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Statement by  
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*Introduction of report of the Secretary-General on the integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the major UN conferences and summits*

Mr. Vice-President,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished delegates:

It is a great pleasure for me to introduce the report of the Secretary-General on the integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the major UN conferences and summits.

The UN Conferences and Summits have established a broad and detailed platform for action, to which we refer, in shorthand, as the UN Development Agenda. Establishing the various components of this agenda seemed the less difficult part. We now have a set of common goals and targets. But it seems more difficult to move into a stage of robust implementation. To help us make this transition from commitment to action over the last twenty years, we have established a framework for the integrated follow-up of conferences.

When establishing the integrated follow-up framework, our focus has been on two main issues: architectural coherence and substantive coherence. Architectural coherence refers to the effort to fit the diversity of the different follow-up tracks into a meaningful whole. Substantive coherence refers to the promotion of holistic approaches, which takes into account the strong links between the different development goals. Both elements are needed to translate conference outcomes into concrete action.

The report before you documents the significant progress that we have made in advancing these two dimensions of coherence. Given the evolution of the integrated follow-up of conferences, you posed the following question during last year's ECOSOC: What kind of periodicity would render the conference follow-up report most effective?

Ladies and Gentleman,

After considering several options, regarding the periodicity, we are proposing that in order to ensure the largest impact, the report should be prepared on a quadrennial basis rather

than annually. The timing of such a report would be one year prior to the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities. We also propose that the report should have a greater focus on substantive coherence and take the United Nations development agenda as a framework for analysis. Please allow me to briefly address the reasoning behind these recommendations.

Does this mean that an annual report is no longer needed? When the annual reports were initially requested, they were mainly meant to monitor the progress made in setting up an architecture for conference follow-up. With the institutional framework now largely in place, this function of the report has become less essential. In addition, the Annual Ministerial Review has taken on part of the monitoring role through its annual review on the implementation of the United Nations development agenda.

What would be the advantage of a quadrennial report issued one year prior to the quadrennial comprehensive policy review (QCPR) of operational activities?

Firstly, such a report would give the Council and the Assembly an overview of the progress that we have made in promoting policy coherence in the implementation of the United Nations development agenda. This will enable Member States to provide new guidance to us on our operational activities. In this fashion, the operational activities would be more supportive of your efforts to implement the United Nations development agenda.

Secondly, preparing the report one year prior to the QCPR would help limit the additional reporting burden and would allow us to draw upon the assessment of the report on the integrated follow-up of conferences in preparation for the QCPR. Moreover, we feel that 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.

What would such a quadrennial report then look like? We feel that while future reports should continue to focus both on architectural and substantive coherence, greater attention to substantive coherence could help to increase their impact. To ensure that the report adds value, it will be important that it remains focused and provides concrete examples.

We therefore propose that future reports could focus on the progress made in advancing the integrated follow-up of conferences on the UN development agenda themes taken up by the Annual Ministerial Review. We also suggest that the report could draw upon the experiences of the countries which made National Voluntary Presentations. This would help to provide a direct link between the global discussions and national level operations.

Ladies and Gentleman,

I hope sharing some of our thinking underlying our recommendations for the preparation of future reports on the integrated and coordinated follow-up is helpful as you embark on discussions on this issue.

Thank you.