



**United Nations System
Chief Executives Board
for Coordination**

20 May 2008

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First Regular Session of 2008

UPU Headquarters

Bern

28 April 2008**Summary of Conclusions****Advance Unedited Version****I. Introduction**

1. The first regular session of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) for 2008, chaired by the Secretary-General, was held at UPU headquarters in Bern, on Monday morning, 28 April 2008.
2. Following the conclusion of the session, a CEB private meeting was held on Monday afternoon, 28 April. A CEB retreat was held on the evening of 28 April and on Tuesday morning, 29 April at the Bellevue Palace Hotel in Bern. Executive Heads had an exchange of views on current developments, including the rise in global food prices, and staff security and safety. Following its deliberations on global food prices, the CEB issued a Communiqué on “A Unified United Nations Response to the Global Food Price Challenge” which is attached to this report (Annex).
3. The Board expressed its appreciation to Mr. Edouard Dayan, Director-General of UPU, for the excellent arrangements that he and his colleagues had made for the CEB session.
4. The present report covers the outcome of the first regular session of CEB for 2008, which was held during the morning of 28 April.
5. On behalf of the Board, the Secretary-General welcomed its new Secretary, Mr. Thomas Stelzer. He also welcomed *in absentia* the new Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund, Mr. Dominique Strauss-Kahn. He regretted that the outgoing High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms. Louise Arbour, was unable to join the Board’s session, and expressed appreciation for her dedicated service to the Organization. He underscored that Ms. Arbour had been instrumental in developing a

more balanced approach to the whole range of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. Her legacy would be one of a stronger UN human rights system, focusing on justice and accountability. The Board expressed its deep admiration.

Agenda

6. The agenda of the first regular session of 2008 of CEB was as follows:

- (1) Adoption of the agenda.
- (2) Reports of CEB High Level Committees.
 - a. United Nations Development Group
 - b. High Level Committee on Management
 - c. High Level Committee on Programmes
- (3) Other matters.

II. Reports of CEB High Level Committees

A. United Nations Development Group

7. The UNDP Administrator and Chair of UNDG introduced his briefing, underlining that this was the first time he was reporting to the Board with UNDG formally part of the CEB framework. The report covered highlights on the ongoing work, as well as progress in operationalizing the integration of UNDG as a third pillar of the CEB framework.
8. After almost eighteen months since the “Delivering as One” Pilots were launched, initial results as well as remaining challenges have now been extensively documented in the Government reports of pilot countries and in the UN Country Team (UNCT) Stocktaking reports.
9. One of the critical lessons learned is that Government leadership and involvement is key to ensuring that the UN system as a whole is aligned with the national priorities. The pilot Country Teams are more effectively interacting with the Governments, listening to national priorities, and finding ways to draw on a wider range of UN assets.
10. An encouraging outcome has been a greater engagement of Non-Resident Agencies, both in the programming process, and in the resulting programmes. Clearer definition of roles and responsibilities and improved understanding of each others’ mandates and expertise have been valuable in team building and mutual trust.

11. The issue of “joint programming” is one of the key gains emerging from the Pilots: the UN Country Teams are truly exploring how the UN system can respond to national priorities by joint analysis, joint thinking, and joint prioritization/planning. The critical remaining challenge is to translate this coherence effort into the implementation stage.
12. As for the way forward, UNDG would now focus on facilitating the application of the lessons being learned from the Pilots to all other countries as relevant, but especially in countries in which Governments are requesting a more coherent and aligned UN programming, as well as in countries beginning a new UNDAF programme. This “mainstreaming” of the lessons learned would continue as we keep on learning more from the Pilots and other countries making strides towards increased efficiency.
13. UNDG, in coordination with the High Level Committee on Management (HLCM), would increasingly focus on the harmonization of business practices and the necessary support by Headquarters to the Pilots and other UN Country Teams.
14. The work of UNDG would continue along the directions already identified and within the framework of the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review (TCPR), which provides a solid and sufficient inter-governmental mandate for the work to be carried out at the country level.
15. Among the several positive developments with the Resident Coordinator (RC) System, the UNDG Chair indicated that briefings for new Resident Coordinators by sixteen agencies and departments were held. Performance assessments are being done for all Resident Coordinators by the Regional Director Teams. The teams are being further expanded to include most entities that have members on the UNCTs.
16. A particularly notable achievement is the growing involvement of UN agencies in the Resident Coordinator function: Currently, 29% of Resident Coordinators are not from UNDP (up from 19% in 2002). Fifty percent of the candidates submitted to the Secretary-General last March were not staff members of UNDP.
17. Problems are being encountered, however, in finding sufficient qualified candidates for this function. The reasons for such declining interest are two-fold: first, the complexity and responsibilities for Resident Coordinator positions have increased, particularly in terms of the new security environment, without being matched by a corresponding growth in the authority and supporting resources. Secondly, the success of the Resident Coordinator System depends to a high degree on the readiness of all agencies to put forward their best and brightest staff for the job, while a problem of competition between the RC function and internal career opportunities still persists.
18. Difficulties are also being encountered in filling Resident Coordinator positions with women. The objective of gender balance should be maintained as a top priority. The organizations of the UN system must vow to take collective responsibility for the

Resident Coordinator function and make an increased effort to propose qualified female candidates for such positions.

19. Considerable progress has been made in the restructuring of the UNDG and its integration as a third pillar into the CEB framework. In particular:
 - The UNDG mechanism has been significantly streamlined with its working groups being reduced from nineteen to five;
 - The UNDG pillar now regularly consults with the other two pillars, HLCM and HLCP, and the work plans of all three pillars are currently being reviewed to ensure a clear division of labour;
 - A secondment from DGO to the CEB secretariat has been realized, to facilitate the integration of UNDG into the CEB, and cooperation between the pillars;
 - The name of DGO will be changed to Development Operations Coordination Office (DOCO) to better reflect its dual function as technical support unit to the UNDG, as well as supporting country level coordination through the Resident Coordinator System.
20. The leadership of UNDG would include a Vice-Chair at the ASG level from one of the Specialized Agencies. Consultations on this matter are already at an advanced stage and the appointment of the Vice-Chair is expected shortly.
21. A key part of the agreed new approach is the establishment of a UNDG Advisory Group, composed of permanent and rotational members, which would be a more broadly representative group than the UNDG ExCom, while still being small enough to be an effective body. This would be a group that provides advice, not a decision-making group, as the UNDG decisions would be made by the full UNDG on technical issues, and in the CEB on policy issues.
22. While the criteria for membership in the Advisory Group have been defined and agreed upon following a process of extensive consultations, the exact membership in the Group has still to be finalized. This would be done shortly, taking into consideration the need to recognize the analytical and normative input of Non-Resident Agencies. In this respect, and to strengthen the linkages between the regional and country levels and promote coherence at the regional level, it was agreed that the Regional Commissions will be regularly informed of the agenda and a representative of the Commissions will be invited to participate as a member of the Advisory Group when regional issues are planned for discussion.
23. In responding to the report of the Chair of UNDG, the Board acknowledged with appreciation the positive trend towards increased inclusiveness in the work of UNDG, and encouraged UNDG to progress further along this path.
24. Taking note and endorsing the report by UNDG, the Board asked to be kept informed of developments and challenges in the Resident Coordinator System, in recognition of

the critical role it exercises in ensuring a coordinated, coherent and successful delivery of the UN system organizations at the country level.

B. High level Committee on Management

25. The Chair of the High-level Committee on Management briefed the Board on the recent activities of the Committee, which had focused on two concurrent, broad objectives:
 - Refinement of the Committee's structure, procedures and functioning mechanisms; and
 - Formulation of its programme of work for the next two/three years, drawing on the conclusions of the High-level Panel on System-wide Coherence, on the latest Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review (TCPR), and on any other relevant inter-agency mandates, with particular attention to needs emerging at the country level which require comprehensive consideration and guidance at the central level.
26. HLCM consolidated an expanded system of bodies and actors within its institutional framework: together with the three networks serviced by the CEB Secretariat, i.e. Human Resources (HR), co-chaired by the United Nations and by UNESCO; Finance & Budget (FB), co-chaired by the United Nations and by IAEA; and Information, Communication & Technology (ICT), chaired by WFP, HLCM now incorporates the newly established network of Procurement Chiefs, chaired by WFP and serviced by the UNDP Procurement Support Office in Copenhagen, as well as the network of Legal Advisors, chaired by the Under-Secretary General for Legal Affairs and supported by his Office.
27. Concurrently with such "structural" refinements, and in an effort to break functional compartments in favour of a more integrated management support to programmatic needs, HLCM dedicated a considerable effort to increasing its permeability both internally, promoting communication and coordination among its networks; and externally, strengthening its relationship and improving cooperation with other inter-agency mechanisms of the UN system, such as the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC), the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) and the Representatives of Internal Audit Services of the United Nations System (UN-RIAS).
28. Continuing an established practice of information sharing and coordination, which had become even more critical following UNDG's integration into the CEB framework, the three Committees have started a process of regular consultations, inspired by the principle that, in the area of management, discussions leading to implications for the UN system would be coordinated through HLCM and its Networks for comprehensive consideration and buy-in, while UNDG would ensure guidance and support for piloting solutions in countries and, more in general, for the requirements emerging from the country level.

29. Turning to the outcome of the recent HLCM session of 17-18 March at FAO's headquarters in Rome, the HLCM Chair thanked Mr. Jacques Diouf for the excellent hospitality and support provided by FAO during the meeting.
30. In addition to the discussion on Security and Safety of Staff, whose conclusions and recommendations were part of the agenda of the CEB Retreat, HLCM took up a number of other important issues. In particular, the Committee:
- Confirmed its support for strengthened institutional links between HLCM and the Representatives of Internal Audit Services of the United Nations System (UN-RIAS), and approved the conceptual framework and *modus operandi* of a partnership arrangement with UN-RIAS, aimed at promoting exchange of experience and knowledge on areas of common interest.
 - Recommended that the representatives of Executive Heads at the upcoming Rome meeting of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board pursue, within the bounds of actuarial possibilities, proposals for:
 - (a) changes which would promote staff mobility through improved portability of pension benefits; and
 - (b) changes to the pension adjustment system to ameliorate the effects of the weakened US dollar pending an overall review of such structural adjustments as may be required in United Nations Pension arrangements to respond to any long term changes in the foreign exchange value of the US dollar.
 - Agreed to conduct a system-wide discussion with a view to developing a common recommendation on harmonized standards of air travel, taking due consideration of the specificity of the work and mandates of the different entities of the system, and building on the recommendations and conclusions of ICSC, JIU and Medical Doctors, as well as on a comparative analysis of standards applicable in Member States and in other international organizations.
 - Encouraged organizations that have adopted the same ERP systems to intensify the sharing of information and experiences on implementation challenges and process and business issues. This would provide an opportunity for organizations which are advanced in the setting up of the ERP systems to provide advice and support to those who are beginning this process; therefore possibly save time and costs.
31. The HLCM Chair then provided the Board with some details on the directions and next steps of the Committee's Plan of Action for the Harmonization of Business Practices, whose components represented the building blocks for the HLCM's programme of work for the next two/three years.
32. Following the positive response of Executive Heads to the Chair's letter of 5 March 2008, HLCM approved the launch of its Plan of Action for the Harmonization of Business Practices in the UN system, packaged in a Funding Proposal for resource

mobilization, that would be submitted to Member States with a view to informing them about this initiative and soliciting extra-budgetary contributions.

33. The Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chair of the CEB, would transmit the Funding Proposal to Member States. Concurrently, the Permanent Representatives of Tanzania and Ireland to the United Nations, which are serving as Co-chairs of the UN General Assembly's consultations on System-wide Coherence, had invited the Secretary-General to informally brief the General Assembly on this initiative during the Assembly's second resumed session this spring. This would present a valuable opportunity to provide Member States with greater detail on each project included in the Plan of Action and to raise awareness in as open and transparent a manner as possible.
34. The HLCM Chair underlined that the scope of the Plan was limited to functions and processes for which the Executive Heads have responsibility, and that HLCM was engaged in an effort towards harmonization in areas that are the prerogative of Executive Heads.
35. The Chair recalled that the Plan of Action had been developed under the guidance of a Steering Group led by the HLCM Vice-Chair, Mr. Denis Aitken of WHO, and comprising the chairs of the HLCM Networks, the Director of the CEB Secretariat and the Secretary of HLCM. Following the integration in the HLCM framework of the networks of Procurement Chiefs and of Legal Advisors, and in recognition of the critical role that UN organizations with strong field presence have for the successful achievement of the objectives outlined in the Plan, the Steering Group had been expanded as of March 2008 to include the chairs of the two new networks and the HLCM representatives of UNDP and UNICEF
36. It was noted that the Staff Representatives and the ICSC had appreciated the work done by the Committee as an important step towards enhanced coherence for better programmatic delivery of the UN system organizations, and had assured their support and commitment to the implementation of this initiative.
37. HLCM organizations can voluntarily commit their participation in any of the proposed initiatives (cluster approach). Working groups of interested organizations would then be formed around a Lead Agency, which would carry ultimate responsibility for delivery of results and would retain financial authority over and accountability for the resources allocated to the project for which it is responsible.
38. The CEB Secretariat would retain responsibility for central oversight, coordination and reporting for the complete package of projects included in the Plan of Action, preserving unity of direction and central accountability to the CEB membership and to the Member States providing financial support.
39. Once again, the Board acknowledged the value of the HLCM proposal as a new level of commitment by the entire UN system for a fundamental realignment and

harmonization of business practices to respond to the new political demand for a coherent and effective UN system.

40. Recognizing the need to ensure a strong mandate by top management for the success of such a joint effort towards harmonization of business practices, Executive Heads re-iterated their support and commitment for the Plan of Action developed by HLCM.
41. The Board concluded expressing its support and endorsement for the decisions and recommendations of the HLCM at its 15th session and, in particular, for the launch of the Plan of Action for the Harmonization of Business Practices in the UN system.

B. High Level Committee on Programmes

42. The Chairman of HLCP introduced the Committee's report on its fifteenth session, which was the first following the review by CEB of its role and functioning. The Committee undertook an examination of its role following the outcome of the CEB review, including its role vis-à-vis UNDG and HLCM, and also discussed its relations with the Secretary-General's Policy Committee. In order to further coherence, it was proposed that the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the three CEB Committees meet regularly to harmonize their agendas. HLCP would also be holding an intersessional meeting in July to agree on its forward-looking work plan.
43. It was recalled that a year ago, CEB had endorsed the proposal of HLCP for the evaluation of the One UN pilots. The first step of this process, the evaluability study, was near completion. The longer-term evaluation process, which was ongoing and would be complementary to the immediate stocktaking exercise, would ensure a systematic means to measure targets and goals. The results shown thus far were encouraging, corroborating the positive messages that had emerged from the stocktaking exercise.
44. The key issue that HLCP had been focusing on over the last year was climate change, following CEB's request for the Committee to prepare the UN system's contribution to the Climate Change Conference in Bali. The Chairman noted that on no other matter had there been such a committed engagement of the entire UN system. He thanked his Vice-Chairman for his dedicated efforts in steering the process of consultations, and all organizations for their contributions. The resulting paper on UN system coordination on climate change was well received by the Parties to UNFCCC, creating expectations for further coordinated action by the system. HLCP's work also formed the basis for the Secretary-General's overview report and inventory of UN system activities, which was submitted to the thematic debate on climate change at the General Assembly in February 2008. Views expressed by Member States on that occasion, along with a contribution by the UNFCCC Secretariat on how the system could assist in the implementation of the Bali Road Map, informed the discussion by HLCP in March. HLCP had prepared a draft decision for consideration

by CEB; should the Board agree, the Committee would continue to oversee UN system coordination on climate change.

45. Mr. Båge thanked the Deputy-Secretary-General for her briefing to HLCP on progress made thus far by the MDG Africa Steering Committee and Working Group. He noted the range of issues that needed to be pursued to accelerate the implementation of the MDGs in Africa, including agriculture and food security, and assured the Board of HLCP's commitment to remain engaged and backstop system-wide efforts in this regard.
46. The Chairman went on to say that HLCP had also benefited from a briefing by the Assistant Secretary-General on the implications of the integrated peacebuilding strategies. The Committee examined how the UN system could best backstop this new function, drawing on lessons learned from the first countries undertaking integrated strategies, Burundi and Sierra Leone.
47. He was pleased to note that HLCP had taken a number of its earlier efforts to conclusion. These included the Toolkit on Mainstreaming Employment and Decent Work, led by ILO, and the Trade Capacity Building Interagency Resource Guide, produced under the leadership of UNIDO. These products were examples that could be drawn upon to bring the system together as it addressed other key issues.
48. The Director-General of UNIDO thanked organizations for providing inputs to the Trade Capacity Building Interagency Resource Guide. He also briefed the Board on the outcome of the Vienna Consultation on One UN, held on 4-5 March 2008. The Director General of ILO thanked those organizations that had completed the self-assessment and Toolkit on Mainstreaming Employment and Decent Work, and reminded others to expedite this process in view of the requirement for him to report to ECOSOC on progress made.

UN System-wide Approach to Climate Change

49. The Executive Secretary, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, briefed the Board on the outcome of the first meeting of the Ad-Hoc Working Group of the UNFCCC on long-term cooperative action (Bangkok from 31 March to 4 April 2008). As UNFCCC was not an implementing agency, it placed high priority on working with others to ensure that decisions taken by governments lead to action on the ground, especially in countries that need support. In this connection, he thanked CEB members for their efforts in ensuring that the UN system delivers as one in meeting the challenge of climate change. He emphasized that the Copenhagen agreement in 2009 would determine what countries would need to do on the ground to limit their emissions and to adapt to climate change, and noted in this regard the important role of the UN system at the country level, under the leadership of the Resident Coordinator.

50. He recalled that the Bali Conference formally launched negotiations, agreed to an agenda and set a deadline for negotiations. There were different views among countries regarding this outcome, which was finding its way back into the negotiation process. The Bangkok meeting was comprised of the sessions of the two bodies forming the parallel negotiating tracks: long-term cooperative action under the Convention, and post-Kyoto Protocol commitments.
51. The Bangkok meeting resulted in a work programme on long-term cooperative action that reconfirmed the 23 elements contained in the Bali Action Plan, grouped under five areas: shared vision; mitigation; adaptation; technology; and finance. In addition, the Group made a strong reference to linkages to the work of the other subsidiary bodies under the UNFCCC, which provided a connection to the focus areas identified by HLCP (adaptation, technology transfer, capacity building, reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, and mitigation and finance in support of developing countries on mitigation actions). The UNFCCC Secretariat was ready to work with others to take the issues forward, and play a convening role, linking up to current and emerging mandates that relate to specific work on the ground.
52. The Executive Secretary highlighted the significant progress that had already been made on adaptation. The Nairobi Work Programme, initiated a year earlier, had as its objective to assist all Parties/countries to improve their understanding and assessment of climate change impacts, their vulnerability and the adaptation options open to them to make informed decisions on practical adaptation actions. Thus far, more than 100 organizations around the world – from large intergovernmental institutions to small non-governmental organizations – had committed to specific activities within the Work Programme.
53. He went on to say that the Bangkok work programme foresaw two points of entry in the negotiation process for the UN system: observer organizations (including UN organizations) were invited to provide additional information, views and proposals on the elements referred to in the Bali Action Plan, this including the five areas identified by HLCP; and other intergovernmental processes were invited to take note of the work programme agreed in Bali so that the Bali process could be informed by the outputs of these processes.
54. The Executive Secretary added that the process under the Kyoto Protocol had a successful start to its second phase of work, which was aimed at revisiting the rules that govern and define emissions reduction commitments of Annex I Parties. Increased attention was paid to emissions stemming from international aviation and marine transport, where the Kyoto Protocol had foreseen work to be conducted in the framework of ICAO and IMO. There was a divergence of views on whether or not to include these two sectors under the UNFCCC in the next phase. In his view, this was an issue that would benefit from a wider discussion within the UN system, in support of governments and in response to their mandates.

55. In summary, there were three important areas for the system to fulfil in a well managed way forward: (a) inputs to negotiations over the next two years; (b) response to mandates already provided by the negotiation process; and (c) coherent assistance at the national level on adaptation and mitigation.
56. The Vice-Chairman of HLCP introduced the Committee's draft decision, noting that it reflected the need to be responsive to the evolution of the intergovernmental discussion, while at the same time offering proactive leadership in key emerging areas. He referred in this context to the letter of 25 April 2008 from the Friends on Climate Change to the Secretary-General, which welcomed the fact that CEB was taking forward further work on coordination of the UN system in response to the challenges of climate change.
57. HLCP had agreed that the coordinating mechanism to take this work forward should remain light and flexible, and be focused on a number of major issues, which would evolve over time. Decisions regarding facilitation of the five areas set out in the draft decision would be arrived at on the basis of expressed commitments by participants. Coordination on key issues would be strengthened, through existing mechanisms, such as UN-Energy, UN-Water and UN-Oceans, and special efforts made to respond to immediate challenges. Current mechanisms to support country and regional level work would be used to provide countries with the services and capacity that they required. As decided by CEB, work to deliver on a Green UN would also continue. Finally, to support information exchange, engagement and results tracking, the current inventory of UN system activities would be evolved into a web-based tool.
58. Executive heads voiced their appreciation and support for the work undertaken thus far by HLCP. In relation to the draft decision and the work being undertaken by the UN system, as well as the outcome of the first meeting of the Ad-Hoc Working Group of the UNFCCC on long-term cooperative action, several observations were made:
- Climate change was a global challenge that required global, holistic and comprehensive solutions. Executive heads stressed the central role of the UN Secretary-General in leading the efforts of the United Nations to support a positive outcome in the climate change negotiations. At the same time, developing countries were requesting longer-term assistance with respect to a post-Kyoto regime; the UN system had a responsibility to respond to these requests in an integrated way.
 - The importance of transformational leadership by the UN system was underscored and, in particular, concern was voiced that sectoral approaches to dealing with climate change risked segmenting problems and leading to trade-offs within sectors. CEB should set a greater level of ambition to meet the expectations placed on the system, while also containing transaction costs in supporting the various coordination mechanisms on climate change.

- Transitions likely to occur in production and consumption patterns would have a large impact on a wide range of enterprises. What was important was for the UN system to look at the productive implications of climate change policy to ensure that energy prices do not have a severe impact on the poor, to deal with energy intensive industry in a way that doesn't cause jobs and capital to flee from one country to another, to design fiscal policies that can push low emission technologies into the market, and to use the carbon market to create new job opportunities. ILO was working to deepen its knowledge of the transition process and apply its tools in the four areas of: social protection; social dialogue, including within enterprises at the national level; labour market analysis; and capacity building. It had launched a Green Jobs initiative, along with UNEP, the International Trade Union Confederation and the Intergovernmental Organization of Employers. UNIDO was also spearheading a Green Industry Initiative.
- UN-Energy was focusing on the centrality of the energy issue in discussions on climate change. It had divided its work into three clusters: energy access, led by UNDP and UN-DESA; energy efficiency, led by IAEA, UNIDO and UN-Habitat; and renewable energy, led by FAO, UNEP and UNESCO. It expected shortly to elaborate a guide on to who does what in the system.
- The important role of science, assessment, monitoring and early warning reflected in the draft decision to CEB was highlighted. WMO together with UNESCO would convene a knowledge-based network on adaptation and mitigation. The global network of observation would be enhanced by consolidating and improving scientific knowledge on the climate regime, and climate prediction made more accurate by strengthening local and regional capacities. The Third World Climate Conference, to be held in Geneva from 31 August to 4 September 2009, would have as its theme climate prediction for decision-making, both with regard to climate change and climate variability. WMO was also in the final stages of implementing a network of regional climate centres to provide information through meteorological services; this network would also be of use in the area of food security.
- The ICT sector, including equipment, contributes approximately 2.5 to 3 percent of greenhouse gas emissions, but ICTs can help all sectors achieve major reductions in GHG emissions and in energy consumption through the use of more energy efficient technology. Remote sensing applications for global observatory systems was one of the clear examples of how the UN system worked together to protect the environment. Looking ahead, there were several actions that the UN system could pursue in promoting a green culture: move towards a paperless environment; establish more efficient telecommunications standards; and employ greater use of teleconferencing and videoconferencing.

- The intergovernmental consultative process had identified the scaling up of technology transfer to countries. DESA was currently consulting with the Government of the People's Republic of China to organize a conference in November 2008 on climate change and technology cooperation innovation and transfer, to complement COP 14 in Poznan.
- With regard to the discussion at the UNFCCC meeting in Bangkok regarding international aviation and maritime transport, it was important to highlight the progress that had indeed been achieved. Following its Assembly in September 2007, ICAO had established the Group on International Aviation and Climate Change (GIACC). The GIACC Programme of Action, to be concluded in 2009, will be reviewed by an ICAO high-level meeting, taking into account the 15th Conference of the Parties. ICAO had also developed a carbon calculator to estimate aviation emissions as part of the UN climate neutral initiative, and would be holding a two-day workshop on carbon markets and aviation emissions on 18-19 June 2008 in Montreal. The recently-held IMO Marine Environment Protection Committee had agreed on amendments to Annex VI of the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, regulating ships' exhaust gas emissions, so as to limit further the level of air pollutants from ships; the amendments were due to be adopted in October 2008, with entry into force expected in February 2010. In respect of greenhouse gases, IMO had conducted a study in 2000, which ascertained that shipping was responsible for some 1.8 percent of greenhouse gas emissions; six years later, the Stern report had acknowledged that while the transport sector as a whole contributed 14 percent of the total, shipping contributed only a tenth of that, or 1.4 percent. On this issue, IMO continued to work apace on the action plan it had previously adopted. Together with the scientific updating of the aforementioned 2000 study, the three elements of the action plan were scheduled to be completed by July 2009, thus enabling the Organization to submit to the Copenhagen conference of 2009 a comprehensive and solid proposal, agreed by the Member States of IMO, on how best to limit, control and reduce CO₂ emissions from ships. To that end, IMO had agreed to expedite the completion of two of the plan's three elements. As Parties to Annex I of the Kyoto Protocol represented some 25 per cent of the world's shipping industry, in an effort to do more, not less, to ensure the widest possible environmental benefit, IMO considered that it should not limit itself to holding only those countries responsible for mitigating greenhouse gases from international shipping. The global control of greenhouse gas emissions from international shipping should therefore be regulated through IMO, by a single global regime affecting not just some ships, but all merchant ships, and remain outside the scope of negotiations towards a post-Kyoto regime.
- Climate change was having an impact in other areas. Tourism, for instance, was both a contributor – up to 5 percent - to greenhouse gas emissions as well as an industry that suffered from the impacts of climate change.

- With respect to work to deliver on a Green UN, the Chair of HLCM noted that the Government of Vietnam would be establishing a green UN building. She had been asked to approach CEB members for symbolic contributions to this worthy project. The UN Secretary-General also noted that on 5 May, the groundbreaking ceremony for the renovation of UN headquarters in New York would be taking place. He hoped that the original donor countries, along with others, would be willing to contribute to the refurbishment of the buildings.

59. CEB endorsed the report of HLCP on its 15th session and the draft decision before it. CEB members agreed to continue all efforts to work together in a holistic and ambitious, yet pragmatic way, to support negotiations under UNFCCC, enhance awareness and galvanize political will.

A. Dates of CEB Fall 2008 and Spring 2009 session

60. With respect to the second regular session of CEB in 2008, to be held at UN Headquarters, the Board confirmed the dates of Friday 24 and Saturday 25 October.

62. The Board agreed to accept the invitation of the Director-General of UNESCO to host CEB's first regular session of 2009 on 6 and 7 April in Paris. The Director-General of UNIDO invited the Board to hold its first regular session of 2010 in Vienna.

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Annex

UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM CHIEF EXECUTIVES BOARD (CEB)

PRESS COMMUNIQUE

A unified United Nations response to the global food price challenge

We consider that the recent dramatic escalation in food prices worldwide has evolved into a unprecedented challenge of global proportions that has become a crisis for the world's most vulnerable, including the urban poor. This crisis has multiple causes, including rapidly increasing energy prices, lack of investments in the agricultural sector, rapidly rising demand for food, trade distorting subsidies, recurrent bad weather and environmental degradation, subsidized production of bio-fuels that substitute food production, and the imposition of export restrictions leading to hoarding and panic buying.

This challenge is having multiple effects with its most serious impact unfolding as a crisis for the most vulnerable. Mounting hunger and increasing evidence of severe malnutrition is evident and the capacities of humanitarian agencies to meet these needs is under severe strain, particularly as pledged funding remains undelivered. This situation is increasingly resulting in social tension as governments which find themselves powerless to address this global crisis come under mounting pressure. Inflationary pressures are rising and trade deficits are widening in a number of countries.

The Executive Heads of the United Nations Specialized Agencies, Funds and Programmes and Bretton Woods institutions, meeting in Bern on 28 and 29 April 2008 under the chairmanship of the UN Secretary-General, agreed on a common strategy in support of developing country governance to confront the global food crisis and have decided the following:

1. First, we must FEED THE HUNGRY

The rapidly escalating price of food is severely impacting the poor in developing countries, resulting in heightened vulnerability, reduced levels of nutrition with serious health impacts, and rising social tensions.

The CEB calls upon the international community to urgently and fully fund the emergency requirements of US\$ 755 million for the World Food Programme and deliver on its pledges and provide maximum flexibility to target the most urgent needs. This extraordinary appeal, together with WFP's voluntary funded budget and newly assessed needs must be urgently met. Without full funding of these emergency requirements, we risk again the spectre of widespread hunger, malnutrition and social unrest on an unprecedented scale.

2. Second, we must ensure FOOD FOR TOMORROW

Action must be taken to provide developing country farmers with the support required to ensure the next harvest. Escalating energy, fertilizer and input prices are leading farmers to plant less in the coming season and will lead to even more severe food shortages in the coming year.

The FAO Emergency Initiative on soaring food prices has called for US\$ 1.7 billion in funding to provide low-income food deficit countries with seeds and inputs to boost production.

IFAD is making available US\$200 million to poor farmers in the most affected countries to boost food production by providing essential inputs.

The World Bank is exploring with its Board the creation of a rapid financing facility for grant support to especially fragile, poor countries and quicker, more flexible financing for others.

We need to address multi-faceted challenges in the short, medium and long terms.

The Short to Medium Term

The UN system will co-operate together in crisis response, the development of emergency safety nets and social protection of the most vulnerable and rapid employment and income generation programmes.

The UN system will fully deploy its capacity in the monitoring, quick assessment and analysis of the rapidly evolving food price trends and their impact on vulnerability to support the response of affected national governments.

At the country level, UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinators, Heads of the World Bank missions, and the UN country teams will urgently meet also with WFP and other humanitarian agencies in affected countries to draw up support strategies for national governments and vulnerable populations and seek international support for their implementation.

The IMF will propose to its Executive Board additional financial support for countries facing serious balance of payment gaps as a result of higher food and oil prices.

The CEB calls upon countries that have imposed export restrictions on food that have reduced supplies and contributed to price hikes to urgently reconsider those policies.

The Medium to Long Term

The UN system will bring together its technical and analytical capabilities to fill research and knowledge gaps in order to support governments with the best information for agricultural decision-making to boost production and productivity.

As assessment of the diverse impacts of the crisis, the development of sets of tailored policy instruments and implementation capacity are required to underpin an effective policy response.

Domestic policy measures that correct distortions and do not jeopardize the supply response need to be put in place, together with budget support measures and balance of payments support for the most affected countries.

The CEB calls for a rapid conclusion of the Doha Development Round resulting in scaling down trade distorting subsidies that have damaged developing countries production capacity.

The Long-Term

The CEB underscores the urgent necessity to address the structural and policy issues that have substantially contributed to this crisis and the challenge posed by climate change to productive systems.

Further research must be undertaken on the impact of diversion of food crops to bio-fuel production and all subsidies to food-based bio-fuels should be reviewed.

We must make a special effort to address the specific needs of Africa as the most affected region, including through relevant African programmes such as the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADDP). To this end, we must put in place the requirements to realize the promise of a Green Revolution in Africa which the UN Africa MDG Steering Group has estimated will require US\$8 to 10 billion annually.

The World Bank, IMF, IFAD, Regional Development Banks and relevant agencies of the UN system will collaborate to develop a long-term strategy, including the required macro-economic measures for increasing productivity, production and marketing in agriculture and ensuring availability of and access to food.

Immediate action

In order to create a prioritized plan of action and coordinate its implementation, the CEB has decided that a Task Force on the Global Food Crisis be established immediately under the leadership of the Secretary-General and bringing together the Heads of the United Nations Specialized Agencies, Funds and Programmes, Bretton Woods institutions and relevant parts of the UN Secretariat.

Forthcoming Meetings

Forthcoming high-level gatherings, including the meetings of TICAD, the Economic and Social Council, the G-8 Summit, the September High-Level Event of the General Assembly on MDGs and the ILO International Labour Conference on Rural Employment, all provide opportunities to strengthen political commitment to meet the challenge of this crisis.

In this regard, the UN Secretary-General calls on World Leaders to make every effort to participate in the High-Level Conference on Food Security in Rome on 3 to 5 June 2008

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