



**Briefing by**

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Secretary of the UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB)  
to members of the Economic and Social Council  
on the Second Regular Session of CEB for 2013**

**16 December 2013**

Good afternoon, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen.

I am pleased to address you in my new capacity as CEB Secretary. I welcome this opportunity to brief you on the recent work of the Chief Executives Board for Coordination and to exchange views on issues of mutual interest.

CEB was born in ECOSOC. I hope to do my part today in following the long tradition to keep ECOSOC informed of CEB work, also reinforced in the recent resolution on the strengthening of the Council.

Distinguished Delegates,

The CEB met just three weeks ago. The formal session was held at UN Headquarters on 25 November 2013. On the following day, the Board convened its semi-annual retreat and private meeting.

My briefing today will cover the key programmatic, management and operational activities of the CEB and its subsidiary mechanisms as reported at the second regular session of the CEB for 2013, as well as the fall 2013 sessions of the High-level Committee on Programmes (HLCP), the High-level Committee on Management (HLCM), and the United Nations Development Group (UNDG). Now I will give an overview of the CEB discussion on key substantive issues.

First, on MDG acceleration.

The Executive Heads are acutely aware that much remains to be done before the 2015 deadline to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The CEB is using its MDG review at the country level as a vehicle to help accelerate progress towards achieving the goals. UN system capabilities should be leveraged to close gaps or overcome bottlenecks in countries that are lagging in one or more targets. This exercise was launched in November 2012 under the co-chairmanship of the UNDP Administrator and the President of the World Bank.

Five countries were included as the second round of review: Burkina Faso, on hunger and poverty (MDG 1); Nepal on sanitation (part of MDG 7); and El Salvador, Indonesia and Kyrgyzstan on maternal health (MDG 5).

The respective resident coordinators and World Bank country directors joined the CEB members to engage in dialogue to identify possible solutions to accelerate MDG achievement. It was observed that participating in the CEB review itself had already improved coordination and cooperation among agencies and the World Bank at the country level. CEB Members expressed their ongoing commitment to this review process and to the UN system's contributing to the "big push" to the finish line of 2015.

CEB also heard reports on progress in UN system commitments made to the three countries -- Ghana, Niger and Tanzania -- that took part in the first review of last April. Feedback was encouraging and proved the value of the review. In forthcoming sessions, the Board will continue to monitor results achieved as a result of UN system interventions at the country level.

Second, on Post-2015 Agenda.

In parallel with the efforts to accelerate the achievement of MDGs, the international community has been seized with discussing what will come next, after 2015. Given its strategic nature, the Board has been exploring this subject from its unique vantage point, in an effort to contribute to Member States deliberations.

The latest CEB retreat provided a space for the Executive Heads to focus on this topic. They examined the UN system's role in helping the Member States to define and, eventually, implement the post-2015 development agenda. True to its role as a coordination body, the Board saw the need to achieve a clarity and unity of stance on key issues that will enable it to inform the intergovernmental discussions on the subject and to ensure that the organizations of the UN system, individually and collectively, are prepared to support the needs of the international community. To be "fit for purpose," it was recognized that the system must be able to keep step with the rapid changes in the world and provide services that respond to the constantly evolving needs and requirements of Member States and other stakeholders.

The Board's retreat discussion had been informed by work carried out by its subsidiary mechanisms. UNDG has already made a significant contribution to elaborating a post-2015 agenda, largely through the activities of its MDG Task Force. Notably, UNDG has facilitated the far-reaching global consultation process, summarized in the report "A Million Voices: the World We Want". HLCP, as the mechanism responsible for identifying and responding proactively to emerging policy and programmatic issues of concern to the entire UN system, has devoted itself to reflection on the conceptual post-2015 framework and how the system could prepare to meet the new expectations and requirements that might subsequently arise.

The Board and its subsidiary machinery will continue to deepen its work in this area as the wider intergovernmental discussions evolve and mature.

Distinguished Delegates,

Now I would like to turn to CEB discussion on other substantive issues.

First, on cybercrime and cybersecurity and policies on information.

As I mentioned earlier, the CEB, as well as its two high-level committees, have been seized of this topic of cybercrime and cybersecurity and policies on information. This topic has also received considerable attention during the current General Assembly session. Indeed, a growing awareness to the risks to global security has led to a growing urgency to take action to protect both the work of the UN system and the people it serves.

From a management perspective, HLCM is stepping up its efforts to coordinate work of UN system entities in crisis preparedness and response, business continuity and cyber-security, including through the CEB UN Information Security Special Interest Group under the ICT Network.

At a programmatic level, HLCP recently endorsed a UN-wide framework on Cybersecurity and Cybercrime. It is intended to guide United Nations entities towards better cooperation and coordination in delivering products and services to Member States at a time when demand for expertise and support is rising quickly. Through the CEB, the UN system is working at the highest levels to protect development gains achieved through information technology and to create a more secure cyber-environment for all.

#### Second, on Human Rights.

The item on human rights was brought to the CEB at the recent session through its subsidiary machinery, highlighting its centrality in the work of the UN system.

The 26<sup>th</sup> session of the HLCP, held in October, included an in-depth consideration of the subject, with the High Commissioner for Human Rights setting the tone for the meeting. The progress made in recent years in mainstreaming human rights into development work, and in linking human rights with peace and security and the rule of law, was strongly welcomed. The Committee expressed its support for the Secretary-General's statement "Renewing Our Commitment to the Peoples and Purposes of the United Nations", which was subsequently endorsed by the CEB. Human rights policy coherence will remain a regular item on HLCP's agenda.

#### Third, on Climate Change.

With time running out to take action on climate change, CEB and HLCP continue to advance work of the UN system in this critical area.

At the COP-19 in Warsaw, the CEB convened a high-level side event, under the leadership of the Secretary-General. It brought attention to the lasting domestic and global benefits of building climate-resilient societies and promoting low-carbon economic development.

A number of joint initiatives under the HLCP's Climate Change Working Group – such as the Climate-Smart Agriculture partnership, the UN-REDD programme, the Climate Finance Options Platform, and an effort on Spatial Data for Adaptation Planning – bring the technical expertise of the UN system together to tackle one of the planet's most pressing challenges. The Working Group is collaborating closely with the Secretary-General's Climate Change Support Team and will extend its full support to the 2014 Climate Summit.

#### Fourth, on Migration and Development.

As Member States are aware, 2013 was a critical year for advancing the agenda on this issue. UN System input to the General Assembly's High-level Dialogue, held in October, was coordinated by HLCP and transmitted through CEB. A joint CEB publication entitled *International Migration and Development: Contributions and Recommendations of the International System* also resulted from the Committee's collaboration with the Global Migration Group. A special event was held on 27 September 2013 to launch the publication, which features contributions by 28 UN organizations and related international entities. A soft copy of the publication can be obtained on the CEB website, and hard copies are available from the CEB Secretariat.

A number of other programmatic topics remain on HLCP's agenda. Committee members are working closely together to achieve system-wide coherence on drug policy and to support preparations for the 2016 Special Session of the General Assembly on the World Drug Problem. The Committee continues to be seized with ways to ensure effective coordination and follow-up on intergovernmental mandates relevant to water and energy through its coordination mechanisms. In follow-up to a resolution of the General Assembly that called for greater engagement of the CEB and HCLP on issues related to LDCs, a number of recommendations on system-wide support to the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked

Countries and Small Island Developing States (OHRLLS) with regard to the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action were endorsed.

Distinguished Delegates,

Now I would like to turn to the key management issues of which ECOSOC has been closely seized, in particular through QCPR process.

A range of management issues of system-wide interest continue to be taken forward by HLCM. The HLCM Strategic Plan for 2013-2016 is also closely linked to the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR). HLCM offers a useful platform for member organizations to devise and implement the appropriate response to the QCPR operational mandates that require policy coordination and headquarters' engagement. HLCM aims to report back to the CEB in line with the timeframes identified in the QCPR, for the Secretary General to be able to meet his reporting requirements as identified in the resolution.

The HLCM priority area on redesigning and innovating UN business models revolves around requests from the QCPR. The Committee is focusing on common and shared services, on improved common procurement practices, and on other initiatives to promote efficiency and effectiveness of the UN system. Results achieved through these activities will be reported to ECOSOC in line with the QCPR resolution.

It should be noted that HLCM is working in close coordination with UNDG to ensure consistency of action with country-level operational activities. Indeed, UNDG is a key actor in coordinating the UN system's follow-up to the QCPR. The Group has agreed on the first-ever common action plan for the QCPR, and UN entities in turn have taken significant strides to internalize the QCPR mandates into their strategic plans. Together, DESA and UNDG have developed a coherent monitoring and reporting framework for the QCPR.

UNDG and HLCM are also working in coordination to support the second phase of Delivering as One (DaO).

UNDG has finalized standard operating procedures (SOPs) for Delivering as One countries. The SOPs intend to shift the emphasis from joint planning to delivering measurable results and robust monitoring, evaluation and reporting. To ensure that the SOPs have their intended impact on coherence, effectiveness and simplification at the country level, the UNDG will adopt a Plan of Action for Headquarters, which outlines priority actions to be addressed at headquarters and by UN governing bodies, before the end of the year.

HLCM complements UNDG's work in cases where the SOPs necessitate system-wide action related to more efficient and cost-effective support services and to identifying and responding to challenges and bottlenecks to cooperation in field operations.

The HLCM is also moving ahead with its system-wide efforts on measuring and communicating results. The Committee is focused on improving the UN system's capacity and ability to present UN system data and on implementing standards for data presentation.

Furthermore, among the current top priorities for HLCM, a key one is to engage in a dialogue with the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) in the context of its Review of the Conditions of Service for UN system staff, with the aim to develop a proposal for a competitive and simplified compensation package that enables organizations to attract and retain staff of the highest caliber and reduces transaction costs.

The UNDG Task Team on Gender Equality is progressing work on a Gender Equality Marker. This initiative will help the UN system to track gender-related resource allocation and expenditure based on common principles and standards for gender equality marker systems in a way that would be comparable across entities.

Distinguished Delegates,

Final words about the on-going efforts to improve access to CEB work.

At the briefing to ECOSOC in May, the re-launch of CEB's website was announced. It had been redeveloped to improve the user experience and provide the UN system with a more visible and interactive platform. Since then, new content has been added to continuously improve and enrich the website.

First, the Directory of United Nations System Organizations<sup>1</sup> consolidates information about all UN system entities in a single webpage. It also features links to inter-agency mechanisms, jointly financed bodies and the subsidiary machinery of the CEB itself.

Second, the Directory of Senior Officials<sup>2</sup> is due to be launched by the end of this week. This password-protected directory makes available contact details for approximately 1000 UN system officials. It will be accessible to Member States and can be searched by organization, duty station, and staff name.

Since the re-release, content throughout the rest of the website has been regularly updated. Documents can be located by type, keyword, mechanism, organization and reference number.

Looking ahead, the CEB Secretariat is planning to improve the presentation of UN system human resources data in the New Year. It is also working to make available consolidated statistics on system-wide procurement in the future. This information will complement the existing database on financial statistics. Once all these elements are in place, the CEB website will provide the most comprehensive profile of UN system organizations from a resource perspective available anywhere.

The CEB website is an important tool for promoting transparency and accountability to Member States. We welcome your feedback on the content.

Distinguished Delegates,

I would like to close by reiterating that the CEB Secretariat ensures that CEB actions are within the purview of Executive Heads of the organizations of the UN system. Necessary consultations are undertaken prior to issues being considered, particularly where they require legislative action or decision by Governing Bodies. In accordance, the CEB will continue to prioritize issues identified by Member States and work under their guidance.

Further information on the topics I have addressed today is available in reports of the CEB and its subsidiary machinery, which are available online at ([www.unsceb.org](http://www.unsceb.org) and [www.undg.org](http://www.undg.org)).

Thank you again for this opportunity to brief you on the outcome of the second regular session of the CEB of 2013. I am now happy to hear your views on any of the topics addressed.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.unsceb.org/directory>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.unsceb.org/content/doso-home>