

**Informal Consultations on System-wide Coherence  
in the United Nations General Assembly  
Friday, 28 March, 2008-03-28**

**Closing Remarks of the Co-chairs  
delivered by H.E. Ambassador Paul Kavanagh of Ireland**

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, let me on my own behalf and that of my colleague and friend Ambassador Mahiga of Tanzania, thank you for all of the contributions which have been made in the course of today's consultation.

The Co-Chairs appreciate very much the trouble taken by the Deputy Secretary-General, by the representatives of those countries which are implementing at home the 'Delivering as One' approach and by other participants. I believe that we have all learned a lot from the proceedings.

Today we have, I believe, registered with the General Assembly in New York something of the substantial and increasing momentum that is so evident in a diverse range of developing countries, as the 'Delivering as One' approach moves strongly now from the conceptual, or design phase to that of implementation.

Today's exchanges have also brought more audibly into the Assembly's halls the great seriousness, practicality and urgency which these developing countries attach to the process underway at country level. We congratulate Mozambique as the latest country to have signed a UN One Country Programme that will align UN Country Team activities much more closely to national development policies, programmes and priorities.

The Co-Chairs observe that the 'Delivering as One' process is clearly proceeding in a positive direction and believe that it needs to be encouraged and empowered. Country after country among those which are applying the approach have made this clear today.

It must surely now be recognised that the principle of "No One Size Fits All" is in fact being observed, since – in the view of the developing countries concerned – the "Delivering as One" approach is being calibrated and tailored to meet the unique (and widely diverse) situations, policies, programmes and priorities of these countries. By their own testimony, it is they who are exercising national ownership and leadership in the process. They are not experiencing any new "conditionalities" arising from the "Delivering as One" approach. It is to be hoped that these very positive messages are being widely heard.

At the same time, not least the countries concerned have stated that a number of challenges remain and that some aspects of the “Delivering as One” approach will only become fully clear with the passage of more time.

These challenges include funding gaps. A significant number of concerned States have highlighted this aspect. Many have also underlined the need for various Headquarters levels to “catch up with” the progress being made at country level.

Headquarters across the System need to empower and encourage their regional and country level representatives more widely to show even greater commitment to advancing the ‘Delivering as One’ approach, so that the UN System may become a much more effective partner. The way needs to be cleared for the “ploughing back” into programmatic development work of administrative savings realised in the ‘Delivering as One’ process. There is a consensus in the Assembly behind such ploughing back and Agencies, Funds and Programmes should take the necessary action, or where required seek the necessary authority, to do so. Greater clarity is needed regarding the effective design and operation of an empowered Resident Coordinator function at the head of an empowered, united and willing Country Team. Several interventions today highlighted the need for clarity in due course on the evolution of monitoring and evaluation indicators for the new process. We have heard all along about the desire of developing country governments to act more often as executing

agents in respect of UN System activities in their country. Today, we also heard appeals that co-ordinating arms of national administrations ought to be strengthened through assistance from UN Country Teams. This is not necessarily an exhaustive list of remaining challenges.

An important dimension of 'Delivering as One' and of a more effective UN Development System will be further illuminated when the Secretary-General's senior colleagues from the System join us here in this forum in early May to brief us on the progress that they are achieving, within their own competencies, in Harmonising Business Practices. We noted carefully the Deputy Secretary-General's point that there is an urgent need to achieve early progress in implementing agreed steps. The Co-Chairs share the opinion that while far-reaching harmonisation will not be achieved overnight, concrete steps should be implemented quickly where feasible. Such steps will show more clearly the commitment of the Secretary-General and his colleagues in this area.

In all of this, the Co-Chairs are very conscious of the fact that a full, independent evaluation of the 'Delivering as One' process will come only in the latter part of 2009. It is the Assembly that will receive this evaluation through the hands of the Secretary-General, before taking any definitive position of its own. Indeed, the Co-Chairs have repeatedly highlighted this scenario. Accordingly, whatever the General Assembly may

state in regard to 'Delivering as One' in 2008 will, by definition, be *interim* in nature. Nonetheless, your Co-Chairs believe that the General Assembly ought to speak in clear terms to this issue during its current, 62nd Session.

We have heard clearly the various statements today as regards procedure and process relating to how we as Co-Chairs might conduct and conclude our mandate. We have been greatly reassured through our meetings in recent days with the leadership of various Regional and Co-ordination groups that these parties are keen to ensure that the Co-Chairs enjoy a wide latitude and flexibility, consistent with the open, transparent, inclusive and balanced approach which we will continue to take. Ambassador Mahiga and I are grateful for the confidence and trust that has been placed in us and in our two countries. We will continue to work to vindicate that trust.

Our next open consultation will concern the over-arching issue of *Funding* and will take place on 7 April. We have repeatedly heard – most recently today from those developing countries which are leading the way in promoting a more coherent, efficient and effective United Nations System – about the need for adequacy, predictability and timeliness of funding. We will be particularly attentive to the positions of the development partners in this regard on 7 April. Then, on 17 April, we will turn to the over-arching issue of *Governance*.

Finally, we will come before long to the issue of Gender. The Co-Chairs refuse to believe that there can be any part of the UN membership that does not attach high importance to Gender Equality and Womens' Empowerment – and we will focus a strong effort in the latter months of our mandate on promoting a meeting of minds among the membership on this issue. In this matter we will maintain fully our approach of seeking, in a transparent and fair manner, to enlarge the measure of agreement in the Assembly. In the meantime, we would continue to encourage concerned parties to explore informally - and in a discrete manner likely to build bridges - the scope for building consensus.

Once again, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, the Co-Chairs thank you for your participation.

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