



Chief Executives Board for Coordination

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English only

Report of the High-level Committee on Programmes on its nineteenth session

(Geneva, 3 and 4 March 2010)

I. Introduction

1. The High-level Committee on Programmes of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) held its nineteenth session in Geneva on 3 and 4 March 2010. The agenda of the meeting (annex I) and the list of participants (annex II) are attached.

2. In adopting the agenda, the Committee took note of the important interlinkages among the items under consideration, in particular those regarding the global financial and economic crisis, the 10-year review of the Millennium Development Goals and the discussion on moving towards fairer, greener and more sustainable globalization.

II. Global financial and economic crisis: state of play

3. The Chairperson invited the Committee to take stock of where the United Nations system was positioned in the current global economic landscape and to identify the emerging issues and lessons learned from the global financial and economic crisis. The Committee was requested to highlight the practical impact of the work of the system through the joint crisis initiatives at the country level. On the basis of their stocktaking and analysis, the High-level Committee on Programmes should consider the nature of its further work.

Review of the crisis

4. In reflecting on responses to the crisis, the Chairperson noted the level of autonomy that countries had in defining their own policies, the change that had occurred in the traditional role of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the evidence of new thinking with regard to countercyclical policies, inflation and capital controls and the greater degree to which developing countries, compared with developed countries, had internalized the lessons learned from the earlier Asian crisis, which had helped to limit the extent of financial contagion and facilitated a



more rapid recovery. The crisis had led to greater receptivity to the notion of a basic social protection floor, heightened recognition of the significance of work and the risks of a job-weak recovery, as well as of the importance of agricultural production. The Chairperson highlighted the breakthrough at the G-20 meeting in Pittsburgh, United States of America, towards creating a framework for strong, sustainable and balanced growth, supported by IMF through its surveillance of countries' policy frameworks, which could perhaps become a model for generalized exchanges on governance issues. At the same time, the Chairperson expressed concern about the potential risk of returning to "business as usual" and not paying sufficient attention to the continued impact of the crisis on the lives of people. The Chairperson also noted that, while 2009 had been a "governmental year", 2010 would be less so in view of the fact that deepening fiscal constraints were beginning to emerge. It would be a year of public policy and private decision-making and one addressing the question of how to get the real economy going.

5. The CEB Secretary introduced the briefing note prepared by the Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, which, in addition to containing a sober analysis of the current situation, underscored the importance of stepping up coordination and coherence in the macroeconomic work of the United Nations, as well as in mobilizing support for the "Global Green New Deal". The importance of pursuing the capacity to provide a "second opinion" on macroeconomic issues was also stressed.

6. Although the United Nations had warned for some years of the dangers posed by the growing imbalances in the global economy and unregulated financial sector developments, it had not been leading the global response to the crisis. A stumbling block was to be found in the current state of inclusive multilateralism, especially concerning the issues of international economic governance. Very little had been done to seriously advance fundamental issues of systemic reform, despite the strong interest of Member States. Meanwhile, joblessness continued to mount despite some signs of recovery, albeit still fragile, food prices were on the rise and developing countries, with little fiscal space, still remained vulnerable. There was an urgent need to ensure that efforts to mitigate climate change did not undermine developing countries' aspirations for development, which could be achieved only by subsidizing the generation of renewable energy in addition to enhancing energy efficiency in developing countries. Both renewable energy generation and food production would also enable the creation of decent work opportunities, and it was critical for public investments to be front-loaded into those areas. The crisis had also revealed a greater consensus in policy thinking than had obtained previously, offering an opportunity for more complementarity in macroeconomic work, with particular focus on employment, decent work and social protection.

7. The IMF representative noted that the global recovery was off to a stronger start than had been anticipated, but that it was proceeding at varying speeds. Recovery in advanced economies was being driven largely by extraordinary policy support and the turn in the inventory cycle. In key emerging countries, the recovery reflected strong domestic demand and higher commodity prices. The speed of recovery was expected to vary considerably across G-20 countries, with weaker and more fragile growth in advanced economies and robust expansion in emerging economies, particularly in Asia. After having contracted by 0.8 per cent in 2009, global output was expected to expand by about 4 per cent in 2010 and 4.3 per cent

in 2011, an upward revision of 0.75 and 0.1 percentage points, respectively, relative to projections of the IMF publication *World Economic Outlook: Sustaining the Recovery* (October 2009). Inflation was expected to remain contained in most advanced economies as a result of increasing unemployment and large output gaps, but some emerging economies would increasingly face upward inflationary pressures.

8. The IMF representative made a number of additional observations. First, while financial market conditions continued to improve, bank credit was likely to remain sluggish in many advanced G-20 economies, and some sovereign debt markets were facing growing pressures. Second, there had been important exchange rate changes, reflecting the multiple speed nature of the recovery, renewed appetite for risk and rebounding capital flows to emerging economies. Currency appreciation was still being resisted in some emerging economies, which complicated global rebalancing in some cases. Third, commodity prices had increased strongly at the onset of the recovery, driven largely by buoyant growth in emerging economies, particularly in Asia. Finally, unemployment had stabilized in the major advanced economies and had begun to decline across many emerging economies.

9. In view of the varying speed of the recovery, economies would face different policy challenges. It seemed likely that, for advanced economies, policy stimulus measures would need to be maintained at least through 2010 and possibly augmented in some cases. However, macroeconomic support could not substitute for restructuring in securing durable growth; in particular, financial system reform needed to proceed with a greater sense of urgency. At the same time, policymakers needed credible coherent exit strategies to make the transition from extraordinary short-term support towards the medium-term objective of strong, sustained and balanced growth.

10. The IMF representative added that, in view of the more rapid recoveries that were occurring, some major emerging economies might have to unwind stimulus measures faster and deal with robust capital inflows. Monetary policy might have to be tightened sooner than in advanced countries and before fiscal consolidation had taken place, owing to rising inflation of incipient financial vulnerabilities. Some economies might need to manage a surge in capital inflows, which could include an appropriate mix of macroprudential policies, some reserve accumulation and carefully designed capital controls on inflows. Fiscal tightening might be needed where fiscal stimulus had spurred domestic demand adequately. Emerging economies that had depended on export-led growth must proceed with rebalancing their economies in order to increase the relative importance of robust domestic demand and pursue additional reforms to reduce precautionary savings. Greater exchange rate flexibility would help reduce capital inflows and facilitate rebalancing in the major surplus emerging economies.

11. The representative of the World Bank noted that the world was taking on a new economic configuration, with the centre of gravity shifting towards developing countries. That phenomenon called for the integration of the rising powers into the multilateral system in a more robust and decisive way. In parallel, the global development architecture had also evolved dramatically, with many new actors on the scene. That situation risked aid fragmentation, possible loss of efficiency and mismatch with country priorities, and was an issue that the United Nations should address.

12. Recovery from the crisis would be slow, weak and bumpy; even in 2011, demand was projected to be some 4 per cent below the potential of the global economy. The risk of premature withdrawal of stimulus measures and rising concern over fiscal costs and debt sustainability could intensify pressures to curtail fiscal stimulus packages. Extended joblessness would limit the scope of gains and generate political pressure for protectionism. Beyond those broad risks, it was expected that the fallout of the crisis would change the landscape for financing growth for the next 10 years and that developing countries would likely face reduced access to global capital flows.

13. The World Bank representative added that four issues were related to the rethinking of development in the wake of the crisis: the importance of broader reform to improve the stability of financial systems; the criticality of safety nets; the need to give primacy to a competitive private sector and dynamic export sector as drivers of growth; and the key role of effective Governments in providing a supportive environment through sound governance infrastructure and institutions. There was also a need to reconsider how best to approach a broad range of policy issues, such as public-private partnerships and the viability of exchange rate regimes.

14. The representative of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development stressed that many of the ideas under discussion, such as the idea of the developmental State being part of a sustainable path, had long been recognized. There was a need for an assessment of the “boom-bust” cycle of the last decade in order to provide a more balanced analysis than had thus far been presented. The rise of emerging economies and growing South-South cooperation represented an important shift that needed to be better factored into multilateral relations. The global economy was far from balanced and there were a number of medium- and long-term adjustments to be faced, which required careful monitoring and action by the international community. The necessary adjustments in certain countries would be very large, with important implications for other developing countries. Of particular concern was the fact that there had been very little reform of the international economic architecture, which pointed to a serious deficit in trust between developed and developing countries at the multilateral level, and that needed to be overcome. There remained a need for more predictable, automatic sources of international liquidity in response to shocks, and for an international debt workout mechanism.

15. With regard to development strategy, the fact that more policy space had become evident was a major shift in the political economic discourse, and should be built upon. Countries needed strong State structures to assure their opportunities, and the role of the international community in promoting strong States remained a challenge.

16. The representative of the World Trade Organization (WTO) stressed that the 12 per cent contraction in trade in the previous year had had a serious impact on developing countries that were dependent on trade for their growth strategies. WTO, working consensually with its member States, had focused on monitoring protectionism, ensuring finance for trade, and “aid for trade”. While no more than 1 per cent of trade had been affected by protectionist measures, the concern was that, given the unemployment figures, pressures would remain that needed to be managed. With regard to trade finance, while the largest problems had been

addressed, WTO remained concerned that there were still problems for smaller traders, particularly in African and Central Asian countries. In moving forward, banks' perception of risk management could be supported by means of guarantees or additional support. With respect to aid for trade, the picture for the period 2005-2009 was reassuring; in going forward, however, it would be necessary to use the High-level Plenary Meeting of the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly in September 2010 to raise awareness among donors that it was now that the impact of the crisis was being felt most strongly by developing countries. Similarly, that meeting should be an occasion to make a link between the rapid conclusion of the Doha Development Round and the Millennium Development Goals.

17. The representative of the International Labour Organization (ILO) noted that 2009 had been a very difficult year, and had had the most negative impacts on those people who had not benefited from earlier economic growth. Still, the reduction in employment had been mitigated by the combined fiscal stimulus to economies and the attention that had been given to jobs and social protection in that response. A number of challenges remained. First, it would take a few years for employment to recover; in the meantime, long-term unemployment was increasing and there was a rise in the informal sector, which would be difficult to reverse. Second, an early exit strategy would have a negative impact on economies and jobs, and have implications for fiscal sustainability in the medium term. The third challenge had to do with reform of the financial system, which, prior to the crisis, had favoured the financial over the real economy. That situation was affecting the response to the crisis, with many enterprises finding it difficult to access credit. The lack of reform in the financial architecture was also contributing to volatile capital flows in developing countries, a situation which had impacts on the real economy and labour markets because they required stability.

18. In the discussion that followed the briefing session, a number of Committee members stressed that, while there were encouraging signs of recovery, for the most vulnerable populations, the crisis was far from over. Such indicators as increases in malnutrition, child poverty, decline in household income and the closing of schools were particularly worrisome, given the situation with regard to unemployment, declining budgets and threatened services. Aid flows for development had not been commensurate with the levels of bail out packages for financial institutions. The United Nations system needed to advocate increasing investment in children, maintaining aid flows and ensuring the availability and monitoring of disaggregated and real time data. It was also important to use the international normative framework of human rights to develop integrated responses to the crisis and to build the capacities of States to fulfil their obligations.

19. In addition, it was noted that about 15-16 per cent of the stimulus packages had been identified as green-related investments at the general level. The speed of disbursement had been relatively slow and there were some concerns over the actual impact of the investments on the environment. The fiscal space available to many developing countries to launch green stimulus packages was limited, and questions remained to be resolved over the understanding of a green economy. On climate, it was noted that the 4 per cent decline in greenhouse gas emissions as a consequence of the crisis presented opportunities also to focus on shifting investment into areas that addressed climate change concerns and to organize better dialogue between Governments and the private sector.

20. The technology and communications sector had fared relatively well through the crisis, with steady growth in the number of mobile telephone subscribers and Internet users. It was noted that the earmarking of stimulus for that sector had been helpful. On the other hand, it was noted that there had been a dip of 4.5 per cent in patent filings. With regard to the postal sector, the Universal Postal Union was monitoring the impacts and opportunities of the crisis in such areas as employment, postal traffic and trade.

Review of the joint crisis initiatives

21. Members of the Committee had a wide-ranging discussion on the work of the United Nations system within the context of the United Nations system joint crisis initiatives, taking into consideration the progress that was being made. A number of points were discussed:

(a) The joint crisis initiatives had been built upon ongoing work of the United Nations system, with a particular focus on the crisis-related aspects of the system's response. They had thus filled a need and allowed for a common outlook on the nine respective areas. The initiatives had permitted the United Nations system to move forward in maintaining the global macroeconomic perspective while paying attention to the human face of the recovery;

(b) Because the initiatives were built upon the long-standing activities of the United Nations system, their impact should be measured also in terms of the policies that had been promoted under them. For instance, ILO had studied the application of its Global Jobs Pact in a number of countries. Many had decided to implement the policy on its own merits, and not necessarily as a result of the initiatives;

(c) There was a fundamental shift towards increased reliance at the country level on the United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks and the United Nations country teams to ensure an integrated, comprehensive and coordinated approach to the crisis and its aftermath. A number of projects and activities were under way at the country and regional levels, which provided anecdotal evidence of the application of the initiatives, but there was no overall assessment. It would be helpful to undertake such an assessment, with a view to policy interaction, integration and convergence. In that regard, it was important to seek greater coherence between the Bretton Woods institutions and the rest of the United Nations system at the country level;

(d) There had been no direct support for a vulnerability fund at the global level to support in-country activities, and no requests had come in from United Nations country teams for such funding. There appeared to be a correlation between funding available within the scope of initiatives and requests for advice from United Nations country teams through the framework of the initiatives. A question was raised concerning the support structures that needed to be provided to the United Nations country teams in relation to the initiatives;

(e) The fact that the initiative on food security had been built on the work of the High-level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis afforded the opportunity to reflect the crisis-related aspects in the revised Comprehensive Framework for Action and establish a broad partnership with relevant actors. Experience on the ground showed that all coordination mechanisms worked equally

well, so long as they were inclusive. Pledged funds for food security and agricultural production had not been disbursed;

(f) Focus on the most vulnerable groups had led to synergies among the initiatives. For instance, the initiative on humanitarian security and social stability was widened in scope, with links to social protection and food security. The Emergency Relief Coordinator would be writing to Humanitarian Coordinators to inform them about the initiative;

(g) The Global Impact and Vulnerability Alert System was moving forward, but much more remained to be accomplished to ensure the availability of real time data on the impact of the crisis on vulnerable populations at the local level;

(h) The initiative on green economy had received wide political support, and developing countries were asking for information on successful models that had worked on the ground, as well as for technical, financial and capacity-building support. It was proposed that the Environmental Management Group be given lead responsibility for carrying work forward beyond the crisis phase, and that the scope of cooperating agencies be expanded to include organizations such as the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and regional development banks;

(i) The agencies participating in the initiative on technology and innovation had been monitoring the impact of the crisis and had launched projects to support the technology sector, which had emerged fairly well, and to promote innovation;

(j) The time might be approaching for the initiatives to be reframed in relation to the regular development agenda in order to better address the global systemic risks, while maintaining the “One United Nations” approach.

22. The Committee requested the Chairperson to share its analysis and reflection with CEB at its forthcoming session in spring 2010.

III. Ten-year review of the Millennium Development Goals

23. The CEB Secretary briefed the Committee on the preparations under way for the High-level Plenary Meeting of the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly in September 2010, with focus on accelerating progress towards the achievement of all the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. In that regard, the Committee had been provided with relevant written materials in preparation for that summit.

24. The CEB Secretary noted that intense activity was currently under way in the United Nations system to prepare for that important event. In addition to the reports mandated by General Assembly resolution 64/184, United Nations system organizations were preparing a number of additional complementary publications. The Secretary-General had set up a task team to coordinate United Nations system contributions to the summit, in support of the efforts of Member States in negotiating a good outcome document. For that purpose, 15 eminent experts, or Millennium Development Goal advocates, would be tasked with linking together all the constituents in the preparatory processes. The advocacy efforts would be supported by a number of United Nations goodwill ambassadors, or Millennium Development Goal champions, as well as several Millennium Development Goal leaders from the business community. The Policy Committee of the Secretary-

General had further identified eight priority policy issues for the summit: (a) employment and decent work; (b) food security, agricultural development and nutrition; (c) education; (d) empowerment of women; (e) public health; (f) social protection; (g) climate change adaptation and mitigation, and disaster risk reduction; and (h) financing for development.

25. Members of the Committee reaffirmed their commitment to supporting the leadership role of the Secretary-General. They noted, however, that emphasis on what the United Nations system as a whole was concretely contributing on the ground and otherwise in order to help Governments achieve the Millennium Development Goals was largely missing from his report. Concern was also expressed regarding the process of coordinating the United Nations system preparations for the summit. The large number of United Nations reports that were expected to be published for that occasion risked fragmenting the message leading to and possibly emerging from the summit, as well as diluting the voice of a “One United Nations”.

26. The Committee members underscored the importance of taking a broad view, given the interlinkages among the Millennium Development Goals, and considered that approaching the Goals as an integrated package would help to advance the collective agendas of United Nations system organizations. Given the significance of the Millennium Development Goals, and mindful of the advanced stage in the preparations for the September summit, the Committee engaged in an in-depth discussion on the contribution that it and, more broadly, CEB, could make to the summit. In that connection, it was recalled that the High-level Committee on Programmes had prepared the CEB report entitled *One United Nations — Catalyst for Progress and Change: How the Millennium Declaration is Changing the Way the UN System Works* as a collective contribution by the United Nations system to the 2005 World Summit.

27. In discussing the messaging for the summit, the Committee Members stressed the critical importance of the compact on the international dimensions of supporting the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and national development strategies. They considered as crucial that the summit lead to national commitments to the Millennium Development Goals.

28. It was noted that, in addition to the Millennium Development Goals summit, two other high-level events would be held in New York in September 2010: a high-level event on biodiversity and the five-year review of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States. It was proposed that a possible message from CEB should connect the three events, and underscore the contribution that achieving the Millennium Development Goals would make to reducing overall vulnerabilities.

29. It was further noted that progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals was not being monitored in an open and transparent manner. That was considered critical, as it was believed that what gets measured gets done. A concrete proposal to have peer reviews of achievements, country by country, at the regional level was therefore strongly supported. It was suggested, as a practical measure to underline each country’s responsibility, that progress by rich and poor countries alike be monitored. In that connection, it was noted that official development assistance was not being funnelled to where it was needed most: least

developed countries, low-income countries and the countries that were undergoing conflict and disasters.

30. While stressing the importance of not distracting from the Millennium Development Goals, it was proposed that a reference framework that addressed the Goals while also laying out longer-term thinking could be prepared for CEB. It was also suggested that CEB issue a clear and precise message to provide Member States with a good reference from the system to assist them in their negotiations on the summit outcome document. It was further proposed that the High-level Committee on Programmes could pick up on the outcome of the summit at its next session in order to consider a product that would inform the next discussion to 2015 and start looking at the larger interrelated policy environment.

31. In concluding consideration of that issue, the Chairperson noted that consensus on two products seemed to be emerging from the Committee's discussion: (a) a letter from the Chairperson of the High-level Committee on Programmes to the Secretary-General seeking his guidance on key political messages for the summit, to be discussed at the forthcoming CEB session in spring 2010; and (b) a paper for consideration at the next session of the High-level of the Committee on Programmes on the basis of the Committee's reflection on the global financial and economic crisis, the Millennium Development Goals and moving towards fairer, greener, more sustainable globalization.

IV. Moving towards fairer, greener and more sustainable globalization

32. The Vice-Chairperson introduced the paper entitled "Reflections on a Fairer, Greener, More Sustainable Globalization" which had built upon the outcome of the High-level Committee on Programmes' brainstorming session on the same issue. The paper contained a number of elements for the Committee's consideration, with the aim of moving the United Nations system towards a new paradigm of development, drawing and building on both the momentum expected to be generated around the Millennium Development Goals and the internationally agreed development goals by the High-level Plenary Meeting of the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly, as well as the willingness, in the wake of the global financial and economic crisis, to re-examine many long-held approaches and principles underpinning current economic and social policies.

33. The Vice-Chairperson noted that the crisis had already brought about great change. Only unprecedentedly large and internationally coordinated government interventions had prevented a full financial meltdown and a spiral into economic depression. Such coordination reflected a number of developments that would have been improbable prior to the crisis. There was now widespread recognition of the systemic importance of a much larger range of countries and full acceptance of the fact that no country could "go it alone". The governance challenge was to translate into national self-interest the awareness that the economic and financial health of countries at systemic risk was for all intents and purposes a global public good.

34. The Vice-Chairperson also pointed to other developments: the over-recognition of the dangers of over-reliance on markets and the legitimate role of the State in

guiding market practices and correcting market failures; the willingness to consider social protection systems on their own merit following the positive contribution such systems had made in responding to the crisis; and the flexible government responses in the areas of fiscal and monetary policy, including the use of stimulus spending in some countries for targeted investments intended to facilitate the transition to a green economy.

35. The crisis clearly showed the downside aspects of globalization: among them, the prospect of a jobless recovery and the inability of globalization to redress existing inequities, environmental degradation, trade imbalances and social and political conflict. The globalization of private markets for goods, financial flows and services had not been accompanied by a corresponding globalization of the governance structure, which demonstrated the shortcomings of national regulation and supervision of internationally active financial entities. The same was true of other issues that crossed borders. Indeed, because of globalization, the size of today's problems often exceeded the capacity of any single Government to deal with them, and no country was immune to contagion.

36. In the view of the Vice-Chairperson, the new awareness of those issues, combined with the flexibility of government responses, could provide a fertile context when the time was right for changing the pattern and effect of globalization towards a process that would be more inclusive, equitable and environmentally and socially sustainable. The United Nations should be thinking ahead in strategic and systemic terms to identify the elements of a new framework for globalization. The consensus about the Millennium Development Goals and the internationally agreed development goals could be harnessed to prepare that larger agenda.

37. The Vice-Chairperson asked the Committee to reflect upon a number of key questions: (a) What aspects of globalization are most directly responsible for its inequitable pattern and what shortcomings need to be addressed? (b) Which of these shortcomings can be addressed by modification of the existing system? (c) Which aspects of globalization are more in the nature of global public goods, and so particularly susceptible to market failure? (d) Can existing governance concerns be addressed through reform of the existing institutional framework? (e) How must global governance arrangements be adapted to face emerging challenges, particularly in managing the provision of global public goods? and (f) Is the United Nations system in the position to provide the support needed by Governments to formulate and implement the necessary policies, including with regard to the accelerated implementation of the Millennium Development Goals?

38. In concluding, the Vice-Chairperson suggested that a unifying theme might generate momentum behind a common purpose and motivate action across constituencies. The green economy initiative, covering areas of the global economy, investment in sustainable technology, climate change, social protection and decent work, might be one such theme, although definitional issues concerning the concept remained to be ironed out. During the discussion, a number of observations were made:

(a) Moving towards fairer, greener and more sustainable globalization would require a rethinking of growth, with a focus on risk and resource scarcity, and reforming governance, with a focus on inclusion, safeguarding the resilience of the vulnerable populations and the needs of future generations. While rethinking growth efforts towards a green economy must be supported, risk management and resilience

could also be a unifying theme across a broad range of constituencies. That would require better monitoring of risks and strengthening of the associative warning systems, such as the Global Impact and Vulnerability Alert System;

(b) When discussing the role of the United Nations in bringing to the fore new ideas and approaches, it was important to keep in mind three distinct components: (a) the governance system of the United Nations; (b) United Nations staff and their expertise; and (c) external players in partnership with the United Nations. Whatever discussions took place outside the governance system must build upon the rich array of work on globalization that had already been concluded within the United Nations system's governing bodies;

(c) There was need for serious reflection on what was missing in the current range of institutions and policy frameworks to advance global public goods and to address the "mega trends" that were reshaping the world. Whatever the new governance approach would be, it needed to encompass all components of Government and address the primacy of finance ministries and central banks, as well as take into account the rise in civil society and private sector actors participating in shaping policies;

(d) It was important for the system to seek direction from Member States to ensure that the multilateral framework responded to current needs and was fit for the purpose. In that connection, it was noted that there was a need to overcome the trust deficit at the political level;

(e) The General Assembly, with its universal membership, was the appropriate venue for looking at new conceptual thinking and developing relevant legislative processes. While it was appropriate to consider how the United Nations system might wish to contribute some reflections on fairer, greener and more sustainable globalization, it was necessary to maintain critical focus on the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals in the lead-up to the High-level Plenary Meeting in September 2010. Beyond that, considerations by the High-level Committee on Programmes would form a valuable contribution to preparations towards "Rio+20" (in reference to the forthcoming follow-up meeting to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1992);

(f) In looking strategically at globalization, there were three areas upon which to focus: regulations (such as with regard to pricing of greenhouse gas emissions); capacity (more equity in implementing and monitoring regulations); and global governance (individual United Nations system organizations and their governing structures, the G-8 and G-20, and the United Nations as a whole);

(g) The United Nations had driven the intellectual leadership and norm-setting of the development agenda until the debt crisis of the early 1980s and the subsequent rise of international finance. Since then, development cooperation, with the shift of its focus towards global public goods on one end and dealing with extreme poverty on the other, had shifted focus away to some extent from traditional development challenges, leaving out some of the concerns of a large number of developing countries. It was important now to recognize that domestic resource mobilization was key to long-term sustainable development, and global governance structures should support that recognition.

39. **The Committee thanked the Vice-Chairperson for the thoughtful issues paper, which would be revised based on the discussion held.**

V. Climate change

40. In introducing the item on climate change, the Chairperson of the High-level Committee on Programmes noted that, in the lead-up to the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen in 2009, the Committee had focused on modalities to ensure that the presentation of the CEB Climate Change Action Framework had maximum visibility and impact and conveyed the system's commitment and capacity to assist Member States in the implementation of an agreement. A number of side events had been held at the Copenhagen Conference, successfully projecting a unified approach by the United Nations system. The Committee was invited to take stock of developments leading to the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, at its sixteenth session (COP16) and the recommendations of the High-level Committee on Programmes Working Group on Climate Change concerning ongoing work and related initiatives, as well as the next steps for the United Nations system.

41. The Director of the Secretary-General's Climate Change Support Team noted that, although the outcome of the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP15) had not met prior expectations, significant achievements had been made through the Copenhagen Accord, not least on the target to keep the increase in global temperature below 2 degrees Celsius, as well as on substantial short- and long-term funding pledges. In support of the Secretary-General's efforts to move forward on that basis, the Director suggested that the United Nations system focus on: (a) its readiness to support Member States in short- and long-term implementation of the Copenhagen Accord; (b) helping to create strong bridges between the Millennium Development Goals and climate change processes; and (c) making preparations for and supporting the two-tracked negotiations leading to COP16.

42. The Director added that the Secretary-General had intended to convene a high-level panel on global sustainability that would feed into the area of implementation through a broader sustainable development framework. Climate change would serve as an entry point to the complex aspects of sustainable development and major issues of implementation, such as developing a road map for a green economy. Providing input in the lead-up to Rio+20 would be one objective for the panel. The High-level Advisory Group on Climate Change Financing, which the Secretary-General had formed in February 2010, would focus its attention on scaling up long-term financing for mitigation and adaptation strategies in developing countries using public and private sources. While those two ad hoc bodies would be working autonomously, it was critical for the United Nations system to feed into their work.

43. The representative of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change underscored that the outcome of COP15 included a range of encouraging achievements: (a) strong political engagement of world leaders; (b) the fact that the Copenhagen Accord took forward a number of contentious issues that could drive further negotiations; and (c) a broad range of almost final draft agreements as an outcome of negotiations under the two tracks of the ad hoc working groups. The

challenge now was to make further progress on those areas and resolve the remaining outstanding issues.

44. The representative noted that a range of informal activities and intergovernmental consultations were now taking place. The fact that the bureau of the Conference of the Parties had decided to advance its first session to be held in 2010 was a clear signal from all regions that negotiations should continue under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The regular two-week meeting would be held in Bonn, Germany, in June and there would be possibly two negotiating sessions before the Conference of the Parties to be held in Cancun, Mexico, in November and December 2010. The key political issues to be considered at the further negotiations would continue to be mitigation, that is, the targets for reduction of greenhouse gas emissions for developed countries and actions for developing countries, and funding for implementation. Although some issues on mitigation had been resolved with the adoption of the Copenhagen Accord, the 2-degree Celsius target would be very difficult to achieve in view of the current targets for 2020 set by developed countries. While the Copenhagen Accord had put forward short- and long-term finance targets, clarification was needed on how to ensure measurement, reporting and delivery on the short-term funding pledges made by developed countries, and with respect to the sources of long-term funding. The representative expected that, going forward, the focus would be on implementation infrastructure, discussions on a second commitment period under the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and a road map for the negotiation of a legally binding agreement.

45. The representative welcomed the work of the High-level Committee on Programmes Working Group on Climate Change and advocated that it continue its work through a light, efficient structure that would build further on the One United Nations approach and support the implementation agenda. As part of that process, some streamlining of the cross-cutting and focus areas should take place. While efforts had been successful in presenting ongoing work as One United Nations, more attention was needed in identifying whether the United Nations system was “fit for purpose”, that is, able to support the emerging implementation agenda. With regard to the Copenhagen Conference, much progress had been made towards agreements on the implementation infrastructure in the areas of technology, adaptation, capacity-building, emissions from deforestation and the agricultural sector. In its further work, the United Nations system could benefit from analysing those already existing drafts, identifying how the system could support implementation of those and other areas and, if necessary, suggest improvements in the emerging architecture.

46. The Director of the CEB secretariat briefed the Committee on the progress of the High-level Committee on Programmes Working Group on Climate Change and its achievements, including in establishing a community of practice on climate change across the United Nations system since COP13 in Bali, Indonesia, in 2007. The working group had not only developed a range of joint documents and initiatives, but had established a culture of information and knowledge-sharing. The success of the working group was manifested not least at the Copenhagen Conference, where delegations expressed appreciation for the common vision of the United Nations system, and where interest in joint United Nations system side events was unexpectedly strong. The working group supported continuation of its work with a short-term focus on preparations for the Conference to be held in

Mexico and a long-term focus on a coordination framework for discussing strategic issues related to the implementation agenda. The working group should function not as a forum for substantive policy development, but rather as a light framework for establishing a holistic picture of United Nations activities on climate change, from which coordination, policy discussions and the development of policy frameworks could take place.

47. The representative of the World Meteorological Organization informed the Committee about the newly established High-level Taskforce for the Global Framework for Climate Services, and suggested that the High-level Committee on Programmes might wish to provide coordinated comprehensive input to the work of the taskforce through the working group and the climate knowledge group.

48. Committee members took note of those briefings and expressed satisfaction with the working group's achievements. In moving ahead, it would be important to ensure a clear division of labour among the various coordination mechanisms already in existence. A light approach by the working group was welcomed, and suggestions were made to have lead and cooperating agencies in the various thematic areas, with a structured exchange of progress through a knowledge-sharing Internet-based platform.

49. With regard to thematic focus, it was considered that the climate change focus and cross-cutting areas could benefit from further precision and enhanced operational perspectives. Committee members agreed to establish a separate focus area on the social dimensions of climate change as a way to ensure focus on the most vulnerable groups. The interconnectedness between the work on climate change and the Millennium Development Goals and the nine joint crisis initiatives was seen as crucial in the further work of the working group. **With those considerations in mind, the Committee agreed to continue the mandate of the High-level Committee on Programmes Working Group on Climate Change.**

50. In addition to those matters, the Committee engaged in discussions focused on the outcomes of COP15, lessons for managing the level of expectations and the role of the United Nations as the multilateral forum for intergovernmental negotiations and supporting Member States in implementation. Appreciation was expressed for the informal discussions that had been held in Bali, which had taken forward the message that equity and common responsibility should be the core of an agreement and that the forthcoming negotiations should be clear, transparent and inclusive. **Committee members agreed that, in maintaining the One United Nations approach, it would be useful to develop a clear joint message on the Copenhagen outcome as a basis for leveraging the concrete operational contributions of the United Nations system in the climate change process in order to maintain positive momentum for the conference to be held in Mexico. The Chairperson requested that the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, in consultation with the Secretary-General's Climate Change Support Team and the CEB secretariat, give further consideration to that matter.**

VI. System-wide coherence

51. The Director of the CEB secretariat briefed the Committee on recent developments during the fourth year of consultations in the General Assembly on

the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on System-wide Coherence. A significant achievement during 2009 consultations had been the understanding that the United Nations institutional framework would need to be reviewed in order to address systemic issues; consequently several of the recommendations of the General Assembly had been directed towards CEB. The ongoing consultations in the General Assembly focused on five issues: (a) strengthening governance of operational activities for development of the United Nations system for enhanced system-wide coherence; (b) improving the funding system of operational activities for development of the United Nations system for enhanced system-wide coherence; (c) strengthening of institutional arrangements for the support of gender equality and women's empowerment; (d) delivering as one; and (e) harmonizing of business practices.

52. While agreement was close to universal among Member States on establishing a new United Nations entity on gender, a final decision had not been taken pending movement on funding and governance issues. Agreement had been reached, however, on the independent evaluation of the eight "Delivering as One" pilot projects, an idea which had originated in the High-level Committee on Programmes. Three areas of the consultations were of special relevance for CEB: (a) harmonization of business practices; (b) establishment of a central repository of information on operational activities for development; and (c) establishment of an independent system-wide evaluation mechanism.

53. The work that was being undertaken in the High-level Committee on Management on business practices was expected to have a significant impact on streamlining administrative practices of United Nations system organizations, thereby helping to ease the administrative burden on programmes. The repository of United Nations system information, especially financial data, which was being developed by the CEB secretariat, would provide a reliable system for tracking the flow, allocation and utilization of resources into the system. With regard to the issue of system-wide evaluation, both the High-level Committee on Programmes and the High-level Committee on Management had addressed the lacuna of an independent standing capacity for system-wide evaluations. Discussions with the United Nations Evaluation Group and the Joint Inspection Unit were currently ongoing on the creation of such a framework. In concluding the briefing, the Director of the CEB secretariat noted that there was increasing interest among Member States in the work of CEB. While appreciating the progress that was being made in inter-agency coordination, Member States had also suggested that the interface and substantive dialogue between Member States and CEB should be enhanced.

54. The ensuing discussion in the Committee highlighted that the intergovernmental consultation in the General Assembly had revealed a reluctance to pursue further institutional reform. Member States' discussions of the funding issue focused on shifting allocations from non-core to core activities, on the predictability and flexibility of resources and on additionalities. Moreover, common country programming remained a contentious issue. It was also noted that the legal status of the proposed new United Nations entity on gender remained under consideration.

55. In its reflection on issues related to system-wide coherence, the Committee also highlighted the importance of enhanced synergy among the three CEB pillars: the High-level Committee on Management, the High-level Committee on

Programmes and the United Nations Development Group. In particular, it was suggested that the three committees could benefit from further cross-fertilization of expertise. **Committee members agreed that the issue could be pursued further in the context of the ongoing review of CEB.**

VII. Enhancing the contribution of the United Nations system to the Economic and Social Council

56. The Chairperson recalled that, at its seventeenth session, the High-level Committee on Programmes had an initial exchange of views on how best to enhance linkages between the processes of inter-agency and intergovernmental coordination, and specifically how to strengthen the contribution of CEB to the Economic and Social Council. It had requested the CEB Secretary to lead a review aimed at developing specific proposals. As part of that review, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs was asked to contemplate measures to raise the level of participation in the Council's coordination segment.

57. The representative of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs introduced a paper on relations between the Economic and Social Council and CEB, noting the strong interest of Member States in the work of the Board and the desire for strengthened dialogue. The representative briefed the Committee on preparations under way within the United Nations system for the summer session of the Economic and Social Council, and suggested a number of measures that could be taken to ensure regular information exchanges and greater visibility of CEB across the various segments of the Council. Those included, among others, providing for regular briefings to the Council after the spring and autumn sessions of CEB, expanding the coordination segment's consideration of the CEB annual overview report, and connecting the work of the three pillars of CEB and the Council on the operational dimensions of their work.

58. Committee members noted that United Nations system organizations were already reporting regularly to the Council's coordination segment on collaborative work on particular issues. In addition, CEB tabled its annual report, which reflected the work of the three pillars in response to intergovernmental mandates. It was stressed that the United Nations system organizations worked together within the context of the mandates given to them by their members, and under the direct oversight of their respective governing bodies, and that the work of CEB and its pillars was to ensure overall coherence in the efforts by its members to respond collectively to system-wide challenges. The issue of ensuring policy coherence among the various governing bodies of United Nations system organizations was a broader challenge that needed to be addressed directly by Member States. **The Committee agreed that it was important to ensure timely and open-sharing of information with the Economic and Social Council.**

VIII. Other programme issues

59. The Committee considered a number of progress reports and informational material on topics such as capacity development challenges in science and technology, the fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries and the status of global celebrations of the International Year of Biodiversity (2010).

In accordance with its working methods, the High-level Committee on Programmes thanked the authors and took note of those items.

IX. Other matters

60. The Director of the CEB secretariat briefed the Committee on the latest deliberations in the High-level Committee on Management on the issue of staff security. With the decision of CEB to move from a “when-to-leave” to a “how-to-stay” approach, focus was being placed on a nuanced approach to the evacuation phase. At its nineteenth session on 22-23 February 2010, the High-level Committee on Management had agreed to establish a programme working group, composed of members of the High-level Committee on Programmes, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee and the United Nations Development Group, as well as security professionals, to define the four levels of programme criticality within the guidelines for acceptable risk, and to develop at its twentieth session a framework for determining programme criticality for decision-making. In that regard, in the further definition of the concept of “criticality”, it would be important to integrate the views of officials dealing with critical programmes in addition to those of officials dealing with management issues.

61. The Chairperson was joined by the members of the High-level Committee on Programmes in thanking Ms. Cecilia Lotse, Director of Governance, United Nations and Multilateral Affairs of the United Nations Children’s Fund, and Mr. Ferid Belhaj, representative of the World Bank to the United Nations, for their invaluable contributions to the work of the Committee.

62. The Committee agreed to hold its twentieth session at a date to be established following the summit on the Millennium Development Goals, which would be held in New York from 20 to 22 September 2010.

Annex I

Agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda and introductory remarks by the Chair
2. Global financial and economic crisis: state-of-play
3. Moving towards a fairer, greener, sustainable globalization
4. Ten-year review of the Millennium Development Goals
5. Climate change
6. System-wide coherence
7. Enhancing the contribution of the United Nations system to the Economic and Social Council
8. Other programme issues
9. Other matters

Annex II

List of participants

Chairperson: Juan Somavía (International Labour Organization)

Vice-Chairperson: Elliot Harris (International Monetary Fund)

Secretary: Phyllis Lee (CEB secretariat)

United Nations

Executive Office of the Secretary-General	Janos Pasztor
Department of Economic and Social Affairs	Thomas Stelzer Nikhil Seth
Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights	Marcia Kran
Regional commissions	Amr Nour
International Labour Organization	Maria Ducci Jane Stewart Christophe Perrin
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	Annika Söder
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization	Jean-Yves Le Saux
World Health Organization	Namita Pradhan Peter J. Mertens
World Bank	Ferid Belhaj Dominique Bichara
International Monetary Fund	Elliot Harris
Universal Postal Union	Olivier Boussard
International Telecommunication Union	Doreen Bogdan-Martin Beatrice Pluchon
World Meteorological Organization	Elena Manaenkova
International Maritime Organization	Jianxin Zhu
World Intellectual Property Organization	Johannes Christian Wichard Naresh N. Prasad Marcelo Augusto Di Pietro Peralta
International Fund for Agricultural Development	Luis Jimenez-Mcinnis

United Nations Industrial Development Organization	Yoshi Uramoto Sarwar Hobohm Qazi Shaukat Fareed
International Atomic Energy Agency	Margit Bruck-Friedrich
World Trade Organization	Arancha Gonzalez Emmanuelle Ganne
World Tourism Organization	Frederic Pierret Marcio Favilla Lucca de Paula
United Nations Conference on Trade and Development	Anne Miroux Mongi Hamdi Richard Kozul-Wright
United Nations Development Programme	Alison Drayton Sarah Poole
United Nations Environment Programme	Juanita Castaño Fulai Sheng Steven Stone
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	Vladimir Tsurko Adelmo Risi Valdetaro
United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East	Robert Stryk
United Nations Children's Fund	Cecilia Lotse
United Nations Population Fund	Mabingue Ngom Ronny Lindstrom
World Food Programme	Paul Larsen
United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime	Sandeep Chawla
United Nations Human Settlements Programme	Axumite Gebre-Egziabher
United Nations University	Koko Warner
Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization	Sylwin Jerzy Gizowski
United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change	Henning Wuester
Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS	Emelia Timpo
United Nations System Staff College	Jafar Javan
International Strategy for Disaster Reduction	Salvano Briceno

Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs Jenty Kirsch Wood

United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination of the Secretariat Adnan Z. Amin (Director)
Mikael Rosengren
Katja Gregers Brock
