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**Integrated and coordinated implementation**  
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**The role of the United Nations system**  
**in implementing the ministerial**  
**declaration of the high-level segment**  
**of the substantive session of 2008 of**  
**the Economic and Social Council**

**Implementation of and follow-up**  
**to major international United Nations**  
**conferences and summits**

**Coordination, programme and other**  
**Questions: Ad hoc advisory groups on**  
**African countries emerging from**  
**conflict**

**Implementation of General Assembly**  
**resolutions 50/227, 52/12B, 57/270B and**  
**60/265, including 61/16**

**Economic and environmental**  
**questions**

**Social and human rights questions**

**The role of the Economic and Social Council in the integrated and**  
**coordinated implementation of the outcomes of and follow-up to major**  
**United Nations conferences and summits, in light of relevant General**  
**Assembly resolutions, including resolution 61/16**

**Report of the Secretary-General**

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\*\* E/2009/100

## *Summary*

The current report reviews the horizontal and vertical linkages which have been established among the different parts of the integrated follow-up architecture to enhance coherence in the follow-up of conferences. It illustrates how, by providing an in-depth assessment of a cross-cutting theme common to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits, the Annual Ministerial Review has assumed the function of providing substantive coherence to the follow-up of conferences. It also describes how the biennial Development Cooperation Forum (DCF) as a forum with its high-level and balanced participation of key actors and clear representation of multi-stakeholder positions, can help advance the implementation of the internationally agreed development goals, and through them the integrated follow-up of conferences. It further elaborates how the specific meeting focused on development of the General Assembly, could provide similar substantive coherence for the work of the General Assembly and its relevant Committees.

The report finds that over the last years, key provisions of resolutions 50/227, 52/12b, 57/270b, 60/265 and 61/16 have been implemented. It also attempts to establish that with the introduction of the new functions of ECOSOC and the specific meeting of the General Assembly focused on development, there is the potential to move the integrated and coordinated follow-up to the next level by reorienting its focus away from process related coordination to substantive coherence. To facilitate the reorientation of the integrated follow-up of conferences it recommends a quadrennial report. Such a report would give an overall assessment of where the international community stands in implementing the outcomes of the international conferences and summits one year prior to the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities and the subsequent adoption of the new strategic documents of the United Nations Funds and Programmes and specialized agencies.

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## I. Introduction

1. This report is prepared in response to ECOSOC resolution 2008/29, which requested the Secretary-General to make recommendations on the periodicity of the report on “*The role of the Economic and Social Council in the integrated and coordinated implementation of the outcomes of and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits*” with a view to further enhancing its effectiveness.
2. The report describes the underlying approach of the integrated follow-up of conferences to date (section I). It then reviews the evolution of the conference follow-up architecture (section II) and its implications for the periodicity of the report of the Secretary-General with a view to adding the best possible value to the advancement of the integrated follow-up of conferences (section III). A section devoted to recommendations concludes the report (section IV).
3. Over the past two decades, the major UN conferences and summits have together resulted in the emergence of a shared vision of development. This vision is based on the growing consensus among the international community that integrated, holistic approaches which take into consideration the economic, social and environmental dimension of development are the best way forward to advance development. This broad-based framework laid the groundwork for the Millennium Summit, which led to the adoption of time bound goals and targets known as the Millennium Development Goals.
4. In 2005, when world leaders returned to assess progress, they recognized that the achievement of many of the internationally agreed development goals were off track in a number of countries. To close the implementation gap, they pledged to develop and to implement comprehensive national development strategies to pursue national development priorities as well as achieve the internationally agreed development goals. They also mandated two new functions to ECOSOC – the Annual Ministerial substantive Review (AMR) and the biennial Development Cooperation Forum (DCF) - to speed up implementation.
5. At the World Summit they further stressed that the MDGs could only be achieved if they were approached together with the other goals and targets of the major UN conferences and summits. By endorsing a broad vision of development – now also commonly referred to as the United Nations development agenda, which encompasses the internationally agreed development goals (IADG) derived from the major UN conferences and summits, including the MDGs - called for an integrated and coordinated follow-up of conferences at all levels gained additional momentum.

6. Over the years, the Council has promoted the integrated follow-up of conferences based on a two-pronged approach. At the institutional level, it has promoted enhanced architectural coherence with the aim of transforming the diversity and complexity of the UN system into a source of strength so that organizations – both normative and operational - acting alone or in concert, can apply their varied strength to the common purpose of bringing development for all. At the substantive level, it has advanced a holistic approach to economic and social development, which takes into account the interrelatedness of the different goals and targets of the major UN conferences.

7. One major challenge that the General Assembly and the ECOSOC faced when promoting an integrated follow-up was that while conferences had adopted an all-encompassing approach, national governments and the United Nations system, which had been entrusted with their implementation, continued to largely operate along sectoral lines. During the initial years of the integrated and coordinated follow-up of conferences, the General Assembly and the Council have therefore devoted much of their attention to promoting coherence, cooperation and coordination through the establishment of linkages. They established both vertical linkages running from global to local actors and horizontal linkages to connect institutions across different sectors. While only little progress has been made in the initial years with regard to the follow-up of conferences, more recently the introduction of the Annual Ministerial Review and the Development Cooperation Forum marked a major step forward.

## **II. The evolution of the integrated and coordinated follow-up of conferences architecture**

### **A. Evolution of the integrated follow-up architecture since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 50/227 Country-level follow-up**

8. The real test of the success of an integrated and coordinate follow-up of conferences is whether it makes a difference in people's every day lives by expediting the implementation of the outcomes of the major UN conferences and summits, including the MDGs. Governments have the primary responsibility for implementing the conference outcomes. Over the years, nationally-owned development strategies (NDS) have become the bedrock of nationally-led development efforts. In 2005, at the World Summit, governments put the MDGs and IADGs at the very heart of their national development strategies when they pledged to develop and implement comprehensive national development strategies.

9. The role of the United Nations has been to assist both developing and developed countries to integrate the IADGs, including the MDGs into their national policies. In 2007, 67 United Nations Country Teams (UNCTs) reported that they had assisted national governments to draw up and act upon national development plans or poverty reduction strategies, including through country

analysis of progress on the MDGs and financing of MDG targets. The adoption of comprehensive national strategies has helped to promote policy integration at the policy formulation and policy planning stage. With the national development plans in place, the key challenge now is to ensure that the coherence achieved in the planning process does not get lost during the implementation phase.

10. To ensure coherence and integration at the planning and implementation stage and to better draw upon the diverse expertise from across the UN system, including of non-resident agencies, the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) has developed several tools over the past years. These include the Common Country Assessments (CCA), the United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAF), the formulation of the Results Matrix, and DevInfo. A more recent innovation is the UNDG Policy Network for MDGs to ensure coordinated and focussed UN technical and policy advice for planning and implementation of the national development strategies.

11. To further explore ways to better support countries with the implementation of their comprehensive national development strategies, the United Nations also launched the 'Delivering as One' (DaO) initiative in eight pilot countries at the end of 2006. The pilots have helped to identify ways in which the UN family can deliver in a more integrated and coordinated manner at the country level. DaO has promoted joint programming based on joint analysis, joint thinking, and joint prioritization/planning. The approach of one programme, one budget, one leader and, as applicable, one office has also helped to ensure the inclusion of the experiences and expertise of all UN agencies, including non-resident agencies.<sup>1</sup>

12. A second round of stocktaking reports from the eight pilot countries, which are gathered in a synthesis report published in June 2009, will be of particular relevance at a time when the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) is focusing on facilitating the application of the lessons learned from the pilots in other countries, especially in over 90 countries which will be launching new UNDAF during the next three years.

### **Regional-level conference follow-up**

13. As a result of a vigorous policy of decentralisation the UN's regional hubs are making an increasingly important contribution to the follow-up of conferences. The United Nations regional commissions channel policy experiences and regional perspectives into headquarters policy discussions. Examples include the Dialogue of the Council with the Executive Secretaries of the regional commissions during the ECOSOC annual session and the Dialogue with the General Assembly Second Committee. In addition, the regional hubs of the UN funds and programmes and specialized agencies, through the Regional Directors Teams (RDTs), ensure that global guidance is translated in a coherent manner into country-level guidance. RDTs provide technical support to

Resident Coordinators (RCs) and UNCTs, and are also tasked with performance management of RCs and UNCTs and quality assurance of UNDAFs/UN programmes.

14. As activities at the regional level have increased, there is a more pressing need to coordinate regional efforts. Two key regional coordination structures operate: the Regional Coordination Mechanisms (RCM) of the regional commissions and the RDTs composed of Regional Directors of the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) and relevant senior managers with direct supervisory responsibilities for agency engagement at country level. The relationship between RCMs and RDTs and their contribution to work of UNDG has been recently discussed at the Chief Executives Board of Coordination. The RDTs will continue to provide a regional perspective to the work of UNDGs as far as the operational work is concerned. The RCM could provide a similar perspective to the HLCP from a policy perspective. The degree of cooperation between the RDTs and RCMs currently varies between regions. For instance in the Latin America and Caribbean region, the meeting of the RDTs and RCMs have been held back-to-back to facilitate cooperation.

#### **Inter-agency follow-up**

15. Efforts to promote integrated approaches at the county level and regional level are complemented by efforts at the global level to develop comprehensive UN system-wide responses to global challenges. Over the past years, the Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB), which brings together on a regular basis the executive heads of the organizations of the UN system under the chairmanship of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, has put particular emphasis on promoting horizontal and vertical coherence to enable the UN system to perform as one and to be more than the sum of its parts. This effort has been guided by its “One United Nations” report and the General Assembly’s triennial comprehensive policy review (TCP) of operational activities for development.<sup>2</sup>

16. The CEB is playing an important role in promoting horizontal coherence across the UN system. It is taking the lead in developing common strategies, policies, methodologies and tools to the challenges facing the UN system. Its work on the global food security crisis, climate change and its recent work on the global economic and financial crisis are examples of the United Nations efforts to deliver results by bringing the complementarities of the individual organizations to jointly addressing global challenges.<sup>3</sup> In response to the global economic and financial crisis, the CEB recently agreed on nine joint initiatives. Their objective is to assist countries and the global community to confront the multiple dimensions of the crisis, accelerate recovery and use the crisis as an opportunity to promote a fair and inclusive globalization.<sup>4</sup> CEB has also served as an umbrella for the development of several toolkits to mainstream crosscutting issues into the programmes and activities of organizations across

the system. The examples include employment and decent work, disaster risk reduction and the elimination of violence against women and girls.

17. UNDG plays a key role in promoting coherence by translating guidance of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council into actionable guidelines for UNCTs. With the support of the Development Operations Coordination Office (DOCO), it prepares system-wide guidelines to enhance coordination, harmonization and alignment of UN development activities at the country level with the outcomes of major UN conferences and summits. The integration of UNDG as a third pillar of the CEB next to the High-Level Committee on Programmes (HLCP) and the High-Level Committee on Management (HLCM) helps to promote vertical coherence between the policy, programme and operational aspects of the work of the UN system. The flow of information between the three CEB pillars is ensured through regular meetings of the Chairs as well as the respective Committee Secretariats.

18. The development-related work of CEB has been complemented by EC-ESA, which serves as a platform within the United Nations for strategic analysis and providing coherent advice to countries and the international community on economic and social issues. Through the work of its nine thematic clusters, which reflect key areas of the UN development agenda, EC-ESA has stimulated cooperation and helped to better draw upon the expertise of the centres of excellence in its various entities as well as forge stronger cooperation among the different UN regions. Recent examples include EC-ESA's central role in the preparations of the 2008 MDG High-level Event and its contribution to the formulation of a UN system-wide response to the world economic and financial crisis. The latter included the preparation of an EC-ESA strategic paper on the financial crisis. EC-ESA is also reviewing how it can best make a contribution to the integrated monitoring and analysis system as part of the above-mentioned nine UN System Joint Crisis Initiatives, adopted by the recent meeting of the CEB.

19. Progress has also been made in enhancing the programmatic coherence of the work of the UN funds and programmes and specialized agencies on the one hand and the BWIs on the other hand. This has been achieved through increased collaboration. At the global level, examples of such collaboration include the 'MDG gap task force' and the 'MDG Africa steering group'. Some of the agencies have also highly developed country- and regional-level collaboration, especially with the World Bank. To institutionalize the principles of collaboration, the United Nations and the World Bank are developing several partnership documents. One recent example is a Partnership Framework for Crisis and Post-Crisis Situations, signed in October 2008, which aims to reduce transaction costs for partner countries and increase the coherence and impact of assistance.

## **Intergovernmental-level follow-up**

20. At the intergovernmental level, the follow-up to the UN conferences and summits is subject to a three tiered review. In the first instance, the follow-up is reviewed by a functional commission or other intergovernmental body such as the Executive Boards of the Funds and Programmes and the governing bodies of the specialized agencies. The Economic and Social Council then considers and provides overall guidance and coordination. All conferences are subject to review, at the high policy level, by the General Assembly.

21. The ECOSOC functional commissions have been taking the lead in the follow-up of several of the major UN conferences and summits. To ensure coherence between the work of the different functional commissions, they have held joint bureau meetings and the chairpersons have participated in the sessions of other commissions. Moreover, the adoption of a multi-year programme of work in the context of the review of the working methods of the functional commissions has enabled the functional commissions to work more closely with each other by providing greater predictability.<sup>5</sup>

22. Cooperation between the functional commissions and the Council has also been enhanced. Since July 2002, the Bureau of the Council and the chairpersons of the functional commissions have met annually to exchange views on how the subsidiary machinery of the Council could contribute to the work of the Council and since 2007, the Bureau of the Council has met together with all of the chairpersons of the functional commissions to discuss how they can contribute from their perspective to the AMR and DCF. The ECOSOC President has also made it a regular practise to address the Council's subsidiary bodies.<sup>6</sup>

23. A particularly positive example is the close cooperation between ECOSOC and the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). In 2009, following its now well established practice, the Commission submitted a background paper on *"Gender perspectives on global public health: Implementing the internationally agreed development goals, including the MDG"* (E/CN.6/2009/13) to ECOSOC, which will serve as an input to the 2009 annual ministerial review. In addition, this year the Commission discussed the issue during an expert panel discussion. The Commission also considered *"The gender perspectives of the financial crisis"* as the emerging issue during an interactive expert panel discussion. The outcome of both expert panels is available in the form of a Chairperson's summary.

24. Less progress has been made in engaging the governing bodies of the UN funds and programmes and specialised agencies in the follow-up work of the Council. The substantive discussion during the Executive Boards has remained largely de-linked from the Council's conference follow-up work. This is mainly due to the agendas of the executive boards, including those of their joint

meetings, which are not necessarily focused on the issues upon which a policy dialogue with the Council could be conducted. Consequently, in their annual reports to ECOSOC the Executive Boards have not provided any substantive input or referred any policy issues to the Council or the General Assembly for decision and guidance, except for their reporting on the follow-up to the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review.

25. Similarly, progress in strengthening cooperation with the intergovernmental bodies of the UN specialised agencies has been limited. As separate, legally autonomous organisations, specialised agencies have their own governing structure. Yet, their governing bodies have responsibilities for the follow-up and monitoring of conferences. This is especially the case when they have been assigned a special role in the implementation of the major UN conferences. Closer cooperation between the governing bodies of the UN agencies and ECOSOC should hence be more strongly promoted. Recently, efforts have been made to promote dialogue among the heads of governing bodies during the coordination segment.

#### **B. Follow-up to the 2005 World Summit: Implementation of new functions of ECOSOC and the General Assembly specific meeting focused on development**

26. The review of the conference follow-up architecture shows that the Council has made much progress in putting into place vertical and horizontal linkages between the different entities involved in the conference follow-up. However, a major gap that remained, prior to 2005, was the absence of a common thematic focus around which the different conference follow-up mechanisms could rally. Neither the General Assembly nor the Economic and Social Council provided such substantive focus.

27. This gap was largely narrowed in 2005, when the World Summit Outcome mandated two new functions: the Annual Ministerial substantive Review and the biennial Development Cooperation Forum. In addition, in a subsequent resolution to follow-up on the development outcome of the 2005 World Summit, the General Assembly decided to hold a specific meeting focused on development during the annual debate on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration and the 2005 World Summit Outcome. This section illustrates how the new functions of the Council and the Assembly help to advance substantive integration by bringing Member States and the UN system together around specific aspects of the United Nations development agenda.

#### **Annual Ministerial substantive Review**

28. The Annual Ministerial Review (AMR) has proven to be a particularly effective vehicle to promote substantive coherence to the United Nations' conference follow-up work. By examining each year one selected cross-cutting

theme common to the UN conferences, the AMR has quickly established itself as a forum that helps crystallize the latest thinking and activities of Member States and the UN system on specific crosscutting themes common to the conferences and has opened new avenues for linking global, regional and national level follow-up.

29. By adopting its crosscutting focus well in advance, the Review has enabled the different actors tasked with the follow-up of the UN conferences at the national, regional, and global level to actively contribute to the deliberations of the Council from their own perspective. The resulting multifaceted treatment by the Council of key issues of the United Nations development agenda is unmatched both within the United Nations system and in other intergovernmental fora both in terms of the diversity and geographical scope of the actors involved in the process.

30. At the global level, the AMR has helped to make headway on bringing the views of a wide range of actors together. It has done so by drawing upon the expertise both of the intergovernmental bodies and the Secretariats of the relevant UN funds and programmes and specialized agencies during the preparatory process and the AMR itself. The AMR also incorporates the input of UN functional commissions, several of which have included a standing ECOSOC item in their agendas to contribute to the new functions of the Council.

31. The AMR also provides greater prominence to a regional perspective in global deliberations. In 2009, the Regional Commissions collaborated with UNDESA and WHO for holding five multistakeholder Regional Ministerial Meetings in preparation of the AMR. The South Asia Regional Meeting on *“Financing Strategies for Health Care”*, the Asia-Pacific Regional Ministerial Meeting on *“Promoting Health Literacy”*, the Western Asia Regional Ministerial Meeting on *“Preventing and Controlling Non-Communicable Diseases”*, the Latin America and Caribbean Regional Ministerial Meeting on *“HIV and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean”*, and the Africa Regional Ministerial Meeting on *“e-Health – Information and Communication Technology for Health”*.<sup>7</sup> These meetings highlighted issues which are of particular concern in the different regions. The active participation of Member States, the UN regional commissions and the regional offices of the UN funds and specialized agencies has helped to strengthen the link between country-level operations, regional activities and global-level discussions.

32. The AMR also promotes the adoption of integrated cross-sectoral approaches at the country level. In particular, for countries making presentations at the Council, the preparation of a national report has helped to bring the different ministries together around one table to identify key achievements and bottlenecks and to identify lessons learned and examples of best practices. The presentations provide a direct feedback loop of the country’s perspectives into

the work of the Council. They are unique opportunities for Ministers to discuss hands-on measures on how to translate global priorities into national policies or how they can learn from experiences of other countries and then contextualize these solutions for scaling-up implementation in their countries.

33. The AMR also promotes multistakeholder involvement in the conference follow-up work of the Council. An NGO forum is organized immediately prior to the Council's high-level segment and the results feed into the AMR session. At the AMR session itself, stakeholders can participate in high-level roundtables and the AMR innovation fair. Moreover, there are many opportunities for stakeholders to get involved in the preparatory processes of the AMR. This includes an E-discussion, a philanthropy event, as well as the national and regional preparatory meetings.

34. Taken together, these different elements of the AMR have strengthened ECOSOC's capacity to provide thematic coherence to the follow-up of conferences. To date, the input from a wide range of actors has ensured that the ECOSOC Ministerial Declarations on AMR themes have adopted a comprehensive multi-sectoral approach. They have hence provided helpful guidance, around which the CEB can develop UN system-wide approaches that bring to bear the complementarities and comparative advantages of the different UN system entities. The review of the implementation of the ECOSOC Ministerial Declaration at the coordination segment of the subsequent annual session provides an additional opportunity for the Council to give further guidance to the UN systems on the operationalisation of the Declaration.

### **Biennial Development Cooperation Forum**

35. Another step forward in the integrated follow-up is the newly established biennial Development Cooperation Forum (DCF). It (a) reviews trends and progress in international development cooperation; (b) identifies gaps and obstacles with a view to make recommendations on practical measures and policy options to enhance coherence and effectiveness and to promote development cooperation for the realization of the internationally agreed development goals (IADGs), including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs); (c) provides a platform for Member States to exchange lessons learned and share experiences; and (d) in accordance with the Rules of Procedure, should be open to participation by all stakeholders.<sup>8</sup>

36. The first Forum in 2008 established the DCF as a focal point within the United Nations for holistic consideration of development cooperation with a balance and multi-stakeholder participation. Policy coherence, aid commitments and allocation, the aid effectiveness agenda, country-level capacities and development strategies to South-South cooperation were issues which figured most prominently in the discussions. Building on the outcomes of the 2008 Forum, the 2008 Accra Agenda for Action and the 2008 International

Conference on Financing for Development, the 2010 Forum will focus on the issue of aid policy coherence with a view to moving from aid to more long-term sources of financing, mutual accountability and aid transparency in development cooperation, and South-South and triangular cooperation.

37. By bringing together actors from diverse backgrounds, the DCF has a particular edge in advancing the integrated and coordinated follow-up of conferences. Through its work it can help identify ways of promoting greater policy coherence across different **development cooperation** policy areas. This point was also recognized at the Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development<sup>9</sup> held on 29 November – 2 December 2008, which in its outcome document acknowledged the role of the DCF as focal point within the United Nations system for holistic consideration of development cooperation. At its 2010 session, the DCF will have an opportunity to make a significant contribution on how to ensure greater aid policy coherence to help countries move from aid to long-term sources of development financing.

38. Another major contribution which the DCF can make to the conference follow-up is to help emerging donors to get involved in a more systematic manner in advancing implementation of conference outcomes. The 2010 Forum will have South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation as one of its focus areas. Making headway on this issue is becoming increasingly important at a time when Southern donors are playing a more prominent role in advancing the United Nations development agenda.

39. With its inclusive participation, broad ownership and interactive discussions, the DCF has provided important new avenues to more systematically draw upon the diverse expertise of a wide range of stakeholders whose important role in advancing the integrated follow-up of conferences is widely recognized. This was also a clear message both of the Rome DCF Stakeholder Forum on “*The role of national and local stakeholders in contributing to aid quality and effectiveness*”, held in June 2008 in Rome, Italy and of the Accra Agenda for Action (AAA) adopted at the Third High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, 2-4 September 2008. The 2010 Forum will build on the partnerships which the DCF has established with civil society, parliaments, local governments and the private sector.

40. While the DCF has not yet addressed this issue in depth, its mandate to strengthen the link between the normative and the operational work of the UN system is an opportunity for the Forum to tighten the focus of the United Nations development cooperation on the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. This could be an important contribution to the next comprehensive policy review of operational activities in 2012.

### **Specific meeting focused on development of the General Assembly**

41. Since 2006, the General Assembly has held a specific meeting focused on development in the form of a general debate of the General Assembly plenary. General Assembly resolution 60/265 mandated that the meeting be held during the debate on the follow-up to the Millennium Declaration and the 2005 World Summit Outcome and should include an assessment of progress over the previous year. No official documentation was prepared for the meetings and there was no formal outcome.

42. During the past three years, the debate, held in the month of December, covered a range of issues such as the state of progress towards MDGs and other IADGs, the world economic and financial situation, climate change and its impact on economic and social development, peace and security, and the role of the General Assembly and ECOSOC in facilitating development. In 2007, the General Assembly held an informal interactive panel discussion just prior to the meeting, which informed the delegations on current trends and their impacts on development efforts. The panel discussion engaged the delegations actively and enriched the deliberations in the pursuing meeting on development.

43. Several of the above mentioned issues which were addressed during the development meeting are, however, also addressed in a series of other development-related meetings of the General Assembly plenary. For example, during the current session, development-related events included the high-level meeting on the Millennium Development Goals, the high-level meeting on Africa's development needs, the high-level plenary meeting devoted to the mid-term review of the Almaty Programme of Action, the Follow-Up to the International Conference on Financing for Development to review the implementation of the Monterey Consensus and the upcoming conference at the Highest Level on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and Its Impact on Development. There were also interactive panel discussions on the Global Financial Crisis, the World Financial and Economic Crisis and its impact of development, the Global Food Crisis and the Right to Food, Access to education in emergency and post-crisis and transition situations, caused by man-made conflicts of natural disaster, and on Taking Collective Action to End Human Trafficking.

44. Given the multitude of all the development-related meetings organized by the General Assembly plenary and its relevant Committees, the impact of the special development meeting has been limited. Delegations might therefore want to consider whether a specific meeting focused on development should be organized during years when there are no high-level events focused on development.

45. As pointed out by Member States during past meetings, the development meeting could set the scene for the development work of the General Assembly. Member States could use the meeting to draw attention to major new developments that could impact the achievement of the IADGs, including the MDGs, and make suggestions on how the General Assembly and its relevant Committees should respond. If the meeting is to set the scene for the development work of the General Assembly during any given session, delegations might want to consider holding the meeting on development during the opening of the session rather than towards the end of it. On the other hand, if the meeting continues to be organized towards the end of the session, the meeting could be used to take the stock of deliberations during the session and guide all the stakeholders to implement what have been agreed upon during the ongoing session. In the latter case, the expected outcome in the form of a Presidential summary will weigh as a guiding document for all the development partners.

46. Moving forward, delegations might also want to review the format of the meeting. In the past, following the rule of procedure of the General Assembly, the meeting has taken the form of a plenary debate. Given the positive response of delegations to the interactive panel discussions which have been organized in several occasions, and more specifically in 2007 for the development meeting, delegations might want to consider recommending a more interactive format for the development meeting itself.

### **III. Implications for the periodicity of the report of the Secretary-General on the integrated implementation of and follow-up to major UN conferences**

#### **A. Objective and value-added of future reports of the Secretary-General**

47. In ECOSOC resolution 2008/29, delegations requested the Secretary-General to make recommendations on the periodicity of the report on “*The role of the Economic and Social Council in the integrated and coordinated implementation of the outcomes of and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits*” with a view to further enhancing its effectiveness. Such a review seems timely, given that the current reporting arrangement was mandated before the conception and launch of the new functions of ECOSOC.<sup>10</sup> It hence seems worthwhile to review whether a different reporting arrangement could better help advance the integrated follow-up of conferences.

48. Past reports of the Secretary-General, as mandated, have reviewed the contribution of the entire follow-up architecture established by General Assembly resolutions 50/227, 52/12b, 57/270b, 60/265 and 61/16 to the integrated follow-up of conferences. Given the broad scope of the resolutions, it has proven difficult to provide both a comprehensive assessment of the progress made in promoting architectural as well as thematic coherence. As most of the resolutions’ provisions relating to the follow-up architecture have been

implemented, it is suggested that future reports of the Secretary-General put their main emphasis on substantive coherence.

49. The main value added of future reports of the Secretary-General on integrated follow-up of conferences could be to provide a better understanding of the progress which countries have made to date in implementing the integrated and coordinated follow-up of conferences. The reports should give an overview of how the different parts of the UN follow-up architecture, both on the UN system and the intergovernmental side, have contributed to the integrated and coordinated implementation of the outcomes of the UN conferences and summits. For developed countries, the report could provide an overview of the policies and measures they adopted to promote the integrated follow-up of conferences. For developing countries, the report could focus on the progress they have made in advancing the outcomes of the UN conferences in an integrated way, in particular through the implementation of comprehensive national strategies to achieve the IADGs, including the MDGs, and the support provided by the international community.

50. The United Nations development agenda (UNDA) could provide a framework for analysis of a future report. To keep the report focused, it is proposed that the report could draw upon the experiences of the countries which made National Voluntary Presentations. It could for instance focus on the progress made in advancing the integrated follow-up of conferences on the UN development agenda themes taken up by the AMR. This would ensure that over time there would be a comprehensive coverage of the substantive themes.

51. It should be noted here that while the proposed report on the integrated follow-up and the Report of the Secretary-General on the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR) of operational activities would both examine the linkages between normative guidance and country-level activities, their focus and the scope would be very different. While the focus in the QCPR would largely be on how to enhance the effectiveness of UN system country-level operations, under national ownership and leadership, the integrated follow-up process takes the country-owned development strategies as a starting point for its analysis. The latter assesses from a policy perspective how countries have made progress in advancing the integrated follow-up of conference by promoting comprehensive strategies at the various levels and how the UN system has helped in promoting such an integrated approach.

## **B. Periodicity of future reporting of the Secretary-General**

52. Given the possible synergies between the QCPR and the integrated follow-up report, it is proposed that a report of the Secretary-General should be prepared every four years, a year before the report of the Secretary-General on the QCPR and the subsequent adoption of the new strategic documents of the United Nations Funds and Programmes and specialized agencies.

53. Preparing the integrated follow-up report prior to the QCPR report has several advantages. Firstly, such timing would provide the Council and the Assembly with an overview of the progress which has been made on promoting policy coherence in the implementation of the United Nations development agenda before providing new operational guidance to the UN system during the QCPR. Secondly, preparing such a report in connection with the QCPR would help to limit the additional reporting burden, as the Secretary-General will be able to draw upon the assessment of the report on the integrated follow-up of conferences in preparation for the QCPR. The report would also provide useful guidance to the UN funds and programmes and specialized agencies as they are entering a new four-year planning cycle.

#### **IV. Recommendations**

54. **Based on the above, the delegations might wish to consider requesting the Secretary-General to prepare a quadrennial report on the integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the major United Nations conferences and summits and to submit its first joint report at the 2015 Substantive Session of the Economic and Social Council and the Seventieth session of the General Assembly.**

**It is proposed that such a report should:**

- **Be prepared a year prior to the report of the Secretary-General for the 2016 Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, and every four years thereafter;**
- **Assess the progress made by countries, both developing and developed, in the integrated and coordinated implementation of the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits;**
- **Enable the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council to determine the areas where additional intergovernmental oversight and guidance is most needed to advance the integrated follow-up of conferences;**
- **From a policy perspective, assess how the individual conference follow-up mechanisms have contributed to the integrated and coordinated follow-up of conferences;**
- **Assess the effectiveness of the UN system in providing holistic policy advice in support of national policies or if applicable comprehensive national development strategies aimed at meeting the IADGs, including the MDGs;**

- **Focus on case studies of a few developing and developed countries and a different subset of the United Nations development agenda (UNDA) themes each time, ensuring that all the themes would be covered over time;**
- **Build upon relevant ongoing reporting by Member States and the UN system and, whenever possible, make use of impact evaluation tools and case studies from within the UN system;**

## Endnotes

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<sup>1</sup> To involve non-resident agencies in the common country programming, UNDG implemented the ‘Non-Resident Agencies Action Plan.

<sup>2</sup> One United Nations: *Catalyst for Progress and Change – How the Millennium Declaration is changing the UN system works*, Chief Executives Board, 2005

<sup>3</sup> CEB/2008/2

<sup>4</sup> The nine initiative will focus on: Additional financing for the most vulnerable Lead agencies: World Bank and UNDP, Food Security: (Ongoing High-Level Task Force, lead agencies: FAO, UN, WFP, IFAD), Trade: (Lead agencies: WTO and UNCTAD) A Green Economy Initiative. (Ongoing initiative, Lead agency: UNEP), A Global Jobs Pact: (Lead agency: ILO), A Social Protection Floor: (Lead agencies: WHO and ILO), Humanitarian, Security and Social Stability: (Lead agency: WFP), Technology and Innovation: (Lead agencies: WIPO, UNIDO and ITU), Monitoring and Analysis: (Lead agency: UN/UNDESA) CEB Annual Report

<sup>5</sup> ECOSOC Resolution 2007/29

<sup>6</sup> In 2009, the ECOSOC President addressed, inter alia, the Commission on Population and Development, the Commission on the Status of Women, the Committee of Experts on Public Administration, The Committee for Development Policy and the Commission on Sustainable Development.

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.un.org/ecosoc/newfunct/amrregional2009.shtml>

<sup>8</sup> A/Res/61/16

<sup>9</sup> Doha Declaration on Financing for Development para. 89, A/CONF.212/L.1/Rev.1

<sup>10</sup> Paragraph 39 of General Assembly resolution 57/270B, established the agenda item to be taken up annually to consider the assessment of the implementation of the conference outcomes and to consider the relevant chapters of the annual report of the Council.