



**Report of the High-Level Committee on Programmes (HLCP)
at its Seventeenth Session
(Geneva, Switzerland, 26-27 February 2009)**

I. Introduction

1. The High-level Committee on Programmes (HLCP) of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) held its seventeenth session in Geneva, Switzerland on 26-27 February 2009. The agenda of the meeting and the list of participants are attached, respectively, in *Annexes I* and *II* to the present report.
2. In his opening remarks, the newly-appointed HLCP Chairman, the Director General of ILO, Mr. Juan Somavia, welcomed the opportunity to lead the Committee towards greater policy coherence and results that would impact positively on the lives of people whom the UN system served. He paid tribute to his predecessor, Mr. Lennart Båge, the outgoing President of IFAD, and drew attention to the relevance of the products that HLCP had delivered during Mr. Båge's tenure, such as the "One United Nations" report and the CEB Toolkit for Mainstreaming Employment and Decent Work.
3. Mr. Somavia noted that the policy and institutional vacuums in which the global financial and economic crisis was unfolding presented an enormous opportunity for the UN system working through CEB/HLCP to make an important contribution to the international community. As HLCP operated in the policy field, the policy gap in tackling the crisis provided an opportunity for the Committee to regenerate an approach towards greater coherence. The Committee could also play an important role in addressing the institutional requirements, by helping to put together a global vision, with a linkage to what needed to be done within the United Nations system.

IV), and with respect to the two-track approach delineated in para 41 above. On the broader vision in particular, the Chairman noted convergence between the discussions on climate change and the financial crisis, within the context of fair and inclusive globalization and sustainable development.

V. Second UN Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2008-2017)

45. The representative of ILO introduced the note by ILO and UN-DESA (CEB/2009/HLCP-XVII/CRP.4), referring to General Assembly resolution 63/230 on the Second UN Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2008-2017), which set “full employment and decent work for all” as a theme for the Decade. She recalled the important work that the Committee had already achieved in promoting policy coherence in this area through the development of the CEB Toolkit for Mainstreaming Employment and Decent Work and noted that work which would be undertaken in the context of the earlier crisis discussion would also inform outcomes undertaken under this agenda item. The representative of UN-DESA underscored the contribution that full employment and decent work for all could make to the eradication of poverty. HLCP as the principal body for system-wide coordination in the programme area provided a well-established forum to support the coherent development and implementation of an effective programme of action to ensure measurable results.
46. The note contained a proposal for HLCP to develop a coordinated, substantive and coherent system-wide plan of action for poverty eradication on full employment and decent work, which met with wide support from the Committee. To facilitate this process, it was suggested that HLCP establish a time-bound cluster group of some five to seven members. Given the broad expression of interest by organizations to participate in this group, it was recommended to maintain as broad and inclusive representation as possible.
47. **HLCP agreed to establish a time-bound cluster group of Committee members, co-led by UN-DESA and the ILO, to prepare a draft action plan for review at the next HLCP meeting.**

VI. The UN System’s Contribution to ECOSOC

48. The representative of UN-DESA introduced a note on the engagement of the UN system in the work of the coordination segment of ECOSOC (CEB/2009/HLCP-XVII/CRP.5), underscoring that the changes that ECOSOC had undergone as outlined in the 2005 World Summit Outcome and in General Assembly resolution 61/16 provided a unique opportunity for CEB members to reinvigorate their engagement with the Council. He wished to build upon the discussion that HLCP had at its thirteenth session, in which the need to define approaches and develop modalities to engage UN system agencies in a real dialogue with the Council was stressed. In this regard, he drew attention to the central role of the coordination segment as the main forum for a meaningful dialogue between