



Chief Executives Board for Coordination

29 October 2002

Report of the High-Level Committee on Programmes at its fourth regular session

**United Nations Industrial Development Organization
headquarters (Vienna, 23 and 24 September 2002)**

Introduction and executive summary

The High-Level Committee on Programmes (HLCP) of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board (CEB) held its fourth session at United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) headquarters in Vienna on 23 and 24 September 2002. The agenda of the meeting and the list of participants are attached, respectively, in annexes I and II to the report.

The Committee paid tribute to Messrs. Magariños and Karlsson, whose terms of office as Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee would expire before the next session. Members commended them on their leadership and valuable contribution to the work of the Committee in the challenging first two years of its operations, when the Committee had to lay the ground for implementing a major part of the significant reforms in inter-agency coordination adopted by the Executive Heads. The Committee considered that, under the guidance of the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman, it had made steady progress in discharging the twin responsibilities entrusted to it by CEB, of promoting coherence in programme areas, and of advising Executive Heads on key policy issues facing the system, particularly in mounting a concerted response to the challenges posed to it by the United Nations Millennium Declaration.

As noted in the concluding statements by the chair and the vice-chair, the present session had brought about further distinct progress in a number of key areas directly relevant to the system's response to the Declaration. The prevention of armed conflict is a key objective of the United Nations and a crucial condition for progress in meeting both the political and development goals of the Millennium Declaration. The Committee's discussions on the subject confirmed the readiness of the system to lend its full support to ensure that the objectives and approaches elaborated by the Secretary-General in this regard were effectively advanced. They should contribute to the definition by CEB of the broad elements of a concerted strategy aimed at maximizing the value that the work of the organizations of the system adds to the Secretary-General's efforts in this area.

Progress was also made at the session in shaping the contribution of the Committee to the mobilization of United Nations system organizations in advancing the Millennium Development Goals. The Committee was thoroughly briefed on developments in the launch of the Millennium Development Goals core strategy, with particular reference to the Millennium Project. It also had the opportunity to review the status of inter-agency work for the development of indicators for global monitoring and the provision of support to country-level monitoring of progress in the implementation of the Goals. It decided to keep this work under continuing review, bearing in mind the concern of CEB to ensure mutual reinforcement between these two sets of activities, and to strengthen the system's support for capacity-building in developing countries, including for data collection and analysis. In the same broad context, the Committee had a timely discussion on how the system could best approach the implementation of different aspects of the outcomes of the World Summit for Sustainable Development, held in Johannesburg, South Africa, and could best respond in an integrated way to the follow-up requirements of both the International Conference on Financing for Development, held in Monterrey, Mexico, and Johannesburg, in ways that maximize the contribution to these processes to progress in meeting the Millennium Development Goals. An open-ended group of Committee members would pursue this reflection in the weeks ahead in preparation for the forthcoming intergovernmental discussions of these issues in the General Assembly, the Commission for Sustainable Development and the Economic and Social Council, and CEB discussions at its spring 2003 session on financing for development and on strategies for sustainable development — the two special focus themes to be addressed in the report of the Secretary-General on the follow-up to the Millennium Declaration for 2003.

The Committee's discussions on the collaboration of the United Nations system with civil society organizations were similarly conducted in the perspective of the new challenges posed for the system by the Millennium Declaration and the system's effort to strengthen partnerships, as a central element of the follow-up processes to both Monterrey and Johannesburg. The discussion was instrumental in highlighting a number of key policy issues that will be pursued by the Committee in the period ahead and should contribute to the review of United Nations relations with the non-governmental community which the Secretary-General has launched in his recently issued report on strengthening the Organization (A/57/387). The Committee was briefed on the reform measures outlined in that report, and expressed the readiness of the organizations of the system to lend their support to the effective implementation of this important new initiative of the Secretary-General.

Finally, the Committee welcomed the World Bank initiative to undertake an evaluation of the global programmes it supports and the recommendation of Dr. Nafis Sadik, Member of the Advisory Committee on Evaluation of the World Bank's Global Programmes that the Bank share its findings and assist in developing a common framework for the United Nations system to enhance development effectiveness through a collaborative effort of United Nations system entities. The Committee concluded that the Bank's evaluation should contain valuable insights of direct relevance to the Committee's own work. The methodologies and lessons learned from the World Bank exercise will be drawn upon by the system in pursuing consideration of system-wide approaches to the evaluation of global programmes, particularly those of central relevance to the follow-up to the Millennium Declaration and the outcomes of the World Summit for Sustainable Development and the International Conference on Financing for Development.

I. System-wide response and reporting on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration

A. Preparations for CEB discussion on follow-up to the Millennium Summit — “Preventing Armed Conflicts”

The Committee confirmed strong system-wide support for the Secretary-General’s approach to conflict prevention and offered a number of perspectives that may be taken into account in finalizing the executive paper for submission to CEB.

It recommended that CEB, in acting on the recommendations in the executive paper, take the following into consideration:

- Ways of more effectively highlighting the United Nations success stories and making the point that conflict prevention is not only a more ethical but also a much less costly solution for the international community than countering armed conflicts once they occur.
- The United Nations system needs to reflect on how to evolve more structured linkages between political and socio-economic interventions and, in that context, build capacity to address the increasingly crucial issue of the potential threat of conflicts emanating from international natural resource disparities.
- The focus of system-wide coordination in conflict prevention must remain at the country and subregional level to reinforce country and regional ownership of strategies for the prevention of armed conflict.
- The United Nations system needs to concert its efforts on helping create the political space to bring actual/potential warring parties to dialogue in support of the Secretary-General’s role, particularly in cross-border conflicts.

B. The future role of the Committee in follow-up to the United Nations Millennium Declaration, the Committee decided to keep inter-agency work in these areas under continuing review

The Committee decided to establish an open-ended group of Committee members, led by the Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Inter-Agency Affairs of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat to prepare recommendations for the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Sustainable Development and the integrated follow-up to both the International Conference on Financing for Development, held in Monterrey and the World Summit on Sustainable Development, held in ways that maximize their contribution towards meeting the Millennium Development Goals.

II. United Nations system collaboration with civil society organizations

In considering how best to pursue its mandate in the area, the Committee concluded that this was an issue of great importance for the majority of organizations of the system. It decided that a study should be undertaken to take stock of the state

of collaboration between organizations of the system and civil society organizations, highlighting the policy dimension of such cooperation. The study should be carried out with the support of the Non-Governmental Liaison Service and in cooperation with interested agencies, including participation of selected non-governmental organizations from developed and developing countries, taking fully into account the work of the panel of eminent personalities being set up by the Secretary-General to review the United Nations relationship with civil society organizations. It asked the CEB secretariat to prepare draft terms of reference and to suggest modalities for the study.

III. Follow-up to High-Level Committee on Programmes decisions

A. United Nations system support for Africa's development

The Committee noted that the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) was still evolving and that it was therefore all the more important to nurture the ongoing processes initiated by the United Nations system in support of it. It further noted that, in the absence of the report of the Regional Consultations, it was difficult to assess progress achieved in the seven thematic clusters which remain vitally important entry points for the system's support for NEPAD. The Committee urged United Nations system organizations to participate actively in the work of the thematic clusters, as well as in the forthcoming Regional Consultations of the United Nations agencies, noting that the report of the latter would be presented directly to the Executive Heads at the forthcoming CEB session.

B. Trade facilitation

The Committee took note with appreciation of the progress report on the trade facilitation initiative by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and welcomed the flexible approach adopted as a model for pursuing future issue-driven inter-agency coordination and cooperation.

IV. Other matters

A. Inter-agency cooperation in evaluation of global programmes

The Committee expressed strong interest in associating with the World Bank exercise on evaluation of global programmes, given the prominence of such issues in the Millennium Declaration. It took note of the proposed collective approach to evaluation, as well as the two phases of its implementation and stressed the importance of collaboration among interested bodies as well as the need to utilize existing mechanisms, such as the Inter-Agency Working Group on Evaluation to facilitate further collaboration. The Committee further agreed that the open-ended working group established in the context of follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development and the World Summit on Sustainable Development be invited to identify one or two global issues that would lend themselves to a collective approach to evaluation of global programmes.

B. Preparations for the forthcoming international conferences in 2003: World Summit on the Information Society

The Committee took note of the status of preparations for the World Summit on the Information Society (to be held at Geneva in December 2003 and in Tunis in 2005).

C. Follow-up to the Second World Assembly on Ageing

The Committee took note of the arrangements for the follow-up to the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing and decided to revert to the issue during its spring 2003 session, on the basis of the work programme likely to be drafted through the proposed inter-agency consultations following the forty-first session of the Commission on Social Development. To facilitate the follow-up work, the Committee called upon those United Nations system agencies that had not already done so, to establish focal points on ageing.

D. Update on the United Nations System Staff College

The Committee took note with appreciation of the briefing on recent developments in the United Nations System Staff College in which, the need for Committee members to keep in mind the best use to be made of the College's facilities to advance the goals of CEB and the Committee was emphasized.

E. Joint Inspection Unit reports

On the issue related to the Joint Inspection Unit decision to present its reports directly to the General Assembly (and other related governing bodies), the Committee concluded that the consolidated comments of the organizations of the system on Joint Inspection Unit reports of system-wide relevance should continue to be coordinated by the CEB secretariat, and urged relevant organizations to provide, on an urgent basis to the CEB secretariat, their comments, on the Joint Inspection Unit report entitled, "Support costs related to extrabudgetary activities in organizations of the United Nations system".

In regard to the Joint Inspection Unit report entitled, "Results approach in the United Nations: implementing the United Nations Millennium Declaration" (JIU/REP/2002/2), the Committee concluded that in accordance with action already initiated by the CEB secretariat, the Joint Inspection Unit focal points be requested to provide comments in consultation with Committee members for consolidation by the CEB secretariat and shared with the High-Level Committee on Management at its forthcoming session to be held in Geneva on 7 and 8 October.

V. Date and venue for the next session

The Committee agreed to undertake consultations electronically to decide on the dates, venue and agenda for the next session, tentatively scheduled for mid-March 2003.

VI. Other business

The Committee expressed appreciation for the extensive briefing given by the Assistant Secretary-General of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs on the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Strengthening the United Nations: an agenda for further change" (A/57/387) and expressed the willingness of the United Nations system to contribute to its effective implementation.

The Committee took note of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) proposal for inter-agency collaboration on youth employment and welcomed its suggestion to invite interested agencies to collaborate in this endeavour.

The Committee was briefed on the outcomes of the first meetings of the newly set up United Nations Communications Group, held in Rome on 27 and 28 June 2002, as well as the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality, held in New York from 26 February to 1 March 2002. It took note of the communication received from the Chairperson of the Communications Group and endorsed the response of the Chairman of the Committee on behalf of the Committee. It also expressed appreciation for the information provided by the Chairperson of the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality on its activities.

1. The High-Level Committee on Programmes (HLCP) of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) held its fourth session at United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) headquarters in Vienna on 23 and 24 September 2002. The agenda of the meeting and the list of participants are attached, respectively, in annexes I and II to the report.

I. System-wide response and reporting on the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration

A. Preparations for the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination discussion on follow-up to the Millennium Summit — “Preventing Armed Conflicts”

2. The Committee considered the issue of a system-wide strategic approach to preventing armed conflicts on the basis of a note (CEB/2002/HLCP/CRP.6) prepared by the Department of Political Affairs of the Secretariat in cooperation with the United Nations Development Group secretariat, which was introduced in the Committee by the representative of the United Nations.

3. The Committee expressed appreciation for the thought-provoking note which is to form the basis for an executive paper which, as requested by the Secretary-General, is to be submitted for consideration at the autumn 2002 session of CEB.

4. Discussions in the Committee confirmed strong system-wide support for the Secretary-General’s approach to conflict prevention, and a deep interest and commitment on the part of all organizations and agencies to contribute to this crucial objective. There was general awareness that there was a lot of “learning from doing” and a great deal of further collective study and reflection that the organizations of the system must undertake before all the elements of a full-fledged system-wide strategy for the prevention of armed conflict can be said to be in place. The forthcoming discussions in CEB should serve to chart a course for engendering further collective action as well as the further analytical work required.

5. In the course of the discussions, Committee members offered a number of perspectives that may be taken into account in finalizing the executive paper for submission to CEB, among them:

- While responsibility for conflict prevention rests primarily with national Governments, the United Nations system nonetheless has an important contribution to make, both in the traditional area of operational prevention — concerned with the use of diplomacy in stemming potential conflicts — and in respect of structural prevention — calling for concerted action on the root causes of conflict. Enhancing the impact of the system’s contribution in the latter area requires a more structured link between political and socio-economic strategies, as well as a more systematic effort at ensuring that the prevention of armed conflict features as a deliberate component in the planning of development programmes and of coordination arrangements relating to such programmes and in the pursuit of human security in general.
- In achieving a more in-depth understanding of the causes of conflict and of the most suitable prevention strategies, distinctions need to be drawn between

conflicts of a cross-border nature and those arising within national boundaries, and between one-time conflicts and those of a recurring nature. Ultimately, while typologies of lessons learned in different situations, such as the ones outlined above, are useful in building a more systematic capacity for conflict prevention, each case presents specific, unique features which need to be analysed and acted on in its own right.

- Greater collective attention needs to be given to the potential threats posed by scarce natural resources and resource disparities as precursors of conflicts (e.g. in the case of shared water resources, policy decisions in upstream countries may impact on downstream countries with the potential for triggering regional/subregional conflicts).
- Consideration should be given to ways of better harnessing the vast experience and capacities of United Nations organizations in building early warning systems and of engaging United Nations system field representatives more systematically in the effort. The contribution of such systems to conflict prevention can be enhanced through a more purposeful, concerted use of the information they gather, without affecting the scope and primary objective of the relevant systems.

6. Other specific suggestions made during the discussions, with a view to contributing to the finalization of the executive paper for submission to CEB, included:

- The importance of recognizing that each agency, fund and programme, as well as the Bretton Woods institutions, in pursuing their respective mandates, are contributing different approaches which add value to the process and, as such, should be built on in pursuing greater system-wide synergies towards conflict prevention and ensuring human security.
- In the elaboration of the root causes of armed conflict, the issue of displaced populations needs to be taken into account. Moreover, the role of the international community in undertaking appropriate measures during the time of displacement, as well as facilitating the return, reintegration and rehabilitation of displaced populations in post-conflict situations should be stressed as an important element in averting the recurrence of conflict.
- The need for further analysis of the impact of macroeconomic and fiscal issues.
- The relevance of the World Bank initiative to address the development priorities of lower income countries under stress, as part of its contribution to international peace and security, taking into account the constraints of multilateral financial institutions in lending in high-risk situations.
- The focus of the reflection in CEB should clearly be on the prevention of armed conflicts: the use of abbreviated formulations, such as “conflict prevention”, should be so understood. Issues of disarmament, illicit trade in small arms, human security, HIV/AIDS and population displacements should be included in prevention strategies and addressed in the executive paper.
- A critical point for prevention is the need to start a dialogue, for which political space needs to be created and provided.

- Destabilizing factors, such as drugs and crime, also need to be addressed to prevent armed conflict, especially in post-conflict situations, to prevent resurgence.
- The fact that the role of individual United Nations agencies in the prevention of armed conflicts will tend to vary from country to country should be taken into account and highlighted in the executive paper.
- Implementation of the recommendation in the note before the Committee on the establishment of a focal point to follow up on the implementation of the report of the Secretary-General, as well as the implementation of Security Council resolution 1366 (2001) would benefit from further clarification of the terms of reference of focal points, and take into account the role of the Committee.
- Consideration should also be given to linking the prevention of armed conflict with the issues addressed in the recent report of the Policy Working Group on the United Nations and Terrorism (A/57/273-S/2002/875 dated 6 August 2002) and the follow-up actions required of United Nations system organizations.

7. It was noted that, in the light of the comments made during the session, the Department of Political Affairs, in consultation with concerned organizations, would finalize the executive paper for presentation at the autumn 2002 session of CEB.

8. In its conclusions on the subject, and in acting on the recommendations in the executive paper, CEB may wish to give consideration to the following:

- Ways of more effectively highlighting United Nations success stories and making the point that conflict prevention is not only a more ethical but also a much less costly solution for the international community than countering armed conflicts once they occur.
- The United Nations system needs to reflect on how to evolve more structured linkages between political and socio-economic interventions and, in that context, build capacity to address the increasingly crucial issue of the potential threat of conflicts emanating from international natural resource disparities.
- The focus of system-wide coordination in conflict prevention must remain at the country and subregional level to reinforce country and regional ownership of strategies for the prevention of armed conflict.
- The United Nations system needs to concert its efforts on helping create the political space to bring actual and potential warring parties to dialogue in support of the role of the Secretary-General, particularly in cross-border conflicts.

B. The future role of the High-Level Committee Programmes in follow-up to the United Nations Millennium Declaration

9. The Committee carried out a broad review of its own contribution to harnessing the capacities of the system in support of the follow-up to the Millennium Declaration. Discussions focused on the role of HLCP in ongoing global and country-level monitoring processes and in the development of inter-agency strategies to maximize the system's support to countries achieve the Millennium

Development Goals. The Committee gave particular attention to the conclusion reached by Executive Heads at their spring 2002 retreat on the importance of the system effectively sustaining country-level action and reporting and on the need for capacity-building in data collection and analysis in developing countries.

10. The Chair of the United Nations Development Group Working Group on the Millennium Development Goals and a representative from the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat briefed the Committee on recent developments concerning the Millennium Development Goals Strategy and on the process of global monitoring of the Goals, respectively.

11. In his briefing, the Chair of the United Nations Development Group Working Group on the Millennium Development Goals outlined the progress made to date in implementing the Millennium Development Goals Strategy and the next steps with regard to the four elements of the Strategy. He reported on the United Nations Expert Group, of which he is the Chair, formed to work with Jeffrey Sachs in preparing the results of the ten task forces of the Millennium Project. He noted that the Experts Group met recently and agreed on the United Nations membership of the task forces. He also confirmed that the output of the task forces would serve as inputs to policy making. On the country reports, he indicated that 12 Millennium Development Goals country reports had been issued and that a further 20 would be finalized by the end of the year. It was hoped that there would be regular reporting by all countries, working through the United Nations country team, on progress towards implementing the Millennium Development Goals. He noted that the main purpose of the country reports was to help stimulate local debate on Goals, both in Government and with civil society. On the Millennium Campaign, the Chairman of the United Nations Development Group Working Group on the Millennium Development Goals clarified the role of the Working Group and its relationship to the United Nations Communications Group. He informed the Committee that a campaign director was expected to be selected in the coming weeks. Finally, on the fourth component of the Millennium Development Goals Strategy relating to operational activities, he reported that members of the United Nations Development Group were restructuring their country work to conform to the Goals as a results-based approach to development. Members of the Committee were provided with handouts on the briefing and with copies of the Millennium Development Goals report on Nepal and on Africa.

12. The representative of the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs briefed the Committee on global monitoring of the Millennium Development Goals. He stressed the importance of inter-agency ownership of the statistical database, and the activities of the Coordinating Committee on the Statistical Database. He highlighted the difficulties in reaching conformity between national and global statistical surveys, especially on poverty estimates. He was, however, optimistic that there was much greater understanding among United Nations system agencies on statistical measurement issues. The representative informed participants that the results of the United Nations Statistics Division's work on global monitoring were appended to the report of the Secretary-General on follow-up to the Millennium Declaration and he noted that various indicators would continue to be refined, such as in the education field.

13. Members of the Committee welcomed the valuable information provided by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Statistics Division

and expressed satisfaction with the progress achieved so far at the global level and with UNDP leadership at the country level. In particular, they endorsed the approach taken by the United Nations Development Group in moving ahead with the Millennium Development Goals Strategy and called for regular updates on progress achieved in that regard.

14. After an extensive exchange of views, the Committee concluded that:

- The development of indicators for global monitoring and the provision of support to country-level monitoring of progress in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals should keep under continuing review.
- It was important to ensure mutual reinforcement between global monitoring and country-level monitoring and, in that context, to strengthen the system's support for capacity-building in developing countries, including for data collection and analysis, and taking into account mechanisms set up for monitoring other goals common to the Millennium Development Goals (e.g. on education and health).

15. Turning to the follow-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the Committee shared the view that, while the Summit had added value to policy development in a good number of areas which had not been adequately addressed in Agenda 21, the main accomplishment of the Summit had been the contribution it had made to implementation, by providing renewed political impetus and pointing the way for an effective mobilization of efforts by all development actors to give practical effect to the principles and agreements reached at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1992.

16. The Committee considered that this renewed emphasis on implementation, together with the need to effectively integrate conference follow-up processes so that they maximize their impact on the Millennium Development Goals, should be the two main orientations to guide inter-agency cooperation for sustainable development and the system's collaboration with other development actors in the period ahead. In particular, special attention needed to be given to:

- The development of a coherent strategy to ensure mutual reinforcement among the new round of trade negotiations launched at Doha, the follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development (FFD) and the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, and to maximize the overall contribution of these processes to the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals.
- Ensuring that the follow-up to the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and measures to pursue other related aspects of the Johannesburg outcomes (including the components of those outcomes relating to the monitoring and fostering of partnerships, and the follow-up to the five water, energy, health, agriculture and biodiversity (WEHAB) frameworks for action and related plenary discussions in Johannesburg) are articulated, so as to be responsive to the specific characteristics and requirements of each component, while, at the same time, complementing each other and contributing substantially to overall progress towards the Goals.

- Arrangements to ensure that the partnerships launched during the World Summit serve to advance in a concrete and sustained way the follow-up to Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation; and that follow-up in the five WEHAB thematic areas build on the very productive working relationship developed among United Nations system agencies in preparing the frameworks for action and are pursued in an innovative and participatory way, thus contributing to the further development of broad alliances that effectively complement action to follow-up the Plan of Implementation.

17. The Committee decided to pursue this reflection through an open-ended working group, led by the Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Inter-Agency Affairs, which would address the following issues:

- How best to relate, programmatically and in terms of communication strategies, the follow-up to the World Summit to both the follow-up to the Doha and Monterrey Conferences, and the broader process of follow-up to the Millennium Development Goals.
- How best to advance a holistic approach to the follow-up to the Summit that projects in an integrated way overall action to pursue the Plan of Implementation; the monitoring and further promotion of the partnership process launched in Johannesburg; and a sustained follow-up to the WEHAB plans of actions presented in Johannesburg.
- The implications of the Johannesburg outcomes for arrangements for programme development, implementation and coordination in the five WEHAB thematic areas, as well as other areas of inter-agency concern, such as oceans and marine affairs, taking into account the special characteristics and requirements of each area, including (a) the experience with former Administrative Committee for Coordination subsidiary bodies in some of these areas; (b) the institutional arrangements that prevail in each area; and (c) the relative weight that the United Nations system represents in relation to each of them vis-à-vis other institutions and other development actors; and the thrust towards the broadening of alliances and partnerships that prevailed in Johannesburg.
- The implications of the Summit, particularly the emphasis that the Johannesburg outcomes place on implementation, for the structure, role and functioning of the system of task managers.
- The implications of the Summit for country-level activities, and how best to reconcile global priorities, as they have emerged from Johannesburg, with national priorities and plans.

18. The Committee considered that the work of the group should be organized and timed so as to assist in the elaboration of the proposals that the Secretary-General would put forward to the General Assembly and the Commission on Sustainable Development on the follow-up to Johannesburg; contribute approaches to guide ongoing discussions on successor coordination arrangements in areas such as water and the oceans; and contribute to the identification of policy issues around which CEB discussions at its spring 2003 sessions on financing for development and sustainable development (the two themes selected for special attention in the 2003 report of the Secretary-General on the follow-up to the Millennium Declaration) might most productively focus.

II. United Nations system collaboration with civil society organizations

19. The Committee considered the issue of how best to pursue its mandate to foster dialogue and propose ways in which the collaboration and interaction with, inter alia, non-governmental organizations and other parts of civil society could be enhanced and could contribute to the achievement of system-wide goals. In introducing a note on this issue (CEB/2002/HLCP/CRP.5), the Director of the CEB secretariat suggested that the Committee should focus its discussion on system's relationship with civil society organizations and leave the private sector discussion for a separate occasion. While references had been made to the private sector in the note, these related to perceptions among civil society organizations that the United Nations system was becoming increasingly pro-business and was moving away from its traditional pro-development agenda — a perception that needed to be addressed through policies guiding the system's interactions with those organizations. The Committee was also informed that, in the context of his reform programme contained in his report entitled "Strengthening of the United Nations: an agenda for further change" (A/57/387), the Secretary-General intended to establish a panel of eminent personalities to review the experiences of the United Nations interactions with civil society organizations to promote greater coherence, consistency and predictability in the organization's relations with them. The Committee was invited to consider taking a similar approach in respect of the system as a whole.

20. The contribution of civil society organizations towards furthering the international agendas, not least in the context of the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, has been extremely valuable. As their relationship with the organizations of the system continues to evolve, civil society organizations are becoming more organized and are raising issues with some of the United Nations system policies governing those relations. These policies have often been more or less ad hoc, and have mostly focused on procedural issues, such as accreditation and access. While exchanging information on those issues was important, it was also important to address the more challenging policy aspects of those relations. Civil society organizations had made it clear that they were more interested in the substance of the issues and their ability to influence outcomes.

21. The Committee was invited to place its discussion in the context of the question posed in paragraph 16 of the note before the Committee, namely how can senior managers in the system maintain an overview of system-wide experiences in the management of this complex and challenging relationship in order to inform policy development in this area, in their own organizations and across the United Nations system. In doing so, the Committee was also requested to consider modalities for engaging some civil society organizations in an exchange of views to hear their concerns.

22. The Committee had an extensive exchange of views on the system's relations with civil society organizations. There was strong support for the work of the civil society organizations in advancing the goals of the organizations of the system and a desire to continue to deepen and strengthen this very valuable partnership. In the course of the discussion, Committee members raised a number of issues. These included:

- Civil society organizations have continued to gain recognition and influence in shaping national and international agendas, including at major world conferences. Their contribution to promoting national awareness and dialogue on sustainable socio-economic issues, along with their advocacy and implementing roles, have been pivotal in advancing international action on key areas ranging from HIV/AIDS to food, human rights, environment and humanitarian issues.
- While civil society organization involvement with the work of the organizations of the system continued to evolve, it was important to consider practical modalities for engaging them in determining institutional as well as operational priorities, including of individual organizations.
- Given the scope and range of the activities of the organizations of the system, their relationships with civil society organizations have been and should continue to be dealt with mostly on a case-by-case basis. At the same time, however recent experiences called for some collective reflection on the nature of these relationships from a system-wide perspective leading to broad policy recommendations to guide these relationships.
- Based on the prevailing reality on the ground in many of the affected developing countries, civil society organizations had taken a position on the issue of globalization and the challenge was to see how to persuade them of the positive dimensions of globalization and secure their support for minimizing its negative effects.
- Given the heterogeneity of relationships with civil society organizations among individual CEB member organizations, emanating from the diversity of their mandates, a general set of guidelines applicable to all organizations would neither be meaningful nor helpful. Questions were raised about the impact of past guidance notes and whether there should not be a survey to ascertain their impact, if any.
- Civil society organizations represented a vast range of interests and orientation, with significant divergences in their strategic response to issues of concern to them and in their attitudes towards institutions of global governance. While this had served to heighten both the complexity of the system's collaboration with civil society organizations, it had also tended to broaden and reinforce such relationships.
- Managing the rapidly evolving nature of the relationship had become a complex challenge for United Nations system organizations, both individually and collectively, as they grappled with the dilemma of how to deal constructively with the sometimes asynchronous — if not directly competing — agendas of Governments and civil society. This problem had been exacerbated, on the one hand, by concerns over the issue of the legitimacy, representativity and sources of funding of some of the civil society organizations and, on the other hand, by growing concerns by Member States over the potential infringement of civil society organizations on the prerogative of Member States in intergovernmental decision-making processes.
- Evolving rules of engagement had given added impetus for the system to achieve greater coherence in dealing with civil society organizations, particularly in the context of system-wide efforts to advance the Millennium

Development Goals. In this connection, more reflection was needed on how best to secure the participation and views of civil society organizations, inter alia, in global and country-level monitoring of the Goals.

23. The Committee concluded that this was an issue of great importance for the majority of the organizations of the system and that further work was necessary to better appreciate the system's relations with civil society organizations and how best to make it a positive element in shaping and implementing the global agenda. It agreed that a study should be undertaken to take stock of the state of collaboration between organizations of the system and civil society organizations, highlighting the policy dimension of such cooperation. The study should be carried out with the support of the Non-Governmental Liaison Service and in cooperation with interested agencies, including participation of selected non-governmental organizations from developed and developing countries. It was also suggested that the study address, inter alia, the following issues:

- How can different organizations of the United Nations system use their relationships with civil society organizations to build partnerships with their grass-roots constituencies to enhance participatory democracy at the country level.
- How can the United Nations system engage local authorities, as interface between civil society and government at the local level, in a systematic and practical global dialogue on substantive issues and in the promotion of representative and participative democracy.
- What are reasonable and acceptable parameters for civil society organization participation in intergovernmental decision-making processes, taking into account the position taken by Governments.
- Assessment of the impact of civil society organizations on the outcome of policy decisions taken in international forums where they have been granted a participatory decision-making role.

24. The Committee recognized the importance of the initiative of the Secretary-General to set up a panel of eminent personalities to review the United Nations relationship with civil society organizations and expected that the outcome of the work of the panel would provide useful guidance for the future orientation of the deliberations and decisions by the system as a whole in this area. It also concluded that avenues should be explored to link the proposed study to the work of the panel.

25. The Committee requested the CEB secretariat to prepare draft terms of reference for carrying out a study, taking into account the discussions in the Committee, and also proposed modalities for conducting the study. These proposals will be cleared electronically by Committee members.

III. Follow-up to decisions of the High-Level Committee on Programmes

A. United Nations system support for Africa's development

26. The Committee reviewed progress made in implementing the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) in the light of a note prepared by the secretariat

(CEB/2002/HLCP/CRP.11 and Add.1). The Committee was informed that the second annual Regional Consultations scheduled for 19 to 21 September 2002 had been postponed to 25 and 26 October 2002 and consequently, the expected briefing on its outcome could not be provided at this stage. The Regional Consultations were expected to review and synthesize the work outcomes of the seven thematic clusters identified as areas of priority attention within NEPAD. The respective cluster reports would then form the basis for an annual report on the collective efforts of the United Nations system. It was expected that the clusters would complete the cycle of meetings in time for the forthcoming Regional Consultations to prepare such a report. The Regional Consultations would also draw upon the outcome of the Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development held in Johannesburg from 19 to 21 October 2002, and the Meeting of the Committee of Experts held from 16 to 18 October 2002. The focus of these two meetings would be on “Accelerating Africa’s performance and progress: the challenge of NEPAD”.

27. The Committee’s attention was drawn to a number of recent developments, including the adoption of an Africa Action Plan by the Group of 8 in Kananaskis, Canada, in July 2002. A briefing was also provided on the outcome of the high-level plenary meeting of the United Nations General Assembly held on 16 September 2002 to consider how to support NEPAD as part of the final review and appraisal of the New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s. The high-level plenary meeting was followed by a panel at which United Nations organizations expressed their unequivocal commitment to support NEPAD and to use existing United Nations coordinating mechanisms, especially at the country level. The panel also emphasized the need for greater inter-agency collaboration and the importance of acknowledging the relationship between the Millennium Development Goals and the priorities of NEPAD.

28. In the ensuing discussion, the Committee underscored the importance of working within the NEPAD framework and, in that context, the contribution that the Regional Consultations, with the assistance of the thematic clusters, were expected to make in advancing the collective efforts of the United Nations system in support of NEPAD. The Committee noted that NEPAD was still evolving and that it was therefore all the more important to nurture the ongoing processes initiated by the United Nations system in support of it.

29. The Committee further noted that, in the absence of the report of the Regional Consultations, it was difficult to assess progress achieved in the seven thematic clusters, which remain vitally important entry points for the system’s support for NEPAD. It concluded its discussion by urging United Nations system organizations to participate actively in the work of the thematic clusters, as well as in the forthcoming Regional Consultations of the United Nations agencies, noting that the report of the latter would be presented directly to the Executive Heads at the forthcoming CEB session.

30. The Committee agreed to recommend that CEB take into account the following in further strengthening system-wide support for NEPAD:

(a) The rapidly growing momentum of support expressed or provided for NEPAD by donor Governments, as witnessed during the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session;

(b) The fact that many organizations of the system have either concretized, or are in the process of finalizing, their individual response and support to NEPAD;

(c) The importance of building on the various mandates as well as diverse capacities of the organizations of the system which have ongoing programmes at the country and regional levels;

(d) The need to draw upon lessons learned from the final review and appraisal of the New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s.

B. Trade facilitation

31. The Committee took note with appreciation of the progress report on the trade facilitation initiative (CEB/2002/HLCP/INF.6) by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the additional briefing provided by its representative. It welcomed the flexible approach adopted for the initiative as a model for operationalizing future issue-driven inter-agency coordination and cooperation.

32. Members welcomed in particular the establishment of the web site facilitating the exchange of information of trade-related activities of different agencies, and encouraged agencies who had not done so to nominate managers to collaborate with UNCTAD. They further encouraged participation of concerned agencies at a second inter-agency meeting on trade facilitation to be convened at the end of November 2002.

IV. Other matters

A. Inter-agency cooperation in evaluation of global programmes

33. The Committee welcomed the briefings by Dr. Nafis Sadik, Member of the Advisory Committee of the Operations Evaluation Department evaluation of the World Bank's Approach to Global Policies and Programmes and the presentation by Uma Lele, leader of the World Bank global programme evaluation team.

34. Dr. Sadik emphasized the need for a collaborative approach involving different partners. She further underlined the importance of ensuring ownership of developing countries with particular attention to least developed countries. She also stressed the need to ensure a greater degree of collaboration and synergy among United Nations system entities that possess a strong comparative advantage in this field. Dr. Sadik called for a systematic approach based on a common framework with agreed targets and encouraged the carrying of the process further through the High-Level Committee on Programmes. She also stressed the need to bring interested donors into this process.

35. Uma Lele outlined the two phases of the evaluation, the first phase (October 2002-September 2003) focused on the strategic and programmatic management of the World Bank's approach to global programmes and the second phase involved 26 case studies currently under way and their preliminary results and major themes. The themes included the importance of evaluation experience in the Bank's response to dealing with the strategic issues of selectivity, comparative advantage, linkages of

global programmes to country strategies, promoting multisectoral solutions and getting increased participation of the relevant developing country stakeholders to assure increased relevance. A collective approach to evaluation of global policies and programmes could reinforce a global alignment for the realization of the Millennium Development Goals. The second phase would focus on developing, on a collective basis, common standards for evaluation of global programmes and common evaluation framework among interested agencies.

36. The Committee expressed strong interest in associating with the World Bank exercise on evaluation of global programmes, given the prominence of such issues in the Millennium Declaration, which formed the overarching policy framework in guiding the work of the United Nations system as well as that of the Committee.

37. The Committee took note of the approach outlined above, as well as the two phases of its implementation (see annex III) in working towards a possible collaborative approach to evaluation using existing mechanisms. It further considered that it constituted a successful effort to learn systematically from the empirical analysis of operational programmes on how to deal with global policies and programmes to improve development effectiveness on the ground. In that regard, it also noted that it would be useful to draw upon the results of similar exercises, including the recently concluded five-year evaluation of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, and stressed the importance of collaboration among interested bodies and the need to utilize existing mechanisms, such as the Inter-Agency Working Group on Evaluation to facilitate further collaboration.

38. The Committee further agreed that the open-ended working group established in the context of the discussion of the follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development and the World Summit on Sustainable Development (see para. 17 above) be invited to identify one or two global issues that would lend themselves to a collective approach to evaluation of global programmes.

B. Preparations for the forthcoming international conferences in 2003: World Summit on the Information Society

39. The Committee took note of the status of preparations for the World Summit on the Information Society, to be held at Geneva from 10 to 12 December 2003 and at Tunis in 2005 as documented in CEB/2002/HLCP/INF.5.

C. Follow-up to the Second World Assembly on Ageing

40. On the basis of the briefing provided by the Assistant Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs and the supplementary information contained in document CEB/2002/HLCP/CRP.8, the Committee took note of the arrangements for the follow-up to the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing. The Committee will revert to this issue during its spring 2003 session, on the basis of the work programme likely to be produced through the proposed inter-agency consultations following the forty-first session of the Commission on Social Development.

41. To facilitate the follow-up work, the Committee called upon those United Nations system agencies that had not already done so, to establish focal points on ageing.

D. Update on the United Nations System Staff College

42. The Committee took note with appreciation of the briefing by the Secretary of CEB on recent developments in the United Nations System Staff College in which he emphasized, *inter alia*, the need for Committee members to keep in mind the best use to be made of the College's facilities to advance the goals of CEB and the Committee.

E. Joint Inspection Unit reports

43. Two issues relating to the modalities for handling Joint Inspection Unit reports were brought to the attention of the Committee. The first related to the intention of the Unit to present its reports directly to the General Assembly (and other related governing bodies) with individual comments, including dissenting views, of the organizations of the system. The Joint Inspection Unit had done so pursuant to paragraph 7 of General Assembly resolution 56/245 of 24 December 2001, in which the Unit had been requested to consider including in its reports, where possible, the comments of the participating organizations on its finding and recommendations.

44. The Committee noted that, if this new approach was intended to replace CEB joint comments, it was likely to contribute to a fragmented, rather than an integrated, view of the system as a whole. If unable to view the system as a whole, Member States would be impeded in their objective to promote greater coherence and consistency among the organizations of the system. The Committee members noted that, under the present arrangement, Joint Inspection Unit reports that were of a system-wide nature may contain recommendations designed to impact the organizations of the system, individually and collectively, and often the working relationships among them. The process of preparing joint comments enabled the organizations of the system to address such issues through a joint reflection to develop policy responses on recommendations made to legislative bodies, in particular, the General Assembly. If each organization responded in its individual capacity and, as would appear under the proposed arrangements, with a focus on "technical" considerations, it would deprive the organizations of the system an opportunity to bring in overall policy considerations and take into account relationships that existed with the system as a whole. The practice of providing a collective response from organizations of the system was viewed as promoting coherence and collaborative practices within the system.

45. Committee members concluded that, in accordance with the provisions of article 11.4 (e) of the Joint Inspection Unit statute, consolidated comments of the organizations of the system on Joint Inspection Unit reports of system-wide relevance should continue to be coordinated by the CEB secretariat. This practice would enable a proper presentation of the views of the system on Joint Inspection Unit reports when they were taken up by the General Assembly.

46. The Committee urged the relevant organizations to provide, on an urgent basis to the CEB secretariat, their comments, observations and/or suggestions on the Joint Inspection Unit report entitled, "Support costs related to extrabudgetary activities in organizations of the United Nations system" (JIU/REP/2002/3) as inputs for the preparation of consolidated CEB comments.

47. The second issue related to the approach to be adopted by CEB for addressing the Joint Inspection Unit report entitled, "Results approach in the United Nations: implementing the United Nations Millennium Declaration" (JIU/REP/2002/2). Part I of the report dealt with concepts and definitions of "results" and the various techniques in use by the United Nations system, such as results-based budgeting and planning. It examined whether or not the present results-based budgeting used for formulating the United Nations programme budget and the medium-term plan, provided Member States with greater accountability and transparency. It concluded that the results-based budgeting processes within the United Nations system needed to be greatly improved, including in terms of reducing the human and financial resources required to implement them. Part II extended the discussion and analysis of the concept of "results" to the country level. The report's findings pointed to the need for greater consistency, coordination and coherence among United Nations system organizations and their partners, including the Bretton Woods institutions, in adopting strategies and actions, especially at the country level.

48. Committee members noted that the scope of the report was extremely broad, although it touched upon a number of important issues and concluded that such a report would therefore have benefited from a more thorough consultation process. Some questions were raised about the legislative mandate for the report, especially insofar as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund were concerned.

49. The Committee concluded that, in accordance with action already initiated by the CEB secretariat, the Joint Inspection Unit focal points should be requested to provide comments on part II of the report, in consultation with Committee members. Those comments should then be consolidated by the CEB secretariat and shared with the High-Level Committee on Management at its forthcoming session to be held at Geneva on 7 and 8 October. The point was made that, given its programming implications and the internal arrangements in some agencies, that report could more appropriately be dealt with by the High-Level Committee on Programmes, rather than the High-Level Committee on Management.

V. Date and venue for the next session

50. The Committee agreed to undertake consultations electronically to decide on the dates, venue and agenda for the next session, which was tentatively scheduled for mid-March 2003.

VI. Any other business

51. The Committee welcomed a briefing by the Assistant Secretary-General of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs on the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Strengthening the United Nations: an agenda for further change" (A/57/387) and expressed the willingness of the United Nations system to contribute to its effective implementation.

52. The representative of UNIDO briefed the Committee on the first Youth Employment Summit held earlier in October in Alexandria, Egypt, at which a special campaign for the creation of additional opportunities for sustainable livelihoods for youth was launched. Members of the Committee noted the relevance

of the initiative in the context of the Millennium Declaration and welcomed the suggestion by UNIDO to invite interested agencies to collaborate in this endeavour.

53. The attention of the Committee was also drawn to the coordination work being carried out by inter-agency arrangements in programme areas previously covered by the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination subsidiary machinery. As agreed at the spring 2002 session of CEB, held in Rome, the Committee was briefed on the outcomes of the meeting of the newly set up United Nations Communications Group, held in Rome on 27 and 28 June 2002, as well as the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality, held in New York from 26 February to 1 March 2002.

54. The Committee took note of the communication received from the Chairperson of the Communications Group and endorsed the response of the Chairman of the High-Level Committee on Programmes on behalf of the Committee. The Committee also expressed appreciation for the information provided by the Chairperson of the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality on its activities.

Annex I

Agenda

1. System-wide response and reporting on the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration
 - (a) Preparations for CEB discussion on follow-up to the Millennium Summit;
 - (b) The future role of the High-Level Committee on Programmes in follow-up to the Millennium Declaration.
2. United Nations system collaboration with civil society organizations.
3. Follow-up to decisions of the High-Level Committee on Programmes
 - (a) United Nations system support for Africa's development;
 - (b) Trade facilitation.
4. Other matters
 - (a) Inter-agency cooperation in evaluation of global programmes;
 - (b) Preparations for the forthcoming international conferences in 2003: World Summit on the Information Society;
 - (c) Follow-up to the Second World Assembly on Ageing, Madrid, 8-12 April 2002;
 - (d) Update on the United Nations System Staff College;
 - (e) Joint Inspection Unit report entitled "The Results approach in the United Nations: implementing the Millennium Declaration";
 - (f) Date and venue for the next session;
 - (g) Any other business.

Annex II

List of participants

Chairman: C. A. Magariños (UNIDO)

Secretary: E. Hein (CEB secretariat)

United Nations	P. Civili R. Johnston
United Nations Conference on Trade and Development	C. Fortin D. Deac
United Nations International Drug Control Programme	N. Hassan M. Mounikou S. Mlango
United Nations Environment Programme	A. Z. Amin
United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)	D. Biau
United Nations Development Programme	J. Vandemoortele M. Wahba
United Nations Population Fund	S. Cagar A. Erken
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	M. Kamara M. Loftus
United Nations Children's Fund	A. Vaher
World Food Programme	J. Wickens T. Yanga
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights	D. Kedzia
Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)	R. Chahil-Graf
International Labour Organization	D. Skerrett
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	F. Chenoweth
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization	H. d'Orville
World Health Organization	D. Aitken B. Kean
World Bank	M. Karlsson E. Doryan U. Lele N. Sarna

Advisory Committee, World Bank's Evaluation of Global Programmes	Dr. N. Sadik
International Monetary Fund	R. Munzberg
International Civil Aviation Organization	L. Boisvert
International Maritime Organization	D. Edwards
Universal Postal Union	J. L. Gunderson
World Meteorological Organization	W. Degefu
International Fund for Agricultural Development	U. Abhyankar
United Nations Industrial Development Organization	O. Maizza-Neto I. Freudenschuss-Reichl
International Atomic Energy Agency	W. Burkart
Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban-Treaty Organization	B. Wrabetz
World Trade Organization	P. Werner
High-Level Committee on Management	D. Skerrett
CEB secretariat	Q. S. Fareed A. Lacanlale S. Toh

Annex III

Evaluation of global policies and programmes: two-phased implementation approach

Phase 1 (October 2002-September 2003)

- Sharing World Bank Operations Evaluation Department's 27 case studies on global programmes with the concerned agencies
- Building on the expertise of the existing evaluation groups such as the Inter-Agency Working Group on Evaluation, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development Development Assistance Committee Working Party on Aid Evaluation, Multilateral Development Banks Evaluation Cooperation Group and the International Development Evaluation Association to develop a process for sharing evaluation experience across agencies
- Once agreement is reached in principle among interested agencies on the need to develop a coordinated, common framework for a collaborative approach to evaluation, then identifying resource requirements and potential sources of funding for developing this framework
- Encouraging agencies that have inventories of their global programmes and recent evaluations, and/or have prepared overview reports focusing on key global issues and best practices for their agencies, to share their evaluation experiences to enhance feedback mechanisms
- Sharing the Operations Evaluation Department's Phase 2 synthesis report (after its Board presentation)
- Status report to the High-Level Committee on Programmes (September 2003)

Phase 2

- Developing, on a collective basis, common standards for evaluation of global programmes
 - Developing a common evaluation framework among interested agencies
-