



Chief Executives Board for Coordination

4 September 2003

Report of the High-Level Committee on Programmes at its intersessional meeting

(Geneva, 2 July 2003)

1. The High-Level Committee on Programmes (HLCP) of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) held an intersessional meeting at the United Nations Office at Geneva on 2 July 2003. The agenda of the meeting and the list of participants are attached, respectively, as annexes I and II.

I. Financing for development: Secretary-General's report to the General Assembly

2. The representative of the United Nations introduced a paper entitled "Financing for development" (CEB/2003/HLCP/CRP.17) and recalled that this matter would be taken up by CEB at its autumn session as part of its work programme on the United Nations Millennium Declaration road map and HLCP, in its capacity as the preparatory body, was tasked with defining the focus of CEB discussions.

3. The representative noted that the follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development was essentially an intergovernmental driven process: under the Monterrey Consensus, the Economic and Social Council had been tasked to consider issues falling within the theme of promoting increased coherence and consistency of trade, finance and development policies at its annual spring meetings with the Bretton Woods institutions (the first such occasion was the April 2003 meeting); the current biennial high-level dialogue on strengthening international cooperation for development through partnership had been reconstituted to become the intergovernmental focal point for the general follow-up to the Conference and the first such dialogue was scheduled for 29 and 30 October 2003. The report of the Secretary-General to the latter meeting was in the process of being finalized, and encompassed an in-depth review of the implementation of the Monterrey agreements. Reflecting a genuine spirit of cooperation, the report had been drafted collaboratively, with United Nations system partners, the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization. He noted that the fall session of CEB, scheduled just after the dialogue, provided a timely opportunity for the Board to take further action based on the results emanating from the dialogue.

4. After an extensive exchange, the Committee concluded that:
- With a view of mainstreaming the financing for development follow-up into the implementation of goal 8 of the Millennium Declaration (develop a global partnership for development), the HLCP contribution could focus, first, on fostering policy coherence and synergies. Second, by ensuring progress at the country level through the harmonization of operations with attendant implications for close interaction between HLCP and the United Nations Development Group; in the latter context, the aim should be to focus on concrete initiatives for inter-agency cooperation on the ground in the context of poverty reduction strategy papers, common country assessments/United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks, Millennium Development Goal country reporting and harmonization of operations.
 - A careful distinction needs to be drawn between policy actions falling largely within the ambit of intergovernmental forums (e.g. external debt) and those that can be taken at the inter-agency level.
 - The bullet points in paragraph 7 of document CEB/2003/HLCP/CRP.17 should be redrafted to reflect the balance between international and national responsibilities, and in the latter connection, the potential role of United Nations agencies in assisting developing countries in meeting their commitments in the Monterrey agreements should be outlined.
 - There is a strong case for better cross-organizational collaboration on reporting on Millennium Development Goal/financing for development implementation to various intergovernmental forums (General Assembly, Economic and Social Council, governing bodies, Development Committee) to ensure that each report feeds into the next.
 - An exchange of information among HLCP members on issues to be put forward to agencies' respective governing bodies, as well as issues raised by them would be mutually beneficial.
5. The Committee agreed that the document to be prepared for its autumn meeting should build on the outcome of the current discussion and take into account appropriate elements of the draft report of the Secretary-General when available. It should provide an overview of the follow-up of the Monterrey Conference, with a focus on policy definition and coherence, advocacy and how to deliver as a system, particularly at the country level. Issues to be put forward to executive heads should focus on policy action that can be taken at the inter-agency level (vs. those in the intergovernmental domain), distinguishing between the role of executive heads in advocacy versus policy delivery, with a particular emphasis on the latter. In this way, even prior to the autumn fall session, the outcome of HLCP could be drawn upon by executive heads as they participate in the high-level dialogue. The Committee requested the Department of Economic and Social Affairs to lead the process for preparing the document for HLCP along with interested agencies.

II. Review of the status of the work

A. Task Group on 2005 comprehensive review of the implementation of the Millennium Declaration

6. The Task Group leader briefed the Committee on the outcome of the videoconference on 13 June to advance preparations for the 2005 review. It was generally agreed that the system's contribution to the 2005 review should be analytical, address systemic issues with attention to the fundamental shifts in the international policy environment and their implications for multilateralism and the role of the United Nations system, as well as present a coherent picture of the actions of the United Nations system in support of the implementation of the Millennium Declaration. There was also consensus on the need to synthesize and integrate reporting on related issues, identify and develop indicators to measure progress on goals that are not time-bound nor quantitative (such as Goal 8) and, not least, to structure the system's contribution to the high-level political event planned for the 2005 session of the General Assembly. Proposals were also made to establish an Intranet site to facilitate inter-agency dialogue on ongoing activities and to develop a number of short analytical papers (think pieces) on a number of thematic issues as part of the substantive contribution of HLCP to the review.

7. Briefing the Committee on the contents of the Secretary-General's 2003 report, the representative of the Deputy Secretary-General's office noted that it would contain an analysis of progress, identify constraints and question some of the underlying assumptions especially vis-à-vis the security issue in the wake of the evolving international environment. The report would be a short strategic document, structured in three parts comprising:

- A first chapter reviewing peace, security, humanitarian action and threats other than inter-state aggression
- A second chapter on human rights, democracy and good governance
- A third chapter reviewing progress on the development goals and covering issues related to the protection of the environment
- A concluding chapter to reinforce multilateralism followed by a statistical annex on progress in implementing the Millennium Development Goals.

8. Turning to the 2005 review, the representative conveyed the Deputy Secretary-General's appreciation to HLCP for its contribution and foresight in the early launching of the preparatory process. Among the potential areas for the HLCP/CEB contribution were: the development of a thorough analysis of progress made in the Millennium Declaration; development of policy recommendations as inputs into the Secretary-General's report; and CEB/HLCP assistance in structuring and helping to shape the outcome of the 2005 high-level event.

9. The ensuing discussions highlighted a number of issues relevant to the 2005 review and its preparatory process:

- Importance of stepping up the role of science and technology
- Need to address the implications of the radical change in the policy environment since the adoption of the Millennium Declaration on implementation of the Millennium Development Goals

- Need for a quick assessment of whether the systems and processes are in place to generate the basics needed to underpin the production of the 2005 review
- Expectation that the 2003 report would provide new elements of guidance in framing CEB discussion and contribution to the 2005 review
- Briefings on the Millennium Project and the Millennium Campaign, as well as on related work of the United Nations Development Group should figure as a regular feature of the HLCP agenda to facilitate cross collaboration.

10. Concerning the next steps, the Committee tasked the ad hoc group, with the representative of the United Nations Population Fund as leader, to: (a) create a road map on the process ahead, building on the Secretary-General's 2003 report; (b) identify the issues for the proposed "think pieces"; and (c) reflect on a possible outline of the system's contributions to the 2005 review for the 2003 HLCP/CEB autumn session.

11. It was suggested that the process could draw inter alia on the case evidence emanating from the World Bank's ongoing cross-institutional work on the evaluation of global programmes, structured around the themes of health and education, environment, international trade and finance, knowledge and information and private sector development.

B. Task Force on HIV/AIDS, food security and governance

12. The Committee considered the status of preparations for the HLCP paper on food security, HIV/AIDS and governance on the basis of the document CEB/2003/HLCP/CRP.14.

13. Committee members offered a number of suggestions on the outline of the above-mentioned document, i.e.

- The objective in section I should include the provision of a quantitative analysis to underpin policy decisions (including decisions on investment and its destination) for countries and donors
- Section V on the United Nations institutional response would need to reassert the linkages between HIV/AIDS, food security and governance
- Evidence of progress in joint planning and programming and impact on transaction costs should be shown
- The annex should include an overview of ongoing initiatives on HIV/AIDS, food security and governance to encourage transparency and information sharing
- The report should outline practical recommendations for action and draw lessons from the Uganda experience that pioneered the multisectoral approach in addressing the issue of HIV/AIDS.

14. The Committee encouraged its members to submit further comments in writing to the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) by mid-July 2003. It endorsed the content and time frame of the paper to be presented to the autumn session of HLCP, subject to oral comments made in the course of the meeting and written comments made thereafter.

III. Follow-up to the HLCP and Board discussions on issues related to the World Summit on Sustainable Development

15. Under this agenda item, the Committee considered a note (CEB/2003/HLCP/CRP.18) prepared by the Director of the CEB secretariat at the request of the Chairman. In presenting the note, it was clarified that it constituted a road map for further action and that the note set out key elements or guiding principles for decisions on World Summit on Sustainable Development follow-up arrangements. Attention was drawn to the broad principles underpinning the follow-up framework, the emerging support for a function-based approach to the follow-up to the Summit, the importance of reducing transaction costs for coordination and the need to draw lessons from the experience of past coordination mechanisms.

16. In the ensuing discussion, a number of observations were made, some of which are highlighted below:

- Follow-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development should be interwoven with the follow-up of the Millennium Development Goals and other related United Nations conferences and summits to generate synergies and greater cost effectiveness
- Mutual reinforcement of policy work at the global level on follow-up to the World Summit with the operational activities at the regional and country level requires HLCP-United Nations Development Group collaboration and recognition of the important role of other non-United Nations stakeholders
- United Nations Water should be involved in mapping out proposals for follow-up to the World Summit water and sanitation-related issues and be made in charge of the follow-up actions in this field
- Further consideration of appropriate inter-agency arrangements on oceans and coastal areas should take into account the mandate from the General Assembly for a regular coordination mechanism
- The system should draw on existing flexible informal networks for coordination on energy and sustainable production and consumption issues for policy advice on follow-up to the World Summit and lessons learned from past coordination experiences in those areas
- The approach to follow-up to the World Summit as outlined in document CEB/2003/HLCP/CRP.18 (para. 19) implies a focus on the actual tasks to be performed at the inter-agency level and flexibility so that the system may be able to adjust modalities and “levels of ambitions” to evolving requirements, as well as making maximum use of consultative arrangements in place in connection with many ongoing programmes in these areas, while taking care not to create new bureaucracy or overload existing networks and to proliferate meetings
- More thought is required on how best to systematically capture information on World Summit-related implementation activities at the field level to identify gaps and to feed into global level policy work and decisions; in this connection, the thematic working groups on environment and development established by regional commissions may be useful channels for capturing information on country-level activities.

17. The Committee endorsed the approach suggested for further work set out in the note. It agreed that further work should concentrate on the four areas mentioned in paragraph 21 (c) of document CEB/2003/HLCP/CRP.18: water, energy, oceans and sustainable consumption and production. It requested the Director of the CEB secretariat to take the lead in making appropriate arrangements to pursue the work outlined on paragraph 21 (a) to 21 (c) of the above-mentioned document and to report to the Committee at its autumn session.

18. With a view to mutually reinforcing the policy with the operational aspects of follow-up to the World Summit, the Committee agreed that the United Nations Development Group would be invited to regularly report on its activities in these areas to HLCP.

IV. Approaches in elaborating a communication strategy for the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination

19. The Committee deliberated on different approaches for elaborating a communications strategy for CEB on the basis of an informal note circulated by the Vice-Chairman. In presenting the note, he stressed the importance of a communications strategy in driving outcomes, building understanding, support and trust, critical to underpinning partnerships, joint action and funding.

20. Three options were suggested: a zero approach that is basically internal to CEB, geared to information exchange, team-building and improving cross-institutional management; an opportunities driven approach, to seize opportunities to speak at events and add value to what is done separately by agency heads to capitalize on impact; and, more ambitiously, a collective leadership approach whereby CEB might choose to project itself as a collective leadership of the global multilateral system. Turning to the issue of management of external statements, the Vice-Chairman stressed the need for clear guidance on added value, process, form and importance of follow-up.

21. In the subsequent discussion, the Committee agreed on the value of a communications strategy and the need to proceed cautiously by first aiming for the opportunities driven approach, while working progressively towards the more ambitious leadership approach. Selectivity, the need to be clear about implications, the careful weighing of the trade-offs between added value and costs and a systematic monitoring of impact were some of the considerations that needed to underpin decisions in this respect.

22. With regard to impact, the representative of the World Trade Organization (WTO) noted that the CEB statement on international trade, the Doha Development Round, issued at its spring 2003 meeting, had been widely circulated by WTO and was viewed as a very useful additional tool in rallying political support for the development goals of the Doha Development Round. It was also suggested that CEB statements were valuable in providing guidance both in the field and at headquarters.

23. On future work, the Committee requested the Vice-Chairman to develop further proposals for a communications strategy for its consideration in consultation

with the United Nations Communications Group, taking into account the comments made during the meeting.

V. High-Level Committee on Programmes work programme: agenda for the sixth session (September 2003)

24. The Committee reviewed the work programme as contained in the report of its fifth session, held in Rome, on 26 and 27 March 2003. In the light of the discussion at the current session, the Committee agreed to a revised work programme as contained in annex III. It also reflects the agreement reached on a provisional agenda for its sixth session, to be held in Rome, on 18 and 19 September 2003.

VI. Other matters

A. Indigenous issues

25. The Committee agreed that it would address indigenous issues and their challenges for the work of the United Nations system at its sixth session, taking into account the issues raised in the background note prepared by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (CEB/2003/HLCP/CRP.15).

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

26. The Committee decided to address this issue at its sixth session in the light of the specific proposals contained in the background note prepared by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (CEB/2003/HLCP/CRP.16).

VII. Date and venue of the next session

27. The Committee recalled its decision that the sixth session would be held in Rome on 18 and 19 September 2003. The session would be held at the Hotel Castel Vecchio in Castelgandolfo, outside of Rome (www.hotelcastelvecchio.com). It would begin with a dinner hosted by the HLCP Chairman on the evening of 17 September 2003. Transportation facilities to the venue would be provided.

28. In the light of past experience, and taking into account the number of important issues on its agenda, the Committee decided to convene a further intersessional meeting later during the autumn. The attached HLCP work programme (annex III) would be revised in due course.

Annex I

Agenda

1. Financing for development — Secretary-General's report to the General Assembly.
2. Review of the status of the work of
 - (a) Task Group on 2005 Comprehensive Review of the implementation of the Millennium Declaration
 - (b) Task Force on HIV/AIDS/food security/governance — triple crisis.
3. Follow-up to High-Level Committee on Programmes and United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination discussions on World Summit on Sustainable Development-related issues, including energy, water and oceans.
4. Approaches in elaborating a communication strategy for CEB.
5. High-Level Committee on Programmes work programme: agenda for the sixth session (September 2003).
6. Other matters
 - (a) Indigenous issues
 - (b) Follow-up to the Second World Assembly on Ageing.

Annex II

List of participants

Chairman:

Lennart Båge (International Fund for Agricultural Development)

Vice-Chairman:

Mats Karlsson (World Bank)

Secretary:

Eckhard W. Hein (United Nations System Chief Executives Board
for Coordination secretariat)

United Nations	Patrizio Civili Marta Mauras Navid Hanif Andrey Vasilyev Oscar R. de Rojas
Regional commissions	Sulafa Al-Bassam
United Nations Conference on Trade and Development	Carlos Fortin
United Nations International Drug Control Programme	Nasra Hassan
United Nations Environment Programme	Adnan Amin
UN-Habitat/United Nations Settlements Programme	Axumite Gebre-Egziabher Lars Reutersward
United Nations Development Programme	Bruce Jenks Mourad Wahba
United Nations Population Fund	Mari Simonen
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	Marjon Kamara Martin Loftus
United Nations Children's Fund	Ado Vaher Annamaria Laurini
World Food Programme	Sheila Sisulu Peggy Nelson Allan Jury
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights	Zdzislaw Kedzia
United Nations System Staff College	Timothy Cartwright Geneviève Féraud
Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS	Renu Chahil-Graf Brian Williams
International Labour Organization	Donald Skerrett

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	Florence Chenoweth
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization	Jean-Yves Le Saux
World Health Organization	Bernard Kean Andrew Cassels
World Bank	Eduardo Doryan Clare Fleming Joseph Ingram
International Monetary Fund	Reinhard Munzberg
International Telecommunication Union	Arthur Levin
World Meteorological Organization	D. Don Nanjira
World Intellectual Property Organization	James Neale
International Fund for Agricultural Development	Uday Abhyankar Vera Weill-Hallé
United Nations Industrial Development Organization	Abel Rwendeire Andrey Lazykin
International Atomic Energy Agency	Ramchandran Swaminathan
World Trade Organization	Patrick Rata
United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East	Matthias Burchard
United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change	Mukul Sanwal
United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination secretariat	Qazi Shaukat Fareed Susan Toh

Annex III

HLCP work programme, 2003-2004

<i>March HLCP 2003</i>	<i>April CEB 2003</i>	<i>July HLCP Interseasonal Meeting 2003</i>	<i>September HLCP 2003</i>	<i>October CEB 2003</i>
HLCP work programme		HLCP work programme	HLCP work programme	
Millennium Declaration: comprehensive review	Millennium Declaration: comprehensive review	Millennium Declaration: comprehensive review	Millennium Declaration: comprehensive review	Millennium Declaration: comprehensive review
Follow-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development: Energy, Water	Follow-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development	Follow-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development	Follow-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development	
HIV/AIDS and its linkages with food security and governance	International trade: the Doha development agenda	Financing for development	Financing for development	Financing for development
Conflict prevention		HIV/AIDS and its linkages, with food security and governance	HIV/AIDS and its linkages with food security and governance	HIV/AIDS and its linkages with food security and governance
		Communication strategy	Communication strategy	International trade: the Doha development agenda
		Indigenous issues	International trade: the Doha development agenda	
		Follow-up to the World Assembly on Ageing	Conflict prevention	
			Other items: • Indigenous issues • Follow-up to the World Assembly on Ageing • Migration • Civil society organizations • New Partnership for Africa's Development	

<i>February HLCP 2004</i>	<i>April CEB 2004</i>	<i>September HLCP 2004</i>	<i>October CEB 2004</i>	<i>2005</i>
HLCP work programme		HLCP work programme		
Millennium Declaration: comprehensive review		Millennium Declaration: comprehensive review	Millennium Declaration: comprehensive review	Millennium Declaration: comprehensive review
Digital divide	Digital divide	Transnational crime	Transnational crime	