HLCP/CRP.12), as well as the WHO/FAO information note on Avian Influenza entitled "Food Safety Implications" and FAO Avian Influenza Disease Emergency news — Update on the Avian Influenza situation (as of 23 February 2006) — No. 39. The Committee was briefed by the representatives of FAO and WHO, who noted that while a few new cases of humans contracting the avian influenza had recently been reported by China and India, so far there were no known cases of the avian influenza spreading from human to human. Given the limited capacity of Africa to fight the spread of the disease, reports of the arrival of the influenza in that continent were especially alarming.

66. The FAO representative briefed members on the spread of avian influenza to Africa, specifically Nigeria, where the poultry population was estimated at 140 million but where capacity to monitor and control outbreaks of avian influenza is limited. Poultry constitutes an important asset for many smallholder farmers in Nigeria and the negative economic impact of the disease could result in some farmers falling back into poverty. Paying compensation for the loss of poultry could not only avert this risk but also is an important incentive for reporting outbreaks. The spread of the disease into West Africa did not follow the migratory routes of wild birds and other reasons for the pathways along which avian influenza was spreading would need to be explored.

67. It was recalled that work on avian influenza was ongoing at three levels within the United Nations system: (a) the Deputy Secretary-General chaired a steering Committee which set policy and guidance for a coordinated response by the United Nations system; (b) Dr. David Nabarro, the United Nations System Senior Coordinator for Avian and Human Influenza, was in charge of coordinating the United Nations response worldwide; and (c) the medical directors of the organizations of the United Nations system were in the process of releasing a contingency plan for United Nations system staff members.

68. The representative of the International Civil Aviation Organization noted that her organization had been working on the development of preparedness guidelines for States, airports and airlines in case a strain of avian influenza emerges that can be transmitted easily among humans. These guidelines would continue to be

modified over time as more information is gained on preparedness planning and on the behaviour of relevant infectious agents.

69.　During the discussion of this item, the view was expressed that the level of awareness in different parts of the United Nations system of ongoing system activities was still quite limited. It was particularly important, under these circumstances, that members of HLCP and HLCM share the information received within their respective organizations to avoid a proliferation of uncoordinated initiatives and processes.

C. Progress report on the work of the task force on transnational organized crime

70.　The representative of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime provided a progress report on the work of the task force on transnational organized crime (CEB/2006/HLCP/CRP.13). He noted that while the inputs from member organizations had been somewhat limited, the responses received had confirmed that cooperation was progressing at the country level, while joint programming at the Headquarters level was less developed.

71.　He further informed the Committee that the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, which supplemented the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, and the United Nations Convention against Corruption had entered into force.

72.　Finally, he suggested that the Committee may consider inviting the International Group for Anti-Corruption Coordination, which was dedicated to strengthening international anti-corruption coordination and collaboration, to provide it with a report on its activities. Its activities, he felt, were of relevance not only to the discussion on developing a new United Nations system management culture but also to the work of the High-level Panel.

D. United Nations tourism exchange network

73.　The Committee was briefed by the representative of the World Tourism Organization (WTO) on the proposal to establish a United Nations tourism exchange network (CEB/2006/HLCP/CRP.14). The proposal had been circulated to all the United Nations organizations that had participated in the first informal consultations. Favourable replies had been received from most of them, inviting WTO to proceed to set up the network as soon as possible. The network was intended to be a light, flexible and practical mechanism to promote inter-agency cooperation. In line with the generic guidelines for collaborative inter-agency mechanisms, the objectives of the network would be to facilitate information sharing and to promote collaboration among actors on policy coherence, advocacy, capacity-building and monitoring and evaluation.

74.　Member of the Committee expressed full support for the initiative, bearing in mind the growing importance of tourism as a major sector of economic activity worldwide with important impacts on the social, cultural and environmental fabrics of societies. It was agreed that WTO should proceed with the implementation of the

proposal, following the launch of the network at the CEB session at WTO headquarters.

75.   In concluding the Committee's consideration of this item, the representative of WTO invited all concerned organizations of the system to engage in an active dialogue among themselves and with WTO on their tourism-related activities, as part of the effort to maximize the overall contribution of the system to sustainable development, and to designate focal points for this purpose.

E.   Violence against children

76.   The representative of UNICEF provided a briefing to the Committee on the Secretary-General's study on violence against children, which would be presented to the General Assembly in 2006. Violence against children was a real barrier to achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Security Council resolution 1612 (2005) on the rights and protection of children in armed conflict, which was adopted on 26 July 2005, had been significant in elevating the status of the issue and calling attention to its human rights and security implications.

77.   The study, led by Professor Paulo Sergio Pinheiro, would focus on children as victims of violence. The study sought to provide an understanding of the nature, extent, causes and consequences of different forms of violence against children. Physical, sexual or mental violence and neglect of children by individuals and groups in the course of crime, including drug-related organized crime, commercial sexual exploitation and the sale and trafficking of children, were also being examined.

F.   Knowledge management

78.   The Committee received an update from the CEB secretariat on the status of the United Nations system task force on knowledge-sharing. Mr. Ken Herman, Senior Adviser on Information Management Policy Coordination, reported that the secretariat had circulated terms of reference for the task force and, while some responses had been received, comments from other organizations were still awaited. He recalled that the Committee, at its session in July 2005, had indicated that the objective of the task force would be to elaborate a knowledge-sharing strategy for the United Nations system to support the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. He noted that the proposed task force would endeavour to build upon the many activities ongoing throughout the system regarding knowledge-sharing. He drew the attention of the Committee to a report entitled "Evaluation of knowledge-management networks in pursuit of the goals of the Millennium Declaration", being prepared by the Office of Internal Oversight Services, which touches upon many issues of concern to the task force. He noted that the CEB secretariat had been actively involved in its elaboration.

79.   He expected to finalize the terms of reference of the task force within the next two weeks and to convene a meeting as soon as possible. Members of the Committee who had not already done so were invited to send their comments on the terms of reference and to designate representatives to serve on the task force. He reiterated that the task force would utilize electronic means of communicating almost exclusively, in order to obtain as broad a participation as possible.

80.   The Committee took note of the progress achieved in setting up the task force and requested that it be kept fully informed of further developments.

G.   Task Force on Economic Development

81.   The representative of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) recalled that the Committee had requested the Task Force on Economic Development to present its final report to the current session. The Committee was informed that a new Director-General had assumed office at UNIDO and had asked for additional time to consider how best to proceed with the work of the Task Force. The two issue-leaders of the Task Force, namely UNCTAD and UNEP, had been consulted and had agreed to the UNIDO suggestion that the final report be presented to the Committee's session in the second half of 2006.

H.   Date and venue of future sessions of the High-level Committee on Programmes

82.   The Chair suggested that, in order to fully exploit the synergies of the Committee, and bearing in mind the timetable of the Panel on System-wide Coherence, it would be desirable to increase the frequency of interactions among its members in the coming months. Given the fact that many organizations would already be present for the session of the Economic and Social Council, he proposed that HLCP hold an intersessional meeting in July 2006. The CEB secretariat would follow up with a suggested time frame.

Annex I

Agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda.

2. The system's response to the 2005 World Summit Outcome: reviews of developments since the sessions in the second half of 2005 of the High-level Committee on Programmes (HLCP) and the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) and preparations for the joint meeting with the High-level Committee on Management.

3. Preparations for the spring 2006 session of CEB:

   (a) Implementation and follow-up to the World Summit on the Information Society;

   (b) Gender mainstreaming and women, peace and security.

4. Follow-up to CEB decisions:

   (a) Employment;

   (b) Migration;

   (c) Science and technology.

5. Relations with inter-agency bodies:

   (a) United Nations Geographic Information Working Group;

   (b) UN-Oceans.

6. HLCP work programme.

7. Other matters:

   (a) United Nations System Staff College;

   (b) Updates on Avian flu;

   (c) Progress report on the work of the task force on transnational organized crime;

   (d) United Nations tourism exchange network;

   (e) Violence against children;

   (f) Knowledge management;

   (g) Task Force on Economic Development;

   (h) Date and venue of future sessions of HLCP.

Annex II

List of participants

Chairman: Lennart Båge (International Fund for Agricultural Development)
Vice-Chairman: Mats Karlsson (World Bank)
Secretary: Phyllis Lee (United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination secretariat)

United Nations	Patrizio Civili
Department of Economic and Social Affairs	Rachel Mayanja Sarbuland Khan Anne Rogers
Regional Commissions New York Office	Kazi A. Rahman
International Labour Organization	Maria Ducci Christophe Perrin
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	Serge Garcia Jeff Tschirley Wendy Mann
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization	Hans D'Orville Jean-Yves Le Saux
International Civil Aviation Organization	Lise Boisvert
World Health Organization	Bill Kean
World Bank	Oscar Avalle
International Monetary Fund	Reinhard Munzberg
Universal Postal Union	Olivier Boussard
International Telecommunication Union	Arthur Levin
World Meteorological Organization	Elena Manaenkova Zamba Batjargal
World Intellectual Property Organization	Orobola Fasehun
United Nations Industrial Development Organization	Agerico Lacanlale
International Atomic Energy Agency	Ronald Sturm
World Tourism Organization	Eugenio Yunis
United Nations Conference on Trade and Development	Dirk Bruinsma
United Nations Development Programme	Bruce Jenks
United Nations Environment Programme	Adnan Amin Maaike Jansen

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	A. Akodjenou Christina Linner
United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East	Lex Takkenberg
United Nations Children's Fund	Ado Vaher
United Nations Population Fund	Mari Simonen Kwabena Osei Danquah
World Food Programme	Allan Jury
United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime	Ugi Zvekic
United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)	Axumite Gebre-Egziabher
Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization	Bernhard Wrabetz
Joint and Co-sponsored United Nations Programme on HIV and AIDS	Eammon Murphy
United Nations University	Janos Bogardi
United Nations System Staff College	Don Skerrett
United Nations Development Group Office	Sally Fegan-Wyles
United Nations Chief Executives Board for Coordination secretariat	Qazi Shaukat Fareed Ken Herman Mikael Rosengren

Annex III

A framework for United Nations system follow-up and implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society

I. Introduction

1.   The outcomes of the Geneva and Tunis phases of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) outlined a coherent vision for a people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented information society, in which information and communication technologies (ICTs) would be harnessed to empower individuals, communities and nations to achieve their full potential and to improve the quality of life. A main thrust of these documents is on harnessing the potential of ICTs as tools for achieving the internationally agreed development goals. These technologies can be a powerful instrument for empowering the poor and the marginalized; increasing access to health and education; enhancing productivity; generating economic growth, job creation and employability; strengthening environmental sustainability; and reducing poverty and improving the quality of life of all. They can also promote dialogue among peoples, nations and civilizations. At the same time, the Summit addressed many critical issues concerning the enabling environment for the age of Internet and the information society, and put into place a process to address those issues.

2.   At present, the benefits of the ICT revolution are unevenly distributed between the developed and developing countries and within societies. WSIS participants therefore stated their firm commitment to turning this digital divide into a digital opportunity for all, particularly for those who risk being left behind and being further marginalized.

3.   In order to forge a coherent, effective and sustainable global effort to meet the challenges of building a truly global information society, WSIS agreed on 11 action lines in the Geneva Plan of Action adopted in 2003 and a set of connectivity targets to be reached by 2015, inspired by the Millennium Development Goals. In the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society, adopted in November 2005, world leaders agreed to a concrete blueprint and mechanism to achieve these objectives, involving all stakeholders and with particular reliance on many different institutions and bodies of the United Nations system. The Tunis Agenda recognizes as well that implementation and follow-up of its outcomes are an integral part of the integrated and coordinated follow-up to and implementation of major United Nations conferences and summits, and specifically refers to General Assembly resolution 57/270 B on the subject. The WSIS instruments stress that the aftermath of the Summit should be used to further enhance support for the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

4.   In relation to the implementation of and follow-up to the World Summit on the Information Society, the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society decided to establish a mechanism for implementation and follow-up at the national, regional and international levels. It is useful to make a distinction between implementation, for which the primary responsibility falls to all stakeholders, and follow-up, which

entails a review of developments on WSIS issues and policy debate both at the inter-agency and at the intergovernmental levels.

5. At the international level, the Tunis Agenda provides a detailed and specific blueprint for implementation and follow-up actions, involving all stakeholders. The General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, the Secretary-General, the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB), the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and other United Nations agencies and the regional commissions are all assigned specific roles. The Tunis Agenda also delineates a clear distinction between implementation and follow-up.

6. Three principal streams of implementation and/or follow-up at the international level in the Tunis outputs can be identified as:

(a) Intergovernmental: General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Commission on Science and Technology for Development (a functional commission of the Council);

(b) Inter-agency: United Nations Group on the Information Society (UNGIS) (to be established within CEB);

(c) Multi-stakeholder:

(i) Implementation: multi-stakeholder implementation of the 11 action lines would be moderated or facilitated by United Nations agencies, when appropriate, led by ITU, UNESCO and UNDP;

(ii) Follow-up: multi-stakeholder contribution to the intergovernmental follow up by the Economic and Social Council and the Commission on Science and Technology for Development would be provided through a proposed global alliance for ICT and development, as a forum for policy dialogue,[1] as well as through other public-private partnerships.

7. In addition to the mechanisms specifically provided in the Tunis Agenda, inter-agency coordination would encompass:

(a) Policy and programme coordination provided by UNGIS;

(b) Country-level coordination spearheaded by the Resident Coordinator system with the principal task of mainstreaming WSIS outcomes into United Nations Development Assistance Framework/common country assessments, poverty reduction strategy papers, national development strategies and national e-strategies.

II. Intergovernmental follow-up

8. Intergovernmental follow-up will include the following bodies:

(a) General Assembly: the Assembly is requested in the Tunis Agenda to carry out an overall review of WSIS in 2015, which coincides with the final year of the Millennium Development Goals. This will give the Assembly the opportunity to

---

[1] The proposal to launch a global alliance for ICT and development is currently under consideration by the Secretary-General.

place this review in the context of the broader review of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals;

(b) The Economic and Social Council has been requested to oversee the system-wide follow-up of the Geneva and Tunis outcomes of WSIS. To this end, the Council could undertake an annual review of WSIS, in the context of the integrated and coordinated follow-up to and implementation of major United Nations conferences and summits, on the basis of a thematic approach that could link the outcomes of WSIS with internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. Such a review could take place within the coordination segment, on the basis of a multi-year programme in accordance with General Assembly resolution 57/270 B;

(c) Commission on Science and Technology for Development: the Economic and Social Council has been requested to review, at its substantive session of 2006, the composition, mandate and agenda of the Commission, with a view to strengthening it to enable it to perform its new role in assisting the Council in the follow-up to WSIS. The new mandate and agenda of the Commission will need to reflect two key elements:

(i) Contribution to the Council's follow-up to the outcomes of WSIS; and

(ii) Contribution to the Council's follow-up to the United Nations 2005 World Summit Outcome in the area of science and technology.

Within the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council, there is already a body of practice on how the follow-up to other major conferences (such as Johannesburg, Copenhagen and Beijing) is to be pursued. Organizing, in alternate years, review and policy sessions is now an increasingly accepted practice. Also, there is substantial experience in pursuing multi-year programmes and thematic approaches and in engaging with key stakeholders such as the private sector and civil society. These arrangements and experience provide useful elements for further consideration.

The Commission could draw upon the work of the UNGIS. Information on country-level activities could be gathered through the United Nations Development Group from the Resident Coordinator system as well as through voluntary country case studies and peer reviews.

A two-day multi-stakeholders platform could be held within the Commission session and, on the third day, the Commission could develop the conclusions and recommendations and adopt its report for submission to the Economic and Social Council.

The multi-stakeholder platform could be organized within the framework of the proposed global alliance for ICT and development with substantive and logistical support provided by the global alliance in partnership with the secretariat of the Commission.

III. Inter-agency coordination

9. The distinction should be borne in mind between overall implementation and follow-up of WSIS outcomes by all stakeholders, addressed in the preceding

sections of this note, and coordination at the inter-agency level, which is the focus of this section.

A. Country-level

10.   As regards inter-agency coordination at the country level, the United Nations system would play a supporting role through the Resident Coordinator system by helping Governments mainstream WSIS outcomes and ICTs into their national development strategies.

11.   Country-level coordination will be spearheaded by the Resident Coordinator system with the principal task of mainstreaming WSIS outcomes into the UNDAF/CCA processes; providing support, at the request of Governments, for the development of relevant national strategies and action plans for the integrated and coordinated conference follow-up, including supporting mainstreaming in poverty reduction strategy papers, national development strategies and national e-strategies; and establishing multi-stakeholder thematic groups on ICTs for development that could act as champions across sectors.

B. United Nations group on the information society

12.   The Tunis Agenda requests the United Nations Secretary-General, in consultation with members of CEB, to establish within CEB a United Nations group on the information society (UNGIS), consisting of the relevant United Nations bodies and organizations with the mandate to facilitate the implementation of WSIS outcomes. In considering lead agencies for this work, the text provides that CEB should take into consideration the experience and activities of ITU, UNESCO and UNDP.

13.   The implementation of the WSIS outcomes is particularly challenging for many reasons. These include the complex and interconnected nature of the issues involved, the rapidity of change in the ICT field and the cross-cutting nature of the issue, which touches on the mandates of many United Nations entities.

14.   The strong involvement of the private sector and civil society in the WSIS process is another key element that must be reflected in this work. Throughout the process WSIS has set new markers in the use of a multi-stakeholder approach. This spirit must be carried forward in the implementation and follow-up phase, as stipulated in the Tunis Agenda, which states that: "Implementation and follow-up should include intergovernmental and multi-stakeholder components".

15.   As regards UNGIS, it should be designed to promote policy and programme coordination and coherence and overall guidance to the system.

Precedents

16.   As regards policy concerning subsidiary bodies, CEB decided in 2001 to create two main subsidiary bodies; the High-level Committee on Programmes (HLCP) and the High-level Committee on Management, and to dissolve all other subsidiary bodies. Subsequently, specific coordination mechanisms such as UN-Water, UN-Oceans, and UN-Energy were set up without mandated reporting requirements, but on the understanding that relevant policy issues that arise in their work may be

brought to the attention of HLCP/CEB, and with multi-stakeholder involvement. Hence, it is suggested that UNGIS be organized in a similar manner as these groups, as proposed below.

Objectives

1. UNGIS would serve as an inter-agency mechanism with the main objective to coordinate substantive and policy issues facing the United Nations system's implementation of the Geneva Plan of Action and Tunis Agenda for the Information Society adopted by the World Summit on the Information Society, thereby contributing to improving policy coherence in the system, as requested in the 2005 World Summit Outcome.

2. In order to achieve this objective, UNGIS will:

    Contribute to the implementation of the Geneva Plan of Action and the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society, primarily at the international level, by mainstreaming the Information Society Agenda into the activities and programmes of CEB members. In this context, UNGIS would be closely coordinated with the mechanisms for national and regional implementation established in the Tunis Agenda (paras. 100 and 101), as well as the multi-stakeholder implementation process (paras. 108-110).

    Facilitate synergies between organizations belonging to the United Nations system to maximize joint efforts, avoid duplication and enhance effectiveness in achieving the WSIS outcomes; and

    Promote public awareness about WSIS implementation by the United Nations system.

Tasks

3. UNGIS will work to accomplish the following tasks:

    Monitor progress and key activities relating to the implementation of WSIS outcomes, based on input and reports from CEB member organizations;

    Work with the United Nations Development Group to ensure that the implementation of the Geneva Plan of Action is closely linked to the planning and implementation of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework at the country level;

    Facilitate inter-agency information exchange and activities, including sharing of experiences and lessons learned in particular with regard to WSIS goals, by ensuring the coherence of the stocktaking exercise;

    Work closely with the partnership for the measuring of ICT for development in order to streamline the approach of the United Nations system to the development of appropriate indicators and benchmarking;

    Promote effective communication and collaboration between the United Nations system, intergovernmental organizations outside the United Nations system and civil society and private sector partners, including in relation to the work of multi-stakeholder groups or networks;

Identify key accomplishments and make recommendations on overall policy and coordination as well as proposing effective reporting requirements for WSIS, for consideration by the United Nations system;

Establish mechanisms to report regularly to other WSIS stakeholders on its activities, in particular on preparation of any analytical reports on WSIS implementation to be delivered to the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly;

Disseminate information on the status of WSIS implementation within the United Nations system and to the general public.

Modalities of action

4.   UNGIS will have a chairman and three vice-chairmen. The chairman and two of the vice-chairmen will rotate on a yearly basis among ITU, UNESCO and UNDP. The third vice-chairman will be elected from among the other members of UNGIS on a rotational basis. Secretariat and logistical support will be provided by the chairing organizations.

5.   UNGIS will establish a plan of work that will be updated every two years.

6.   UNGIS will make maximum use of electronic working methods and will physically meet not more than once annually.

7.   UNGIS will cooperate closely, as appropriate, with the United Nations regional commissions and the Bretton Woods Institutions.

8.   The above terms of reference will be periodically updated.

IV. Multi-stakeholder engagement

17.   Both the Geneva and Tunis outcomes of WSIS stressed the need to mainstream the multi-stakeholder approach into implementation and follow-up activities at all levels and along all action lines.

18.   As regards implementation at the international level, stakeholders may be encouraged to develop inclusive, bottom-up, multi-stakeholder groups or networks in partnership with United Nations agencies, based on the Geneva Plan of Action Lines and the relevant substantive elements of the Tunis Agenda (as called for in paragraph 108 of the Agenda). The organizations of the United Nations system could act as moderators/facilitators, when appropriate. These networks would be connected with the system, but it would be one of the partners, with other stakeholders playing their full part in advancing implementation. The country-level thematic groups would be an important source and component of such networks. Coordination among these broadly-based networks will be ensured by ITU, UNDP and UNESCO, in collaboration with other moderators and facilitators in line with the Tunis Agenda, and by these three agencies working with UNGIS. Information on their activities will be provided to UNGIS by the coordinators/facilitating agencies or entities, as applicable.

19.   With respect to follow-up activities, a global alliance for ICT and development — an initiative for promoting multi-stakeholder dialogue developed under the auspices of the United Nations information and communication

technologies Task Force and expected to be launched in the first half of 2006 — could provide an innovative, inclusive and interactive channel for multi-stakeholder input to the policy debate to be conducted in intergovernmental organs — Commission on Science and Technology for Development and the Economic and Social Council. The global alliance could serve as an inclusive multi-stakeholder global platform and forum for policy dialogue on the use of ICTs to enhance the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals.

20.   The Alliance would, in partnership with the Commission on Science and Technology for Development secretariat, help organize a multi-stakeholder platform as the multi-stakeholder component of the Commission's review of WSIS follow-up and implementation.

21.   Similarly, the global alliance would also help organize, in partnership with the Economic and Social Council secretariat, multi-stakeholder round tables in the context of the Council's reviews of cross-cutting themes linking the WSIS outcome to the integrated follow-up to and implementation of other United Nations conferences and summits.

Annex IV

Gender mainstreaming and women, peace and security

Introduction

1.   Gender mainstreaming was adopted as a global strategy in the Beijing Platform for Action following the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995. In 1997 the Economic and Social Council adopted the landmark agreed conclusions 1997/2 which defined gender mainstreaming as follows:

"Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality."

2.   In its resolution 2005/31, the Economic and Social Council called upon all the United Nations entities to strengthen efforts to promote gender equality and empowerment of women in order to realize the Millennium Development Goals. In the 2005 World Summit Outcome, world leaders reaffirmed "that the full and effective implementation of the goals and objectives of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly is an essential contribution to achieving the internationally agreed development goals." World leaders also underscored the importance of system-wide coherence by implementing measures that strengthen linkages between the normative work of the United Nations and its operational activities, pursuing coherent policies and ensuring that the key policy themes such as gender equality are taken into account in all decision-making (see A/Res/60/1, para. 169).

3.   In implementing these decisions, the Secretary-General, in his report to the General Assembly (A/60/430), directed that further steps be taken to mainstream a gender perspective in the policies and programmes of the United Nations system. He asked the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women to work, in cooperation with United Nations entities, to strengthen methodologies, tools and competencies for gender mainstreaming and update existing ones. More specifically, in his letter to the Heads of Agencies dated 16 January 2006, the Secretary-General requested the High-level Committees, in cooperation with the Special Adviser, to develop a system-wide gender mainstreaming policy and strategy.

4.   The development of a system-wide gender mainstreaming policy and strategy would be in line with the efforts being undertaken already by the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB). In its report entitled "One United Nations Catalyst for Progress and Change" released in 2005, CEB notes that the agencies' common effort is serving to broaden the perspectives of all parts of the United Nations system and helping them both individually and collectively, to deepen analysis, expand knowledge-sharing, reinforce synergies and sharpen focus on results. With regard to gender equality and empowerment of women, the CEB report notes that targeted, women-specific initiatives and an active and visible

policy of mainstreaming gender perspectives in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all policies and programmes are long-standing priorities for the United Nations system.

Rationale

5. In the context of the ongoing reform, the United Nations system is called upon to improve management performance in all areas, establish effective and efficient mechanisms for responsibility and accountability, ensure the highest standards of efficiency and competence among staff, implement mandates and make the best and most efficient use of resources (see A/Res/60/1, para. 161). The development of a United Nations system-wide gender mainstreaming policy and strategy would address many of these concerns with regard to the implementation of agreed gender equality goals. In particular, implementing a system-wide gender mainstreaming policy and strategy would cut costs by eliminating duplication by identifying opportunities for pooling resources, creating coherence of approaches and greater synergy in programme implementation, especially at the field level. It would also help to operationalize and concretize results of the CEB vision of the way forward for the United Nations system which includes deepening understanding and better managing knowledge; achieving inclusive, purposeful mobilization of all resources and capacities; and increasing transparency and accountability. This in turn would enable the United Nations system's response at the country level to be more comprehensive, systematic and impactful.

Key policy and strategy elements

6. The review of the status of gender mainstreaming in the United Nations system undertaken by the Economic and Social Council in 2005 noted that while many United Nations entities had made significant progress in mainstreaming a gender perspective in their policies and programmes, such progress was very uneven. In its resolution 2005/31, the Council expressed "concern at the remaining gaps between policy and practice, with particular challenges relating to inadequate institutional mechanisms, including in the area of data collection, accountability, monitoring, reporting and training, as well as inadequate resource allocation".

7. In developing a system-wide gender mainstreaming policy and strategy, the focus will be on the key elements that form the main building blocks for successful gender mainstreaming. While the implementation at the programme level would be informed by different mandates, there exist nonetheless significant common elements that can contribute to the development of strong communities of practice in gender mainstreaming. These can serve to promote the scaling up of some currently ongoing efforts through collective, complementary and collaborative approaches.

Elements of a United Nations system-wide gender mainstreaming policy

8.   A United Nations system-wide gender mainstreaming policy would not simply reproduce at the aggregate level what currently exists. Rather, in responding to the Secretary-General's request for a system-wide policy and strategy, the aim is to propose both additional steps and to align some of the steps that entities are already undertaking. In this manner the proposed system-wide gender mainstreaming policy and strategy would serve as a standard-setting reference guide for gender mainstreaming for all United Nations entities while at the same time providing both a conceptual and an operational framework for collaboration, including collective action where appropriate. The Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality, at its fifth session in February 2006, discussed in depth the elements that would constitute such a system-wide policy and strategy. The following are the proposed elements of a United Nations system-wide gender mainstreaming policy:

(a)   The system-wide policy would build on existing international legislative and normative frameworks such as the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and the Beijing Platform for Action;

(b)   The policy should emphasize that gender equality would not only advance the goals of the organization, but also be a critical element for the achievement of the United Nations mandate as a whole and for the achievement of the respective mandates of specific entities. Gender equality should be framed as a necessary investment and operational necessity for sustainable social and economic development, peace and security, the reduction of poverty and promotion of human rights;

(c)   The policy should seek to enhance coherence and collaboration among United Nations entities, thus contributing to the United Nations reform process;

(d)   The policy should reflect the fact that closing the gender gap would require a multiplicity of approaches, including specific interventions aimed at women's empowerment and full enjoyment of human rights;

(e)   The policy should clarify that progress achieved in reaching the goal of gender equality would need to be measured against the impact of interventions at both country and United Nations system-wide levels.

Elements for a system-wide gender mainstreaming strategy

9.   A system-wide strategy should be established for the implementation of a policy so as to identify gaps and duplications and reveal areas for coordination, collaboration and collective action to capitalize on economies of scale. A system-wide strategy would also contribute to the United Nations system's learning about its own performance with regard to gender equality and empowerment of women with regard to how well its actions are aligned with its statement of commitment and allow for adjustments as appropriate. The proposed elements of such a strategy are presented below:

(a)   Capacity-building mechanisms should be provided to ensure that improved and sustained competencies for gender mainstreaming are created

throughout the United Nations system. Training at different levels and for different cadres is essential in order to ensure that a gender perspective is fully integrated in all policies and programmes. However, most gender-related training curricula share similar components that can be used across the United Nations system for cadres performing many different functions. For example, for any programme, policy, evaluation or technical officer, a good understanding of gender analysis is essential in order to strengthen gender sensitive programme design and implementation, evaluation and monitoring, technical assistance, data collection and analysis and report writing;

(b) Resources should be provided for the efficient and effective implementation of commitments for gender equality and the empowerment of women. Whereas the level of resources devoted to the promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women needs to be increased to reverse trends towards increased poverty among women and rising levels of HIV/AIDS infections among women, just to mention two examples, consideration of how available resources can be better utilized, especially at the country level, is also important;

(c) Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms should be established to determine the effectiveness of the implementation of measures to promote gender equality and empowerment of women. In the context of managing for results, it is essential to emphasize the measurement of outcomes, such as changes in men's and women's roles and behaviours, rather than measuring processes. A system-wide approach in this regard would be useful because it would help address, to a certain degree, the question of attribution of results, which is problematic when evaluating the impact of a single programme focusing on a specific issue;

(d) Clear accountability mechanisms should be established that ensure managing for results elicits conformity to agreed standards of action that will support realization of expected gender equality outcomes. Whereas gender advisers and/or focal points may have the responsibility for implementing gender equality programmes, the challenge that remains is the pervasive unacceptable personal discretion among other staff and some senior managers. Ensuring that specific tasks are spelled out in job descriptions so that individual performance appraisals assess results would be one important step. Similarly, as is the practice with financial audits, internal gender audits of units would contribute to the learning process to support implementation of gender equality programmes within organizations;

(e) Gender perspectives should be integrated in all human resources functions (such as, inter alia, recruitment, promotion, benefits, definition of competencies, work-life balance issues and staff development). Standard job descriptions and performance assessment should clearly define competencies in gender analysis and gender sensitive behaviour. Gender focal points/desks should be maintained at the senior level to act as catalysts for organizational change. Strengthening capacity/gender expertise in all areas of work/technical units should be ensured by developing the gender expertise of specialists in different sectors (including in sectors where gender perspectives are often neglected such as, inter alia, economics, finance, fiscal policies, trade, water, infrastructure and peace and security). Equal representation of women and men in decision-making and leadership positions and gender balance among all staff, including gender focal points, should be ensured as an important step towards effective gender mainstreaming.

(f)   Joint global, regional and national programming should be encouraged to the extent possible. Resources for technical assistance and human resources development should be pooled and; methodologies and good practices should be shared. Practical support should be provided through gender assessments and gender audits and thematic clusters of interest should be established. Communities of practices on specific gender issues through the strengthening of existing knowledge networks and instruments should be created.

The system-wide action plan on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000)

10.   In its presidential statement S/PRST/2004/40, the Security Council requested the Secretary-General to submit, in October 2005, an action plan for implementing resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security across the United Nations system, with a view to strengthening commitment and accountability at the highest levels, including improved accountability, monitoring and reporting on progress on implementation within the United Nations system.

11.   The system-wide action plan on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) was prepared by the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women in collaboration with the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality and its Task Force on Women, Peace and Security and submitted to the Security Council. The Council, in its presidential statement S/PRST/2005/52, welcomed the report and the system-wide action plan and requested the Secretary-General to update, monitor and review its implementation and integration and report to the Security Council in October 2006.

12.   In the 2005 World Summit Outcome, the world's leaders reaffirmed their commitment to the full and effective implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). They underlined the importance of integrating a gender perspective and of women having the opportunity for equal participation and full involvement in all efforts to maintain and promote peace and security, as well as the need to increase their role in decision-making at all levels. Integrating a gender perspective in the design and work of the Peace building Commission is a key element for the success of the Commission's work (A/Res/60/1, para. 116).

13.   Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and the three subsequent presidential statements (S/PRST/2001/31, S/PRST/2002/32 and S/PRST/2004/40) on women, peace and security, made on behalf of the Security Council, provided a framework for the action plan. Furthermore, the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change entitled "A more secure world: our shared responsibility" and the Secretary-General's report entitled "In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all" provided further inspiration for strategies and activities included by United Nations entities in the action plan.

14.   The action plan has the following objectives:

(a)   To formulate concrete strategies, actions and programmes, in a consistent and effective manner, to advance the role of women in peace and security areas;

(b)   To ensure more efficient support for Member States and other actors in national and regional level implementation of resolution 1325 (2000);

(c) To strengthen the commitment and accountability of the United Nations system at the highest levels;

(d) To enhance inter-agency cooperation.

15. In keeping with the mandates given by the Security Council in both resolution 1325 (2000) and the relevant presidential statements, the following 12 areas of action of relevance to the work of both High-level Committees of CEB were identified and the plan has been structured accordingly: conflict prevention and early warning; peacemaking and peacebuilding; peacekeeping operations; humanitarian response; post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation; disarmament, demobilization and reintegration; preventing and responding to gender-based violence in armed conflict; preventing and responding to sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations staff, related personnel and United Nations partners; gender balance; coordination and partnership; monitoring and reporting; financial resources.

16. An overview of the actions and strategies contained in the action plan reveals that the available expertise and efforts in various action areas are not of equal strength. In some areas there are overlapping activities and in a number of areas there are gaps. There is a need to strengthen coordination and accountability for implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) both at Headquarters and in the field.

17. The Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women has been given the task of following up on the request from the Security Council and producing a report of the Secretary-General for the Security Council in October 2006. It is an opportunity to analyse the current level of implementation, to and follow up on earlier recommendations for enhancing accountability within the United Nations system and present strategies and recommendations supporting the full implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and the systematic integration of gender perspectives in all areas related to conflict prevention, conflict resolution, peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

Next steps

Action required by the High-level Committee on Programmes

18. Discussion and endorsing of the programmatic aspects of the proposed system-wide policy and strategy on gender mainstreaming including how best they can be implemented is required. The key programme aspects include the following: a system-wide monitoring and evaluation framework and an implementation strategy for the policy.

Action required by the High-level Committee on Management

19. The proposed policy and strategy has implications that require management decision. Foremost among these is the development of clear accountability mechanisms that would strengthen support for the system-wide gender mainstreaming policy and strategy at all levels of the United Nations system.

Action required by both committees

20.   The proposed system-wide policy and strategy anticipates that capacity-building on gender mainstreaming at various levels needs to be significantly strengthened. However, to be cost-effective in this and in other programme areas new mechanisms that strengthen coordination, collaboration and therefore contribute to a system-wide efficient use of resources may be necessary. Whereas the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality is one such mechanism, its mandate does not include implementation and it does not have any resources of its own. Implementation of the system-wide policy and strategy on gender mainstreaming will entail stronger linkages between the normative and the operational agencies as well as better coordination and coherence at the country level. Endorsement and recommendation to CEB is therefore essential.

21.   The adoption of a system-wide policy and strategy on gender mainstreaming is an important step in realizing Millennium Development Goals and implementing the 2005 World Summit Outcome. The practical aspects of developing the current policy and strategy will be coordinated by the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women in consultation and cooperation with agencies through the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality. As required, the policy and the strategy will be submitted to the Economic and Social Council in its substantive session in 2006 as a report of the Secretary-General. Thereafter, the Office of the Special Adviser would work closely with the United Nations entities to ensure implementation of the policy and strategy. It is expected that the system-wide policy and strategy would have a time-bound action that would enable entities to report annually on the steps that they are taking to ensure that a gender perspective is fully integrated into policies and programmes. This would enhance learning and knowledge-sharing.

———————