



Chief Executives Board for Coordination

16 October 2006

English only

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

(Rome, 29 and 30 September 2006)

I. Introduction

1. The High-level Committee on Programmes (HLCP) of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) held its twelfth session in Rome, on 29 and 30 September 2006. The agenda of the meeting and the list of participants are attached, respectively, in annexes I and II to the present report.

II. Developments in the work of the High-level Panel on System-wide Coherence and implications for the work of the United Nations system, including preparations for the joint session with the High-level Committee on Management

2. The Chairman, in his capacity as ex officio member of the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on System-wide Coherence, opened the discussion by thanking the Executive Director of the Panel's secretariat for the excellent support he has been providing to the Panel, and particularly for his contribution to ensuring a very constructive and widely consultative process throughout all phases of the Panel's work. The process had provided a unique opportunity to rally ideas and political support for strengthening multilateralism and the role of the United Nations, and he expected the Panel's report and recommendations to be a major contribution in this regard. He was especially pleased that the Panel had recognized that, in development, the United Nations is far more than an instrument for the transfer of resources and that its critical normative, analytical and advocacy roles in relation to countries of all income levels had been duly acknowledged and advanced. The approaches underlying the CEB "One United Nations: Catalyst for Progress and Change" report had found a strong echo in the Panel's work. There was now a need to work together again, through CEB, to shape a strategy for taking the report's recommendations forward.

3. At the Chairman's request, the Executive Director provided an extensive briefing on the state-of-play in the Panel's work as it nears the end of its deliberations. He expected the Panel to submit its report to the Secretary-General in



early November and the intergovernmental review to begin in 2007, once a new Secretary-General assumes office.

4. He stressed that, in the process of consultations over the last several months, Panel members had come increasingly to appreciate the important, multifaceted contributions that the United Nations system is making in all of the areas covered by the Panel's mandate. Their commitment to the strengthening of the multilateral system was strong and had continued to deepen as the process unfolded. The sense of positive engagement that characterized the Panel's deliberations had made it possible for the Panel to reach a consensus on many aspects of the way forward. A number of recommendations, however, were still to be finalized and a final draft of the report was therefore not yet available.

5. He noted that, in the area of development, the Panel fully recognized the usefulness of the contribution of the system's operational activities, while at the same time stressing the need for them to be set within the broader context of the system's normative and analytical work. A centrepiece of the Panel's recommendations will be a more coordinated and integrated presence by the system at the country level, fully reflecting the "One United Nations" concept: one programme that respected country ownership, one strengthened leader, one budget and, where feasible, one office. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) would continue to manage the resident coordinator system, but would withdraw from those programmatic sectors where competence existed elsewhere in the United Nations system. A "firewall" would be put in place between the management side of the UNDP work and its programmatic involvement in governance, post-conflict and post-disaster recovery and the cross-cutting areas of gender, human rights and the environment.

6. A new inter-agency Development Policy and Operations Group, chaired by the Administrator of UNDP as Development Coordinator, would be established. This Group would help bring the normative, analytical work of the system to bear on its operational activities and would govern arrangements at the country level. It would also service the intergovernmental United Nations Sustainable Development Board, a body that would report to the Economic and Social Council, provide oversight over the resident coordinator system and take decisions with respect to pooled funding at the country level. Executive Heads most directly concerned would participate *ex officio* in the Board.

7. The Panel was looking at reforms that would strengthen the capacity of the system to respond to humanitarian crises. A number of changes that had been made in recent years — including the cluster lead agency system and the establishment of the Central Emergency Response Fund — had led to tangible improvements, but some arrangements still required further strengthening. The Panel's recommendations would thus address the transition between relief and development, both in terms of funding and in relation to post-conflict recovery and reconstruction. The Panel had also identified difficulties in the management of the issue of internally displaced persons and would recommend, in this regard, a review of the role of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. It would likewise recommend strengthening the risk reduction work of the system, given the increasing numbers of people living in disaster-prone areas, and mainstreaming it more systematically into development policy.

8. The Panel felt strongly that addressing worsening trends of environmental degradation, including climate change, and the implications for economic development posed a major challenge to the global community. It agreed that the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) should be strengthened as the central environmental organization of the United Nations and as a centre for scientific, analytical and normative work. It would also recommend the establishment of strong thematic partnerships among the key agencies concerned with such issues as water, energy and climate change. Recommendations were also under active consideration by the Panel with respect to the coordination of the multitude of multilateral environmental agreement secretariats, which was posing a heavy burden on the capacities of developing countries in particular.

9. With respect to cross-cutting issues, the Panel would, in the area of sustainable development, recommend: a stronger partnership between UNEP and UNDP in respect of the environmental aspects of sustainable development; the establishment of a new segment in the Economic and Social Council to advance policy coordination of intergovernmental work in different areas impinging on sustainable development; and a reform of the Commission on Sustainable Development, with a sharper focus on implementation.

10. The Panel had also concluded that gender had not been successfully mainstreamed at either the country or the global level and that a stronger, more integrated structure was needed, both at Headquarters and on the ground. It would recommend the establishment of a new, unified entity with two pillars, one on normative work and the other on operational activities. The entity would incorporate the functions of the pre-existing structures and be headed by an official at the Under-Secretary-General level, with an annual budget of some \$150 to \$200 million.

11. The Panel would likewise advocate a stronger focus on mainstreaming human rights in development activities: the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) should serve as a centre of excellence, providing normative support to countries, and the role of the resident coordinator in this regard would be strengthened.

12. A key recommendation of the Panel in relation to governance would be the establishment of a global leaders' forum of the Economic and Social Council, with 27 of the Council's members, who would meet once a year at the highest level to address key policy issues and advance global public goods.

13. The Panel had also recognized the great potential of CEB in advancing system-wide coherence and would recommend a review of its functioning. It would also emphasize the role of CEB in driving management change, particularly with regard to the harmonization of business practices. Other recommendations of the Panel would include a call for an independent review of the International Civil Service Commission and suggestions regarding criteria for the selection of agency executive heads and term limits.

14. The Panel's report would also deal with measures to strengthen cooperation between the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions, including a review and update of memorandums of understanding with these institutions. As for the regional commissions, the Panel would call for a further articulation and refocusing

of their role, in the context of a reorganization of the United Nations regional setting.

15. The wide-ranging discussion that followed these briefings addressed both the overall contribution that the Panel's report would be making to the political environment surrounding the system's work and some of the more specific issues and recommendations highlighted in the briefings.

16. Members of the Committee welcomed the opportunity of being briefed by the Chairman and by the Executive Director of the High-level Panel secretariat on the overall thrust of the outcome of the Panel's work. They hoped that it would serve to set aside some of the questioning that had again surfaced at the inception of the process as to the relevance of the system to current realities and requirements and that it would make a significant contribution to renewing confidence in the system's capacity to evolve and further strengthen its coherence and effectiveness. For such confidence to be nurtured, it was important to move ahead quickly in the spirit of the reforms being advocated, in particular at the country level.

17. Especially welcome was the emphasis that the Committee understood the Panel would place on the relevance of the economic, social and environmental role of the United Nations for all countries — both developed and developing — and on the contribution that its development work should make to progress, not only in least developed countries but also in middle-income countries.

18. The Committee also expressed strong appreciation for the attention that it understood the Panel had given to the need to strengthen linkages between the system's normative and analytical contribution and its operational work and to bring such a contribution more systematically to bear on country-level activities.

19. Many members pointed to the difficulty of commenting and advising CEB on the specifics of the Panel's recommendations without reference to the text of the Panel's draft report and were concerned that CEB, at its session at the end of October, would be constrained in shaping an appropriate response, if such a text could not be made available to Executive Heads in advance of the session. With this proviso, observations made included the following:

(a) Some concern was expressed about the number of new central intergovernmental structures being proposed and a lack of clarity as to their relationship with the existing system-wide coordination structures. Their contribution to greater system-wide coherence would depend in large measure on the relationship of these new structures, particularly the proposed Sustainable Development Board, to the agencies' governing bodies;

(b) Some of the same considerations apply to the new inter-agency bodies that would be recommended. Implications for the existing inter-agency structures should be carefully reviewed so as to ensure that ongoing efforts at reinforcing and streamlining current structures are further advanced, rather than being set back. CEB should provide guidance on the way any internal review of inter-agency structures, in the light of the Panel's recommendations, might most profitably be conducted;

(c) In the same perspective, emphasis was placed on the role of CEB — as the highest-level inter-agency body, under the authority of the Secretary-General, owned by the entire system — to provide leadership and direction to all components

of the inter-agency structure and in relation to all aspects of its functions, certainly including, but not confined to, their management dimensions: while CEB has a major role to play in maximizing the coherence and effectiveness of the system's business practices, it also has an irreplaceable leadership role to exercise at the strategic level, in giving collective orientation to the way in which the system tackles global policy issues and in providing collective support to the system's governance structures at the intergovernmental level;

(d) With regard to the new proposed gender entity, it was highlighted that it was important to ensure that the establishment of any new central structure is not taken to imply a centralization of work on advancing the gender dimensions of the wide-ranging issues before the system: promoting the status of women and gender equality should continue to be, and be perceived as, the responsibility of each and every organization of the system, within its mandate. Noting that a budget was being proposed for a new gender entity, some members raised the question of the extent to which funding requirements would be quantified in the Panel's report for other proposed institutional innovations;

(e) Regarding the role of UNDP, some members noted that, under the Panel's proposals, UNDP would still retain a number of major programmatic responsibilities, and raised the question of how, in these circumstances, the necessary checks and balances could be effectively instituted. In the same context, the question was raised of how the "firewall" between UNDP coordination and its programmatic responsibilities would be maintained in connection with the stronger partnership that the Panel would be recommending between UNEP and UNDP in the environmental area. A similar question was raised regarding the delineation of the role of UNDP and responsibilities vis-à-vis the specialized agencies in the cross-cutting area of sustainable development;

(f) The question was also raised of the involvement of the agencies' governing bodies in examining and responding to the Panel's recommendations. The view was expressed, on behalf of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), that it would be advisable for the Secretary-General to seek the reactions of the Bretton Woods institutions before submitting the Panel's recommendations on relations with these institutions to the General Assembly.

20. The Committee also discussed, under this heading, the preparations for the forthcoming meetings of CEB, particularly in relation to the discussions that Executive Heads might wish to have on the outcome of the work of the Panel, bearing in mind that its report would not be formally submitted to the Secretary-General until after the CEB session. The Secretary of CEB indicated that he did not expect the session to be called upon to take a stand on the specifics of the Panel's recommendations. The private meeting would be devoted to a broad discussion on the future evolution of the work of the United Nations system, in the perspective of the experience of Kofi Annan's 10-year tenure as Secretary-General. The Panel's work would undoubtedly feature prominently in the discussion, but with a broad focus on how the system should approach its overall response to the outcome of the Panel's work. The Executive Director added that in order to facilitate even this broader discussion, every effort would be made to make further information available to Executive Heads in writing, as far in advance of the meeting as possible. Meanwhile, the Chairman undertook to convey to the Panel the views

expressed in the Committee's discussions, particularly on the role of CEB, so that they might be taken into account in finalizing the Panel's report.

21. The Committee was further assured that any consultative process that would follow the issuance of the Panel's report would fully involve CEB members. In the same contact, it was suggested that consideration also be given to an extraordinary session of CEB, devoted to the Panel's report, early in the new year.

III. Priority issues for Chief Executives Board sessions in the third quarter of 2006 and first quarter of 2007

A. Employment

22. The representative of the International Labour Organization (ILO) introduced a note, which the Committee, at its last session, had mandated it to produce, on the development of a toolkit for mainstreaming employment and decent work in the policies, programmes and activities of United Nations system organizations. The overall objective of the toolkit would be to enhance the collective impact of the United Nations system on advancing employment and decent work, thus contributing to the effectiveness and coherence of the overall response of the system to the 2005 World Summit Outcome. In her introductory remarks, the ILO representative noted that employment had been somewhat neglected in shaping the international agenda that emerged from the Millennium Summit, and had been left out, except for one specific dimension, of the Millennium Development Goals. It was probably being taken for granted that economic growth would generate a corresponding increase in employment. The jobless growth recently experienced by a number of countries, however, had turned any such conventional wisdom on its head. The outcome of the 2005 World Summit, followed by the Ministerial Declaration that resulted from the high-level segment of the substantive session of 2006 of the Economic and Social Council (3 to 5 July 2006), on the theme of "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", together, have reintroduced employment and decent work as a priority item on the global agenda, challenging the system to develop collective approaches that would serve to concretely advance these objectives at both the global and country level. The proposed toolkit should be understood in this strategic yet practical light. In terms of concrete steps ahead, the ILO representative proposed five areas: (a) individual agency self-evaluations; (b) capacity-building within the system and, most particularly, for resident coordinators and members of country teams; (c) launching a pilot of the toolkit in selected countries; (d) the development of area-specific measurement tools; and (e) the creation of a working group to guide and monitor the way forward.

23. Members of the Committee expressed general support for the suggested approach, appreciating both its overall strategic objectives and its intent to facilitate specific country-level progress. It was noted that the methodology being proposed was an excellent example of how a global issue should be worked into the country-level agenda. It could, as such, be replicated in other areas of system-wide relevance in order to strengthen the coherence of the system's policies and the convergence of its activities. It was observed that, in shaping the toolkit, careful attention should be

given to defining clearly those to whom it is addressed. Respecting the principle of country ownership and advancing the commitment made by countries themselves to pursue the objectives of full employment and decent work for all should be guiding the principles in this regard. A sectoral approach would be particularly relevant for technical and sector-specific agencies. Illicit/criminal activities and the impact of migration were cited as two areas that should be appropriately reflected in the toolkit. The suggestion was also made that the ILO Youth Employment Network could be made use of in the toolkit's pilot, and the option was raised of making the toolkit, once finalized, available as a web-based tool. Given that the first quarter of 2007 session of CEB — at which this item was expected to be given special attention — was only a few months away, the need was stressed of proceeding expeditiously with the necessary inter-agency consultations, so as to enable CEB to move forward on the basis of a product fully owned by the system.

24. The representative of the ILO thanked members of the Committee for their support and the comments they had offered. In order to ensure that these would be fully reflected in a revised version of the paper, she requested members to send her their views in writing within two weeks' time. A small working group of interested HLCP members would thereafter be convened to elaborate the specific questions addressed to United Nations system agencies on which the toolkit would be based. The toolkit would eventually be tested in pilot countries. It was expected that a revised note/toolkit would be submitted to HLCP at its first quarter of 2007 session for its final review and approval and submission to CEB.

B. Migration

25. The representative of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs introduced a note (attached as Annex III to the present document) prepared by the Department in collaboration with ILO, on the implications for the United Nations system of the General Assembly's High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development.

26. As highlighted in the note, the High-level Dialogue affirmed a number of key messages contained in the Secretary-General's report to the Dialogue. First, international migration was a growing phenomenon and a key component of development in both developing and developed countries. Second, international migration could be a positive force for development in countries of origin and countries of destination, provided it was supported by the right policies and was not used as a substitute for development. Third, it was important to strengthen international cooperation on international migration bilaterally, regionally and globally. The debate also stressed that international migration, development and human rights were intrinsically linked. Widespread support was expressed during the Dialogue for incorporating international migration into the development agenda and for integrating migration issues into national development strategies, including, possibly, poverty reduction strategies.

27. With regard to the follow-up to the Dialogue, most representatives had supported the proposal of the Secretary-General to establish a global forum on migration and development and the Government of Belgium offered to host a first meeting of the proposed forum next year. The Secretary-General had extended the

mandate of Peter Sutherland as Special Representative to act, inter alia, as the link between the proposed forum and the entire United Nations system.

28. In addition to summarizing the highlights of the Dialogue, the note before HLCP sets out a number of proposals for consideration at the inter-agency level. Among them:

(a) A strong call was made at the High-level Dialogue for the improvement of the evidence base on which to develop sound policy relating to international migration and development. The Global Migration Group (GMG) was initiating an inventory of data sources available in each of its member institutions. It might be useful, building on this work, to develop a broader inventory of relevant expertise available throughout the international system. The note invited HLCP to give encouragement to this work and to request that these inventories, once completed, be brought to its attention;

(b) Delegates at the High-level Dialogue stressed the need for capacity-building in a number of migration-related areas. Also in this regard, the note invited HLCP to give support to the preparation of a comprehensive inventory of activities that involve capacity-building relevant to international migration and that are carried throughout the system. HLCP was further invited to accept the ILO offer to use the capabilities of its International Training Centre in Turin in capacity-building activities directed to Member States and to United Nations agencies;

(c) Many government representatives at the High-level Dialogue, including most donor Governments, stressed the importance of reflecting international migration issues in national development strategies. The note invited organizations involved in providing technical cooperation to accord due priority to the development of guidelines and assessment tools to assist Governments in reflecting international migration issues realistically in their development strategies;

(d) United Nations entities and agencies working to combat trafficking were likewise invited to consider the possibilities that exist to strengthen their activities in migration-related areas;

(e) A crucial aspect of international migration, in which the United Nations system had a key role to play, was the promotion of human rights. The migration dimension of the work of OHCHR and other concerned entities within the United Nations system might need further strengthening to respond to the needs expressed at the Dialogue. Similarly, the activities of ILO with regard to the protection of migrant workers, respect for their rights and the implementation of international standards might need reinforcement, side by side with the economic and labour-based aspects of migration;

(f) The rights-based approach being recognized as fundamental in the area of international migration, United Nations organizations and agencies charged with setting standards in terms of human or labour rights might need, as a matter of priority, to give particular attention to outreach activities to ensure that migration and development projects or programmes are consistent with existing standards.

29. A representative of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), who had been invited by the Committee to contribute to this discussion and joined the meeting via video link, noted that the issue of migration had ripened significantly over the last decade and it was now seen as a major, shared concern of the

international community. In her view, the challenge was how to work collaboratively at the inter-agency and programmatic levels to translate the good will emanating from the Dialogue into concrete outcomes for the migrants.

30. Members of the Committee shared these observations and referred to the concluding remark of the President of the General Assembly that a main contribution of the Dialogue was to prove that international migration could be debated constructively in the United Nations. They also exchanged information on aspects of the work of their organizations that are especially relevant to advancing international cooperation on international migration. Specific reference was made, in this context, to activities relating to countering human trafficking, the effects of prolonged and secondary migration, the impact of environmental degradation, migration from rural to urban areas and the regional dimensions of migration.

31. The issue was raised of the respective roles of the annual coordination meetings convened by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (the next one was to be held in New York on 20 and 21 November 2006), GMG, HLCP and CEB in the follow-up to the Dialogue. Some members expressed interest in bringing the perspectives of their organizations to bear in the work of the Global Migration Group, noting that the current composition of the Group did not allow for it.

32. The representative of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs explained that the annual meetings convened by his Department over the last four years, while endorsed by the General Assembly, were not an institutional arrangement as such, but simply a periodic occasion for practitioners throughout the system, as well as concerned non-governmental organizations and government officials, to exchange views and coordinate activities, as necessary. GMG was an executive-head-level body, originally comprising six Geneva and Vienna-based organizations that had come together on a voluntary basis to exchange views on the contribution of their organizations to international cooperation on international migration. It had recently been expanded, with the addition of the heads of four entities based in the United States of America (Department of Economic and Social Affairs, UNDP, United Nations Population Fund and the World Bank). While this expansion, endorsed by the Secretary-General, had contributed to institutionalizing the Group, it remained a consultative rather than a decision-making body and its membership obviously defined the scope of its work. CEB and, by extension, HLCP, determine their agenda from a system-wide vantage point, selecting policy issues that are central to the contribution of the system to international cooperation and development. International migration and development feature on the current agenda of HLCP and CEB in this perspective. Obviously, in pursuing such issues, HLCP and CEB should build on the work of all existing inter-agency arrangements, irrespective of their status. In this particular case, HLCP can also be a conduit for the views and concerns of organizations not members of GMG.

33. The Committee took note of the analysis of the implications of the High-level Dialogue for the United Nations system contained in the note before it, and agreed to bring its assessment and recommendations to the attention of CEB, together with the views expressed in the Committee as outlined above. It agreed to revert to the matter at its next session, in order to review developments in the follow-up to the Dialogue. In this connection, it expressed the hope that work on the preparation of system-wide inventories of expertise and capacity-building activities relevant to international migration would be actively pursued. The Committee also called on the

CEB secretariat and the entities servicing different consultative arrangements on international migration to ensure a systematic exchange of information, so as to avoid duplication of work.

C. Least developed countries

34. The Director of the Office of the United Nations High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States briefed the Committee via video link on the outcome of the Mid-term Review of the Programme for Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010. The Review had been carried out in full cooperation with all United Nations system organizations, agencies and other relevant multilateral bodies, with five inter-agency consultative meetings held between July 2005 and July 2006.

35. The outcome of the Review had reiterated that the overall socio-economic situation in the least developed countries continues to be very precarious. In the declaration by the high-level meeting of the sixty-first session of the General Assembly on 18 and 19 September 2006 (attached as annex IV to the present document), Member States recommitted themselves to meeting the special needs of the least developed countries by making progress towards the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

36. The Director expressed the hope that the adoption of the declaration would serve to re-establish the special needs of the least developed countries at the forefront of the international development agenda. She outlined three proposals for further action by entities of the United Nations system: (a) a redoubling of the efforts of United Nations system entities in their respective fields of competence, to accelerate the implementation of the Brussels Programme; (b) a call on the governing bodies of those United Nations system entities which have not yet done so to effectively mainstream the implementation of the Programme of Action in their work programmes; and (c) the transformation of the inter-agency consultations for the Review into an inter-agency consultative group for the accelerated implementation of the Programme of Action during the remainder of the decade (2001-2010).

37. The Committee took note of the above assessment of the outcome of the Review and the implications for the future work of the United Nations system and agreed to convey the proposals by the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States to CEB for its endorsement.

IV. High-level Committee on Programmes future programme of work: follow-up to “One United Nations” and to Committee decisions

A. Economic development

38. The Committee had before it a note by the HLCP Task Force on Economic Development, which was introduced by the representative of the United Nations

Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO). He recalled that the Task Force had been established by HLCP in February 2005 to elaborate a common framework for collective and coordinated action among United Nations entities working in the field of economic development. Progress in the work of the Task Force had been constrained by various factors, and UNIDO, in its capacity as the convenor of the Task Force, had recently proposed new arrangements for giving the Task Force work a more concrete, practical focus. As part of these arrangements, an inter-agency meeting of experts from interested organizations was convened and called on to identify concrete areas for cooperation to advance coherence and coordination in the system's work on market efficiency and integration, with special attention to trade capacity-building.

39. The note before the Committee presented the outcome of the meeting of the Task Force's Working Group on Market Efficiency and Integration, held in Vienna on 15 September 2006. At that meeting, arrangements had been agreed upon to compile information on the services and activities of the participating organizations, including information on joint activities, collaborative arrangements and coordinating mechanisms concerning trade capacity-building. The data collected would form part of a resource handbook or guide on who does what, how, for whom and for what purpose in the fields of market integration and trade capacity-building. Its main purpose would be to provide comprehensive information on capacities and expertise that United Nations country teams could utilize to respond to country-level requirements. The Working Group would build on the activities of existing coordination mechanisms in the field of trade capacity-building and other collaborative work under way within the United Nations system, so as to avoid duplicative efforts. As an ad hoc, time-bound and task-oriented body designed to produce concrete, common outputs for advancing coherence on a specific issue, the Working Group was fully in line with the new approaches to coordination adopted by CEB in 2001.

40. The Committee noted the outcome of this meeting and endorsed its plan to develop a guide to services and activities of entities of the system in the field of trade capacity-building, providing the Committee with periodic updates as appropriate.

41. The representative of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) recalled that the Committee had agreed at its intersessional meeting in Geneva in July 2006 to include an urbanization component in the work of the Task Force on Economic Development. Highlighting the growing importance of urbanization as a system-wide coordination issue, she informed the Committee that UN-Habitat intends to organize a meeting of interested organizations prior to the HLCP meeting to be held in the first quarter of 2007 to develop a joint programme of work to promote coherence and coordination of activities at the city/local level and to assist city/local authorities in the planning and management of their cities and the implementation of local actions for the realization of the Millennium Development Goals. HLCP took note of this initiative and of the intention of UN-Habitat to take the lead in consulting with concerned agencies with a view to proposing a programme of work for the Committee on the issue of urbanization.

42. The Committee also took note of the information provided by the representative of UNEP regarding the environment/climate change component of the

original terms of reference of the Task Force on Economic Development that will be pursued in the context of the work of the Environmental Management Group.

B. Science and technology

43. Members of the Committee had before them a revised version of the note that the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) had originally presented to it at its eleventh session. The revised note was intended to generate further discussion and input with a view towards finalizing an inter-agency programme of work in the area of science and technology for development. The note suggested that an online discussion forum be set up by UNCTAD, which would include all members of the CEB working on science and technology-related issues. The forum would facilitate an ongoing dialogue on how the United Nations system could best respond to the renewed international attention to science and technology and technology transfer, as reflected in the 2005 World Summit Outcome. In so doing, it would also seek to help ensure that the priorities of the technical agencies find an adequate reflection in the CEB/HLCP programme of work.

44. In introducing the revised note, the representative of UNCTAD proposed to organize a meeting of interested HLCP members before the end of the year to:

- Review different United Nations entities' initiatives in the field of science and technology for development
- Share information and experiences on how best to improve coherence and cooperation among United Nations entities in science and technology
- Develop a common strategy in this regard, to be pursued through the online discussion forum

It was stressed that the proposed meeting was intended as a one-off event and would not entail the establishment of any new mechanism.

45. In commenting on the proposed way forward, members of the Committee underscored the need for focusing attention on implementation. They also stressed the importance of ensuring that other ongoing inter-agency work, including in particular the extensive arrangements made in the follow-up to the World Summit on the Information Society and the system-wide analysis of capacity-building in technology development being coordinated by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs as part of the preparations for 2007 Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review of Operational Activities for Development of the United Nations System, are not duplicated. With that understanding, they welcomed the suggestion of an online discussion forum and concurred with the UNCTAD initiative to convene a meeting of interested United Nations entities before the end of the year.

C. Coordination of statistical activities

46. The Director of the United Nations Statistical Division introduced via video link a note prepared for the Committee on coordinating mechanisms within the global statistical system. He explained that the purpose of the note was to keep HLCP informed of developments in an area that had been strongly emphasized in the "Way Forward" section of the CEB "One United Nations" report and to provide

suggestions for improving existing arrangements in order to achieve a higher level of coordination.

47. After presenting the state-of-play in the work of the inter-agency Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities and the Inter-Agency Expert Group on Millennium Development Goals Indicators, the note raised two issues for discussion relating, respectively, to the coordination of data collection activities and dissemination of data; and technical cooperation. With regard to the former issue, the note referred to the significant efforts under way to coordinate data collection activities and to reduce duplication and thus also reduce the response burden on member countries. Data-sharing among agencies was increasingly the strategy adopted. With regard to data dissemination, however, little coordination existed as yet. There was no uniform data dissemination policy, nor was there a central database that pooled all the United Nations data together to enhance data accessibility. To address these concerns, the United Nations Statistical Division had initiated a project to create a web portal (data.un.org) where all United Nations databases would be linked. However, issues of duplication of databases, lack of common standards and lack of quality assurance still needed to be addressed. The Division was exploring ways to develop, through the existing inter-agency coordination mechanisms, common data dissemination standards and ensure compliance and quality assurance of the data collected. HLCP was called on to give encouragement and support for this process.

48. With regard to technical cooperation, the note recalled that the United Nations system had accomplished much in building statistical capacity in member countries. This had been achieved through: (a) transfer of technical knowledge; (b) technical assistance in large scale statistical projects; and (c) the provision of assistance in building sound statistical governance and institutional systems and strengthening statistical infrastructure. In the last 15 years, however, the role of the United Nations in providing assistance in statistical capacity-building had progressively diminished due to a lack of resources. A reversal of this trend would require the United Nations system to join forces in a more purposeful and better coordinated way. Effective coordination would be needed at all stages, including programme design, project evaluation and quality control and monitoring. The Division had launched initiatives to improve the coordination of technical cooperation activities and was willing to move forward to facilitate United Nations system efforts to coordinate country-level work, reduce duplication and pool resources. HLCP was requested to invite the United Nations Development Group and all concerned United Nations agencies and entities to extend support to this effort.

49. The Committee expressed appreciation for the initiatives and efforts under way, as outlined in the note's recommendations. Members of the Committee stressed the need to make further progress in the coordination of the global statistical system and the crucial importance to the process of advancing the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals of a concerted effort at capacity-building and of reliable instruments for monitoring progress.

50. In responding to questions from members of the Committee, the Director noted that the Division had produced more than 50 manuals on international norms and standards as well as on the dissemination of statistics. He drew attention to the Millennium Development Goal database that the Division had designed for the compilation, dissemination and presentation of development indicators to track

progress on Millennium Development Goals and to inform the political debate on Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals. He also reported that the Division had issued the 2006 update of the MDGInfo database and was working on developing a GenderInfo database. Both the MDGInfo and GenderInfo were based on a DevInfo¹ platform. The Director further explained the origins of the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century (PARIS21),² which had been launched to serve as a catalyst for promoting a culture of evidence-based policymaking and implementation, and improving governance and government effectiveness in reducing poverty and achieving the Millennium Development Goals. He further referred to the work under way on poverty mapping that Jeffery Sachs had recently initiated based on Geographical Information Systems (GIS) technology and to the ongoing collaboration between UNDP and the Division in connection with the annual *Human Development Report*. He thanked the Committee for its attention and support.

D. Relations with parliamentarians

51. The Secretary-General of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), Anders B. Johnsson, introduced a note on relations with parliamentarians that the Union had prepared for consideration by the Committee. The note argued that the United Nations system stands to gain considerably by placing more emphasis on its relations with parliaments as an institution and that IPU can play a unique role in shaping and providing content to that relationship. The note offered insights into the type of mechanisms IPU has developed to facilitate interaction between the United Nations and parliaments. Illustrations contained in the note included: the annual IPU assemblies, which are attended by some 1,500 parliamentary delegates from some 140 countries and offer unique opportunities for the system to address and interact with the global Parliamentary community on key United Nations issues; specialized global committees and conferences on specific issues that are high on the international agenda, such as human rights, trade questions, HIV/AIDS, child protection, gender and employment; parliamentary meetings on the occasion of major United Nations conferences and similar events; parliamentary hearings at the United Nations; the work of IPU on monitoring implementation of United Nations conventions; IPU toolkits for members of parliament on select issues (recent handbooks have addressed issues relating to human rights, humanitarian law, refugees and statelessness, child protection and security); workshops and seminars for members of parliament on issues such as human rights, gender equality, the environment and security; and operational support to United Nations missions, projects and activities. With regard to future cooperation, the note identified a number of areas that are high on both the United Nations system and parliaments' agenda, including employment, the environment, violence against children and women and the rights of persons with disabilities.

52. In line with the conclusions of the 2006 report of the Secretary-General on cooperation between the United Nations and IPU, the note argued in favour of a

¹ DevInfo is a database system that maintains indicators by time periods and geographic areas to monitor commitments to sustained human development. It was developed in cooperation with the United Nations system and has been adapted from United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) ChildInfo technology. For more information see: <http://www.devinfo.org/>.

² For more information see: <http://www.paris21.org/>.

structured mechanism for consultation and coordination between IPU and the United Nations system, through, inter alia, a more systematic participation by IPU in relevant inter-agency coordinating mechanisms. This, the note argued, would enable the system, as it develops system-wide strategies and policies, to gain a better understanding of how parliaments work and how to expedite parliamentary action.

53. In his presentation, Mr. Johnsson stressed that the single most important point that the note had tried to communicate was that it made more sense for the United Nations to invest in a relationship with IPU and the 150 or so parliaments that participated in its activities than to try to build relations with the almost 45,000 members of parliaments worldwide.

54. Members of the Committee recalled that stronger cooperation with parliaments was an integral part of the system's commitments, as set out in "The Way Forward" section of the "One United Nations" report.

55. The engagement of United Nations system entities with IPU was wide ranging and many opportunities existed to further expand it. Ethics and anti-corruption activities and governance and peacebuilding were among the areas cited as offering excellent opportunities for closer and more systematic collaboration.

56. The Committee concluded that progress in this area would best be achieved by following a two-track approach: accompanying individual agencies' interactions with IPU by a more systematic effort at engaging clusters of organizations in a dialogue with IPU on specific issues of common concern; and providing, on an ad hoc basis, for system-wide interactions with IPU, within the overall framework of HLCP, on broader strategies to advance multilateralism and global public goods.

57. The Committee thanked the Secretary-General of IPU for the Union's precious contribution to advancing the United Nations system's goals and agreed to keep under constant review ways of further strengthening the system's collaboration and dialogue with parliaments, through IPU, at both the programmatic and strategic levels.

E. Other matters

58. The representative of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs introduced a note on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which highlighted the Convention's significance as a "paradigm shift" in approaches to people with disabilities and called for a system-wide strategy to advance its implementation. The note recommended that HLCP establish a time-bound inter-agency support group tasked with preparing such a strategy. The Committee endorsed this proposal and requested the Department to convene and lead the support group.

59. Due to a lack of time, the Committee decided to defer its review of progress in the ongoing work by the Knowledge Sharing Task Force and the work of the United Nations Group on the Information Society until its next session. The CEB secretariat's Senior Advisor on Information Management Policy Coordination was requested to circulate, in the interim, a note on recent developments in the work of the Task Force for the information of Committee's members.

60. The Committee also decided to defer to the next session consideration of the request of the International Trade Centre of UNCTAD and the World Trade Organization to become a member of HLCP.

61. The Committee accepted the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime offer to prepare a note for consideration at its next session on the subject of anti-corruption initiatives within the framework of the implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption, with a view to designing an effective United Nations system-wide approach against corruption.

62. In concluding the meeting, the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee recalled that their terms of office in the Committee were coming to an end with the current session. They thanked members of the Committee for their constant support and cooperation and referred to the review of CEB structures to be recommended by the Panel on System-Wide Coherence as a precious opportunity to further enhance the system's capacity to respond with unity of purpose to the major challenges facing it, as outlined in the CEB "One United Nations" report.

63. Members expressed their warm appreciation to the Chairman and Vice-Chairman for their inspiring, effective leadership. They appealed to them to consider continuing to serve in their present capacities, until such time as a new bureau for HLCP could be identified by the membership, given the need for continuity during the challenging period of transition as a new Secretary-General takes office and assumes the leadership of CEB.

64. The Committee decided that it would consult further, following its joint session with the High-level Committee on Management, on a suitable timing for its thirteenth session.

Annex I

Agenda

Twelfth session of the High-level Committee on Programmes

1. Adoption of the agenda
2. Developments in the work of the Panel on System-wide Coherence and implications for the work of the United Nations system, including preparations for the Joint session with the High-level Committee on Management
3. Employment
4. Migration
5. Least Developed Countries
6. Coordination of statistical activities
7. Economic development
8. Science and technology
9. United Nations system relations with parliamentarians
10. Other matters

Joint session with the High-level Committee on Management

- (a) System-wide coherence
- (b) Gender mainstreaming
- (c) Results-based management
- (d) United Nations System Staff College

Annex II

List of participants

Chairman: Lennart Båge (International Fund for Agricultural Development)

Vice-Chairman: Mats Karlsson (World Bank)

Secretary: Phyllis Lee (Chief Executives Board for Coordination Secretariat)

United Nations

Department of Economic and Social Affairs	Patrizio Civili Rachel Mayanja Paul Cheung (Vice-Chairman) Hania Zlotnik (Vice-Chairman)
Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States	Harriet Schmidt (Vice-Chairman)
Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean	Marta Maurás Amr Nour
International Labour Organization	Maria Ducci Christophe Perrin
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	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	Denis Aitken Peter Mertens
World Bank	Oscar Avalle
International Monetary Fund	Reinhard Munzberg
Universal Postal Union	Olivier Boussard
International Telecommunication Union	Arthur Levin
World Meteorological Organization	Elena Manaenkova
World Intellectual Property Organization	Orobola Fasehun
International Fund for Agricultural Development	Uday Abhyankar
United Nations Industrial Development Organization	Agerico Lacanlale
World Trade Organization	Said El Hachimi

World Tourism Organization	Taleb Rifai
United Nations Conference on Trade and Development	Dirk Jan Bruinsma Masahiro Igarashi
United Nations Development Programme	Bruce Jenks
United Nations Development Group	Sally Fegan-Wyles
United Nations Environment Programme	Werner Obermeyer
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	Arnauld Akodjenou Brian Lander
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	Kwabena Osei-Danquah
World Food Programme	Allan Jury
United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes	Ugi Zvekic
United Nations Human Settlements Programme	Axumite Gebre-Egziaber
United Nations University	Janos Bogardi
United Nations System Staff College	Staffan de Mistura Paolo Ceratto Michael Alford
Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization	Alexander Kmentt
Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS	Eamonn Murphy
International Organization for Migration	Michele Klein-Solomon (Vice-Chairman)
Inter-Parliamentary Union	Anders Johnsson
Chief Executives Board for Coordination Secretariat	Adnan Amin Ken Herman Mikael Rosengren

Annex III

The High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development: implications for the United Nations system

Note by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the International Labour Organization

A. Background

1. Intergovernmental process at the United Nations

1. The Second Committee of the General Assembly began addressing international migration and its interrelations with development in 1994, as a result of the treatment of the subject at the International Conference on Population and Development. Between 1995 and 2003, the Second Committee considered, every two years, reports analysing the views of Member States on the possible convening of a United Nations conference on international migration and development. The proposed conference never garnered sufficient support. In 2003, the General Assembly opted to hold a High-level Dialogue on the subject in the Assembly itself, in 2006. The Dialogue would identify appropriate ways and means to maximize the development benefits of international migration and minimize its negative impacts (General Assembly resolution 58/208 of 23 December 2003). The outcome of the Dialogue would be a Chairman's summary.

2. Furthermore, in March 2002, the governing body of the International Labour Organization (ILO) decided to place on the agenda of the 92nd session of the International Labour Conference (ILC) a general discussion on migrant workers. This discussion took place in 2004, and the ILC adopted by consensus a resolution requesting the International Labour Office to implement a plan of action on migrant workers.

2. The Global Commission on International Migration

3. Also in 2003, the Global Commission on International Migration — an independent group composed of 19 expert commissioners serving in their personal capacity and supported by over 30 Governments — was launched. The Commission, which was in operation from January 2004 to the second half of 2005, presented its report to the Secretary-General of the United Nations in October 2005. The report contained 33 recommendations to strengthen the national, regional and global governance of international migration. Recommendation 33 was directed to the Secretary-General. It called for the establishment of a high-level inter-institutional group to ensure a more coherent and effective institutional response to the opportunities and challenges presented by international migration.

3. The Global Migration Group

4. In response to this recommendation, the Secretary-General held consultations with the heads of the major United Nations entities involved in international migration and with the Director General of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) at a meeting held on 27 October 2005. One of the main

conclusions of these consultations was to proceed to the expansion of the Geneva Migration Group, which had as members the heads of ILO, IOM, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. Louise Arbour — the Group's chair at that time — was requested to propose, in consultation with the other members, the terms of reference for the expanded group.

5. Ms. Arbour presented her proposals to the Secretary-General in February 2006, and the Secretary-General proceeded to establish the Global Migration Group (GMG) whose members now include, in addition to the members of the former Geneva Migration Group, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund and the World Bank. The Secretary-General also approved the proposed terms of reference of GMG, submitted by Ms. Arbour. GMG has held three meetings at the executive head level since its establishment. Its work has focused on contributing to the report of the Secretary-General for the High-level Dialogue, and its members participated actively in the preparatory activities for the Dialogue as well as in the Dialogue itself (the High-level Committee on Programmes was informed of some of these developments at its eleventh session).

6. GMG is now engaged in developing its methods of work further. It is expected that the chair of the group will rotate for a period of six months (rather than every three months, as is currently the case) among the executive heads that are members of the Group. Secretariat services are being provided by the organization holding the chair.

4. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General on International Migration and Development

7. In January 2006, the Secretary-General, in order to promote participation of Member States in the High-level Dialogue at the highest possible level and to consult Member States regarding the way forward, appointed Peter Sutherland as his Special Representative on International Migration and Development.

5. Global Forum on International Migration and Development

8. The report of the Secretary-General for the High-level Dialogue presented, as requested by Member States, an overview of studies and analyses on the multidimensional aspects of migration and development (General Assembly resolution 60/227). It also provided recommendations for further action and proposed, in that context, the establishment of a consultative forum — led by and open to all the 191 Member States of the United Nations — that would offer Governments a venue to discuss issues related to international migration and development in a systematic, comprehensive way. The proposed forum would not produce negotiated outcomes. It would provide Governments with timely exposure to promising policy ideas, as analysed by the most relevant, qualified bodies from both inside and outside the United Nations system. The forum would complement, and add value to, the activities of the regional consultative processes.

B. The High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development

9. The High-level Dialogue took place on 14 and 15 September 2006. Statements were made by 133 Member States and 13 entities with observer status. About 90 Member States were represented at the ministerial or vice-ministerial level.

10. The Dialogue consisted of six plenary sessions and four round tables, which focused on the impact of international migration on economic and social development, the centrality of human rights in advancing the development benefits of migration, the importance of remittances and the crucial role of international cooperation and partnerships to address the challenges posed by international migration. Participants in the round tables included representatives of Member States and of institutions with observer status as well as representatives of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes and of civil society and the private sector.

11. As the President of the General Assembly remarked at the conclusion of the event, the Dialogue proved that international migration and development could be debated constructively in the United Nations. The Dialogue affirmed a number of key messages contained in the report of the Secretary-General: first, international migration was a growing phenomenon and a key component of development in both developing and developed countries; second, international migration could be a positive force for development in countries of origin and countries of destination, provided it was supported by the right policies; and third, it was important to strengthen international cooperation on international migration, bilaterally, regionally and globally.

12. The debate stressed that international migration, development and human rights were intrinsically linked. Respect for the fundamental rights and freedoms of all migrants, regardless of status, was recognized as an obligation for all States. Respect for human rights was considered to be the necessary foundation for the beneficial effects of migration on development to accrue. Many speakers noted that migrant women and some vulnerable groups, such as children or those seeking asylum from persecution, needed special protection. The ratification and implementation of the core human rights instruments was deemed essential by many delegates. There was agreement that the protocols against trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants were key instruments in the fight against those crimes. Delegates also supported the ratification of ILO instruments and the use of the ILO Multilateral Framework on Labour Migration as a guideline in ensuring the respect of the rights of migrant workers.

13. Delegates recognized that international migration could not be a substitute for development. Several noted that, too often, migrants were forced to seek employment abroad due to poverty, conflict and lack of respect for human rights. They stressed the importance of peace and security, good governance, the rule of law and the provision of decent work in countries of origin to ensure that people migrated out of choice and not out of necessity. There was widespread support for incorporating international migration into the development agenda and for integrating migration issues into national development strategies, including possibly into poverty reduction strategies.

14. Delegates reiterated that remittances were the most tangible benefits of international migration for development. Remittances improved the lives of millions

of migrant families and had a positive effect on the economy at large. It was recognized that more needed to be done to reduce transfer costs and that supporting policies were needed to maximize the development potential of remittances. Delegates stressed that remittances were private money and should not be viewed as a substitute for official development assistance, foreign direct investment or debt relief.

15. Many speakers expressed concern about the emigration of highly skilled workers from developing countries. It was recognized that the loss of skilled workers was posing serious challenges, particularly in small low-income countries where crucial sectors, such as health and education, were severely affected. The representatives of some receiving countries reported that they had stopped active recruitment of skilled personnel from those countries. Others observed that working conditions in countries of origin needed to improve so as to reduce the incentives for emigration. Mention was also made of the desirability of international cooperation and partnerships with the private sector to accelerate the formation of skilled personnel in developing countries.

16. It was recognized that, increasingly, migrant communities were making important contributions to the development of their home countries. Several speakers explained how their Governments were strengthening ties with their citizens abroad and were promoting their active involvement in networks that could be a source of technology, know-how and capital. Speakers noted that the return, be it permanent or temporary, of skilled emigrants could be an important source of some of the skills most needed at home. Measures to support entrepreneurship and business creation were thought apt to promote return.

17. There was widespread agreement on the importance of more timely and accurate data about migration. Speakers also emphasized the need for better research, especially about the implications of international migration for the development prospects of developing countries. It was also stressed that sufficient funding had to be allocated to assist developing countries in migration policy formulation and to develop appropriate expertise. Many speakers called for practical, capacity-building initiatives supported by intergovernmental cooperation.

18. Referring to his proposal for the establishment of a global forum on international migration and development, the Secretary-General, in his opening statement to the High-level Dialogue, stressed that the forum had to be led and overseen by States and that the United Nations system, and he personally, stood ready to support it. With that aim, he was extending the mandate of Peter Sutherland as Special Representative on International Migration and Development and trusted that the Special Representative would provide the essential link between the proposed forum and the entire United Nations system. The Secretary-General added that he was ready to create a voluntary trust fund to help support the forum's work.

19. The President of the General Assembly summed up the response of Governments during the Dialogue in the following words: "We have now completed the High-level Dialogue, where do we go from here? During these two days, in your plenary statements and in your remarks in the round tables, nearly all of you have expressed the wish to continue an international dialogue in some form. Many of you have embraced the Secretary-General's proposal of establishing a global forum on migration and development and the offer made by the Government of Belgium to

host the first meeting of the forum next year. I commend your commitment to advancing this constructive dialogue on this important issue”.

C. Implications for the United Nations system

20. Over the past decade, and especially during the past three years, the involvement of the United Nations system in activities related to international migration has increased markedly. But as activities increase, so does the need for policy coherence and for both programmatic and operational coordination.

21. GMG is at present the main available instrument for such coherence and coordination among its member organizations.

22. At the expert level, the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs has been convening, since 2002, system-wide coordination meetings on international migration involving broad-based participation by all United Nations entities, agencies and related organizations engaged in migration-related work. The General Assembly, in its resolution 58/208, called for those meetings to continue. The next coordination meeting is scheduled to take place on 20 and 21 November 2006 at United Nations Headquarters in New York. The meeting is expected to focus on the follow-up to the High-level Dialogue by the United Nations system and will be guided by related discussions at the forthcoming sessions of the High-level Committee on Programmes (HLCP) and the Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB).

23. As noted above, there was a strong call at the High-level Dialogue for the improvement of the evidence base on which to develop sound policy relative to international migration and development. This should be an important objective of inter-agency efforts, including support for the work of the Global Forum. The Forum is expected to rely heavily on the expertise found among the members of GMG and in the United Nations system as a whole for substantive inputs to its deliberations. GMG is initiating an inventory of data sources available in each of its member institutions. It may be useful, building on this work, to develop a broader inventory of relevant expertise available throughout the international system. HLCP may wish to give encouragement to this work and request that these inventories, once completed, be brought to its attention.

24. Delegates at the High-level Dialogue stressed the need for capacity-building in a number of migration-related areas. Also in this regard, HLCP may wish to give support to the preparation of a comprehensive inventory of activities involving capacity-building relevant for international migration that are carried throughout the system, so as to strengthen the database on which inter-agency collaboration and cooperation in this area should be based. HLCP may also wish to accept the ILO offer to use the capabilities of its International Training Centre in Turin in capacity-building activities directed to Member States and to United Nations agencies.

25. Many government representatives at the High-level Dialogue, including most donor Governments, stressed the importance of reflecting international migration issues in national development strategies and, in particular, in poverty reduction strategies. Since the impact of international migration varies according to the setting, the most suitable way of including international migration and its effects in such documents requires careful study. Organizations involved in providing

technical cooperation may wish to accord priority to the development of guidelines and assessment tools to assist Governments in reflecting international migration issues realistically in their development strategies.

26. One facet of international migration on which there is strong consensus among Governments is the need to combat trafficking in persons and to protect the most vulnerable groups. United Nations entities working to combat trafficking may wish to consider the possibilities that exist to strengthen their activities in this area.

27. A crucial aspect of international migration, and one in which the United Nations system has a key role to play, is the promotion of human rights and the provision of mechanisms to ensure that State obligations in relation to human rights are fulfilled. In this regard, the migration dimension of the work of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and other concerned entities within the United Nations system may need further strengthening to respond to the needs expressed at the Dialogue. Similarly, the activities of ILO with regard to the protection of migrant workers, respect for their rights and the implementation of international standards may need reinforcement.

28. The rights-based approach being recognized as fundamental in the area of international migration, United Nations entities charged with setting standards in terms of human or labour rights may need, as a matter of priority, to give particular attention to outreach activities to ensure that migration and development projects or programmes are consistent with existing standards. The ILO Multilateral Framework on Labour Migration, which consists of a set of non-binding principles and guidelines for a rights-based approach to labour migration, can be used to formulate and implement policies that guarantee the rights of migrant workers while respecting the objectives of both countries of origin and destination.

Annex IV

Declaration of the high-level meeting of the sixty-first session of the General Assembly on the midterm comprehensive global review of the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-

We, Heads of State and Government and heads of delegations participating in the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the midterm comprehensive global review of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010, held on 18 and 19 September 2006:

1. Recommit ourselves to meeting the special needs of the least developed countries by making progress towards the goals of poverty eradication, peace and development through the improvement of the quality of lives of people in the least developed countries and the strengthening of their abilities to build a better future for themselves and develop their countries, as committed to in the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010;

2. Reaffirm that the Programme of Action constitutes a fundamental framework for a strong global partnership whose goal is to accelerate sustained economic growth, sustainable development and poverty eradication in the least developed countries;

3. Also reaffirm that the primary responsibility for development in the least developed countries rests with those countries themselves, but that their efforts need to be given concrete and substantial international support from Governments and international organizations in a spirit of shared responsibility through genuine partnerships, including with civil society and the private sector;

4. Support the smooth transition strategy developed for the graduation of countries from the list of least developed countries and, in this regard, affirm the need for the international community to render necessary support to the graduation of the least developed countries with a view to averting the disruption of their development projects and programmes and allowing them to continue developing;

5. Stress that the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, can be effectively achieved in the least developed countries through, in particular, the timely fulfilment of the seven commitments of the Programme of Action;

6. Note that, while the Programme of Action has, since its adoption, registered some progress in its implementation, at the same time the overall socio-economic situation in the least developed countries continues to be precarious;

7. Stress that, given current trends, many least developed countries are unlikely to achieve the goals and objectives set out in the Programme of Action;

8. Emphasize, however, that many least developed countries, with the support of their development partners, have, despite many difficulties, produced notable achievements through wide-ranging and far-reaching reforms;

^a See General Assembly resolution 61/1.

9. Acknowledge the significant efforts by development partners in the implementation of the Programme of Action, also acknowledge that there is more to be done to implement the Programme of Action, in particular in the area of poverty eradication, and recognize that the situation in the least developed countries requires continued attention;

10. Recognize that it is important to achieve the goals and targets of the Programme of Action in a timely manner and, in this regard, welcome the elaboration of the Cotonou Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010 as an initiative owned and led by least developed countries;

11. Welcome the measures taken by developed and developing countries, as well as by multilateral organizations, to promote South-South cooperation and call upon them to continue to enhance their resources and efforts for capacity-building and development in the least developed countries, including the sharing of best practices in the sustainable development of the least developed countries;

12. Call upon the international community and the United Nations system and its agencies to continue to assist in the implementation of the Programme of Action, taking into account the conclusions of the midterm comprehensive global review;

13. Invite the Economic and Social Council to continue to ensure the annual review of the implementation of the Programme of Action, taking into account the concrete and quantifiable achievements produced in the realization of the agreed objectives.
