



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

# Involving National Commissions for UNESCO in United Nations Common Country Programming

Sector for External Relations and Cooperation  
and  
Bureau of Strategic Planning



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Bureau of Strategic Planning**

## **UNESCO**

National Commissions Section

7 place de Fontenoy,

75352 Paris 07 SP, France

Tel.: +33 (0)1 45 68 15 52

Fax: +33 (0)1 45 68 55 40

e-mail: [natcom@unesco.org](mailto:natcom@unesco.org)

<http://www.unesco.org/en/national-commissions>

Bureau of Strategic Planning

7 place de Fontenoy,

75352 Paris 07 SP, France

Tel.: +33 (0)1 45 68 13 70

Fax: +33 (0)1 45 68 55 21

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# Foreword

While the quest for UN reform has been on the international agenda for decades, it has arguably reached in the last few years an unprecedented level of urgency, being pursued at the highest levels of government and seen as a once-in-a-generation necessity. The UN reform agenda around “Delivering as One”, aims at coherence, efficiency and high-quality delivery in pursuit of national development priorities and has shaped action at the global, regional and in particular the country level. This has major impact and consequences for the United Nations system at large, including for UNESCO.

After almost two years of implementing eight “Delivering as One” pilot countries, and as part of a broad reform agenda, important innovations have been launched in the way the United Nations system works together at country level and assists in the attainment of declared national priorities on the one hand and of a range of internationally agreed development goals on the other hand, in particular through One Programmes/UNDAFs associated with a One Budgetary Framework, and carried out by a unified UN country team headed by an empowered Resident Coordinator. Overall, the experience in the pilot countries has promoted an increased sense of collaboration and coordination. It has also inspired the conduct of joint programmes and joint resource mobilization.

It is in the context of this new-found culture of coordination and partnership, within the United Nations family as well as national and other bilateral partners, that National Commissions for UNESCO can play an ever more important role. In the consultative process of formulating and implementing a common UN programme and strategy in the form of a Common Country Assessment (CCA) and a United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), they have the potential of contributing – through, and in close coordination with, the UNESCO Director/ Head of Field Office – to national development priorities and international goals in UNESCO’s areas of competence.

Active participation of National Commissions will furthermore be bolstered by the recently concluded strategic partnership agreement between UNESCO and UNDP, which entails a specific provision stating that “[t]he RC/ Resident Representative (RR) may invite a UNESCO national commission member(s) to attend certain UNCT meetings, especially in countries where UNESCO is a non-resident agency (NRA) when relevant programming issues are being discussed and commission participation is deemed useful” (Article III.2) – representing nothing short of a sea change in terms of the possibility of access for National Commissions to UN Country Team dealings.

UNESCO is the only UN organization having a network of National Commissions in its Member States. National Commissions act as bodies of coordination and programme implementation, reflecting the participatory approach of the Organization as laid down in its Constitution. They allow the creation of substantive and synergistic linkages between a government, civil society, academia and other communities in UNESCO’s domains. They also help to mobilize expertise at the local

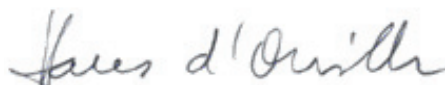
and national levels and to enhance awareness and visibility of UNESCO. National Commissions are dynamic actors and repositories of knowledge, expertise and information and thus valuable resources for UNESCO and its Member States.

The specific added value, opportunities, challenges, and the various modalities of engagement for National Commissions will be examined more closely in the articles assembled in this publication entitled *“Involving National Commissions for UNESCO in United Nations Common Country Programming”*, which for the first time in a UNESCO publication highlights both the potential role and value as well as the challenges and complications of National Commissions involvement in common country programming processes. We trust that this publication will inspire future progress in this area and will also enhance coordinated action by the National Commission, UNESCO field representatives and UN country team members. To that end, every partner has to make special efforts. It will not happen by merely invoking the agreed working arrangements, such as in the recent path-breaking Memorandum of Understanding between UNESCO and UNDP.

To prepare National Commissions for these tasks, regular capacity-building exercises and training as well as exchange of experience will be key. The November 2008 workshop, organized by ERC and BSP in Hanoi for National Commissions in “delivering as one countries” and in UNDAF roll-out countries as well as the Directors/Heads of UNESCO field offices assigned to these countries has set a valuable example of strengthening mutual understanding and launching a new type of understanding that could be emulated on a regular basis.



Ahmed Sayyad  
Assistant Director-General for  
External Relations and Cooperation



Hans d'Orville  
Assistant Director-General for  
Strategic Planning

# Towards an effective contribution of National Commissions for UNESCO to UN common country programming

Xiaolin Cheng

Chief of the National Commissions Section  
Sector for External Relations and Cooperation

## INTRODUCTION

Following the Report of the UN Secretary-General's High-level Panel on System-wide Coherence, the initiative of "Delivering as One" UN<sup>1</sup> was launched, in January 2007, in eight pilot countries (Albania, Cape Verde, Mozambique, Pakistan, Rwanda, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay and Viet Nam). As part of the process, the governments of the selected countries are working together with the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) in the preparation and production of the new generation of United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) documents covering various domains and activities of the UN at the country level. In parallel to the eight pilots, nearly one hundred other countries have been also engaged in the common country programming processes, in order to revise and produce new UNDAF documents.

UNESCO is also a part of this on-going reform initiative, endeavoring to contribute actively to its success both globally within the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) and at the country level. For that purpose, the Organization is exploring the optimal modalities of employing its special resources and long-standing networks. The National Commissions for UNESCO emerge, in this context, as key actors which offer added value for the Organization. The unique outreach capacity of National Commissions and their valuable expertise may indeed provide UNESCO with an important comparative advantage in the common country programming process.

Therefore, a broad range of consultations and discussions have been carried out during the current 2008-2009 biennium, in order to define the possible roles of National Commissions in country-level approaches and to elaborate various modalities of their positioning. This paper contains the summaries and syntheses of the different meetings, discussions and concrete actions, reflecting the evolution of joint reflections made and practical steps taken on this important subject. Further discussions and actions are still needed to sustain these developments and ensure future progress.

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1 "Delivering as One" implies to join all UN related activities under One Plan, One Fund, One Leader and One Office, where appropriate.

# I. STEPS TAKEN TO IDENTIFY POSSIBLE ROLES OF NATIONAL COMMISSIONS IN COMMON COUNTRY-LEVEL PROGRAMMING

## A. Discussions at the Decentralization Review Task Force: what role for National Commissions and what are the conditions for their participation

UNESCO's Decentralization Review Task Force (DRTF) was established in December 2006 by the Director-General with a view to readjusting the decentralization policy in the context of the UN Delivering as One reform process. It is chaired by the Deputy Director-General and composed of senior managers (Sector ADGs and central service Directors) at Headquarters and several Field Office Directors. One of the objectives of the DRTF is to examine the positioning of National Commissions and national partners in country level approaches. Therefore, the Task Force held a special session on this subject at its meeting in February 2008. The representatives of National Commissions of Flanders (Belgium), Germany, Spain, Swaziland and Viet Nam took part in the discussions, which were rich and instructive. As an outcome, the following roles were identified for National Commissions in the "Delivering as One" process.

### ▶ In countries benefiting from joint UN country programmes, National Commissions can

- Act as sources of information;
- Advise UNESCO Field Offices on country priorities;
- Assist UNESCO Field Offices in organizing consultations with line Ministries;
- Advocate for UNESCO within Government focal points and Ministries;
- Directly participate in UN joint mechanisms, wherever possible and agreed upon by UN Resident Coordinators (UNRC);
- Participate in joint national monitoring mechanisms called upon by governments;
- Liaise and network with a broader UNESCO family and other national partners;
- Implement programmes within joint UN programmes;
- Consider the alignment of the Participation Programme requests with UNESCO priorities under country plans;
- Disseminate UNESCO's role and activities.



► **In countries not benefiting from joint UN country programmes (mostly developed countries), National Commissions can**

- Advocate for UNESCO;
- Raise the visibility of UNESCO;
- Ensure Ministries' knowledge of UNESCO;
- Implement programmes, in-country, and in collaboration with other National Commissions to enhance North-South, South-South and North-South-South cooperation among the Commissions;
- Liaise and network with a broader UNESCO family and other national partners;
- Assist in mobilizing resources for the Organization.

The meeting also proposed the following set of **measures to be taken to create adequate conditions** allowing the Commissions to assume the above-mentioned roles:

- Strengthen National Commissions' capacities relating to UNDAF issues through training and the exchange of information;
- Work out (together with Field Offices participating in the Delivering as One UN) a specific approach to involve National Commissions in UNCT activities;
- Convince UN Resident Coordinators to accept National Commissions' participation in technical aspects of UNCT-UNESCO cooperation, where appropriate;
- In consultation with Member States, advocate strongly for National Commissions' joining UNCT technical groups;
- Design clear Terms of Reference for National Commissions' participation in UNCT activities;
- Involve systematically National Commissions in UNESCO's communication plan;
- Promote networking of and partnerships among National Commissions;
- Review cooperation between UNESCO and National Commissions in developed countries to build a strategy to refine their roles in the decentralization process.

The DRTF held another session in January 2009 in order to finalize its consideration on the positioning of National Commissions and national partners in country level programming. Prior to this discussion, an informal meeting of National Commissions from developed and well-resourced countries was organized on this issue and proposals were made. As an outcome of those deliberations, the following recommendations were made to strengthen the effective contribution of National Commissions to a decentralized UNESCO and to UN country-level programming:

- National Commissions should respond to basic management standards so as to be well structured and endowed with sufficient human and financial resources;
- National Commissions should not, through their attachment to a particular Ministry, be limited to work exclusively in one of the Organization's major programmes;

- Given the complexity and technical nature of the UNDAF process, information and training of National Commissions on the related aspects are more than ever needed;
- A new and strong partnership has to be built between UNESCO field offices and National Commissions in the context of the UN Delivering as One reform;
- Partners of UNESCO, notably UNCT members in each country have to be better informed on UNESCO's specificities, including the added value and expertise of National Commissions;
- National Commissions should be associated to the UNDAF process in a pragmatic and flexible way, taking into account the expertise of individual Commissions and their access to relevant national stakeholders, to avoid a "one size fits all" approach;
- National Commissions from developed countries should nurture closer links with ministries in their country dealing with Official Development Assistance (ODA) and advocate "UNESCO's topics" within their National Development Plans.

## **B. Consideration by the Executive Board: endorsement of National Commissions' involvement**

The Executive Board examined, at its 179th session (April 2008), the "Report by the Director-General on UNESCO and the United Nations reform, in particular efforts and challenges with respect to UN system-wide coherence" (Document 179 EX/42). In addition to providing updated information about the "Delivering as One" reform development and UNESCO's participation in that process, the report highlighted certain issues and challenges to be addressed by UNESCO. Among them was the role of National Commissions in common country-level programming exercises.

The Director-General's report emphasized that National Commissions could bring a first-hand, country-rooted UNESCO perspective to the UNCT discussions, especially in countries where UNESCO is non-resident. Furthermore, efforts should be continued to include representatives of National Commissions in government teams in the framework of "Delivering as One" steering or coordination committees. The Executive Board fully endorsed this approach and adopted a decision (179 EX/Decision 42), *"encouraging Member States in the spirit of inclusiveness to include the representatives of the National Commissions on government teams, as appropriate, in the process of country-level programming exercises in the United Nations system"*.

The Executive Board further examined the cooperation between civil society and UNCTs at its 180th session (October 2008) and adopted a decision (180 EX/Decision 41) which, among others,

- Encourages UNESCO to follow up the ongoing process of United Nations system-wide reform, with a view to continuing to facilitate the consultative mechanisms between civil society and the United Nations Development Group (UNDG), both at the global and the country levels;

- Requests the Director-General to ensure that UNESCO field offices facilitate the participation of National Commissions and civil society organizations in programme design and implementation in accordance with national policies and priorities.

### **C. Thematic sessions at regional consultations of National Commissions: confirmation of National Commissions readiness to participate**

During the five regional consultations on the Draft 35 C/5 held from mid-May to early July 2008 in Manila, Kuwait City, The Hague and Antwerp, Panama City and Cotonou, special thematic sessions were devoted to the discussion of UN common country programming, the engagement of UNESCO and the role of National Commissions in that process. In general, the National Commissions welcomed emerging opportunities for them to work with the UNCT and confirmed their readiness to contribute to their successful implementation. While some Commissions were already participating in the UNDAF process at the request of their Governments and with the assistance of UNESCO Offices concerned, the majority of National Commissions had limited knowledge of, and involvement in the UNCT discussions. The following cases were reported and suggestions made during the discussions:

#### **▶ Asia and the Pacific**

Several National Commissions have been involved in the cooperation with the UNCTs and gained first experiences. For instance, the Pakistan National Commission, from one of eight “Delivering as One” pilot countries, confirmed its coordinating role in the field of education with the UN Country Team and its participation in the High Level Commission in Pakistan. The Philippines National Commission informed the audience that it enjoyed a close relationship with the UN Resident Coordinator and participated in the UN Country Team discussions on the preparation of the new UNDAF document. The Viet Nam National Commission, from another “Delivering as One” pilot country, conveyed that, as an integral part of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, it assisted the Government on UNDAF related matters and closely collaborated with the UNESCO Hanoi Office. However, the Commission had also experienced some constraints as the Ministry of Investment and Planning was the line Ministry dealing with the UNCT.

#### **▶ Arab States**

Representatives of the National Commissions of this region stressed the need to strengthen the on-going decentralization process by involving actively regional and cluster offices and National Commissions in the design and implementation of programmes responding to the needs and priorities of the region. They also recommended that special arrangements be made to appoint national officials in countries where UNESCO is a non-resident agency.

### ▶ **Europe and North America**

Although many countries in this region, which are considered developed, are not concerned by and benefiting from the UNDAF process, the representatives of their National Commissions were eager to learn about UNESCO's on-going engagement in the UN country-level reform initiative and supported the association of National Commissions with this process. There were proposals that UNESCO should efficiently adapt its field network to the new "Delivering as One" context.

### ▶ **Latin America and the Caribbean**

The discussions on the ways in which National Commissions could participate in the UNDAF exercise were based on two case studies (Uruguay and English-speaking Caribbean countries) presented by the UNESCO Offices in Montevideo and Kingston. It was stressed that while the UNCT was composed of UN agencies' officials, National Commissions could eventually participate in open-ended thematic meetings upon request by the country and following the acceptance by the UNRC. It was stressed that National Commissions, comprising government and civil society representatives, should become proactive participants of the UNDAF process, expressing and synthesizing the positions of the Government and civil society.

### ▶ **Africa**

The discussions focused on the challenges posed by the "Delivering as One" approach to National Commissions, especially on resources available to National Commissions and ways to increase them, as well as on the need to enhance the National Commission's position within their government and ministries. The need to enhance the Commissions' awareness and participation was underlined. Training, information sharing, networking and close coordination with cluster and regional offices were deemed essential for them to contribute to this process, especially in countries, where UNESCO is non-resident.

## **II. STEPS TAKEN TO CREATE CONDITIONS FOR NATIONAL COMMISSIONS' INVOLVEMENT IN COMMON COUNTRY PROGRAMMING**

### **A. UNESCO-UNDP Memorandum of Understanding: recognition of National Commissions' role**

UNESCO has made efforts to create a pragmatic framework for National Commissions to cooperate with UNCTs, which resulted in a general agreement at the highest level. The Memorandum of Understanding on Strategic Partnership between UNESCO and UNDP, signed by the Director-General of UNESCO and the Administrator of UNDP on 24 October 2008, provides for a number

of important approaches regarding cooperation at the country level. The below paragraph, which represents a major breakthrough, offers possibilities for National Commissions to participate in activities of the UNCT when considered pertinent:

*“The Resident Coordinators/Resident Representatives may invite a UNESCO National Commission member(s) to attend certain UNCT meetings, especially in countries where UNESCO is a non-resident agency (NRA) when relevant programming issues are being discussed and Commission participation is deemed useful” (Article III.2).*

Through this MoU, UNDP has recognized that National Commissions for UNESCO have potentially a role to play in the common country programming process, by providing its expertise and resources, when deemed appropriate and relevant by the Resident Coordinators<sup>2</sup>.

## **B. Meeting of National Commissions from ‘Delivering as One’ pilot countries and UNDAF roll-out countries: identification of needs and solutions**

Representatives of 18 National Commissions from “Delivering as One” pilot countries and UNDAF roll-out countries as well as observers from two European National Commissions met in Hanoi, Viet Nam, from 11 to 13 November 2008 with a view to analyzing past experiences and best practices on the involvement of National Commissions for UNESCO in common country programming processes, and to develop strategies for future participation of National Commissions in upcoming UNDAF and other common country programming exercises as well as their implementation.

The meeting reviewed the current practices in the countries present in Hanoi. It was noted that situations varied greatly from one country to another, according to the Commissions’ status, structure, capacities and relations with government focal points for UNDAF and line ministries, UNESCO Field Offices and UN Country Teams. National Commissions of Albania, the Philippines, Swaziland, South Africa and, to some extent, Pakistan were among those few Commissions which directly contributed to the process, called by their governments, and/or requested by UNESCO Field Offices.

However, the majority of the National Commissions has never been systematically involved in common country programming/negotiating mechanisms, nor in UNCT meetings and thematic groups, nor in UNCT/Government joint committees, although they provided from time to time information and expertise to their governments and stakeholders, advised on national priorities and helped arrange consultations with national institutions and partners. It was therefore suggested to improve communication, coordination and cooperation between field offices/UNESCO focal points/antennas and National Commissions in this regard.

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2 The full text of the MoU is provided in the annex of this booklet.

The participants acknowledged the new prospects opened by the Memorandum of Understanding between UNESCO and UNDP, stipulating, inter alia, National Commissions' involvement in the UN common country programming. This development contains both opportunity and challenges. To this effect, National Commissions need to be strengthened and proactive in order to effectively engage in, and contribute to, the UNCT deliberations.

The meeting adopted a set of recommendations addressed to the UNESCO Secretariat, National Commissions and Member States. According to these recommendations, all parties should make increased efforts to advocate for the Commissions' role, enhance their structure and capacities, promote cooperation between UNESCO Field Offices and National Commissions as well as the latter's interface with civil society, and develop best practices<sup>3</sup>.

### **C. Director-General's circular letter: sending a political message to governments**

The Director-General sent in April 2009 a new circular letter (CL/3870) to Member States' ministers responsible for relations with UNESCO, inviting them to enhance their National Commissions in view of allowing them to effectively participate in the "Delivering as One" process. While pledging for continued advocacy and financial support of UNESCO towards the capacity-building of National Commissions, the Director-General urged Member States to take on that own appropriate measures.

The Director-General stressed that the Commissions needed their governments' support in order to act as efficient and credible actors within the country and vis-à-vis other UN organizations. He underlined the minimum standards which each National Commission is required to meet in terms of status and structure, human resources, and stability in leadership and functioning<sup>4</sup>.

### **D. Capacity-building for and partnership among National Commissions: supporting National Commissions through training, networking and other means**

In all deliberations and meetings on National Commissions' role in the UN common country programming process, capacity-building and training were pinpointed as a key to success. Therefore, in parallel with other efforts, UNESCO has continued to train and strengthen National Commissions during the 2008-2009 biennium, under its regular programme or extrabudgetary funding sources provided by donor countries.

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3 The full text of the recommendations is provided in the annex of this booklet.

4 The full text of the circular letter is provided in the annex of this booklet.

- The National Commissions in **Africa** have been the first beneficiaries of this enhanced training and capacity-building programme. Thanks to the UNESCO-Germany Funds-in-Trust Agreement for Strengthening African National Commissions, a tailor-made programme was implemented in the region: five sub-regional workshops were organized from October 2008 to June 2009 in Kigali, Rwanda; Maseru, Lesotho; Antananarivo, Madagascar; Bamako, Mali and Yaounde, Cameroon which involved more than 110 officials from 36 National Commissions (a sixth workshop is scheduled for Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in November 2009). As a good example of North-South and North-South-South cooperation, these workshops aimed at developing best practices and networking among the participating Commissions, at enhancing cooperation and partnership between National Commissions and UNESCO Field Offices, and at raising the Commissions' awareness of, and capacities in, UN common country programming.
- National Commissions in the **Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) from the Pacific and the Caribbean** as well as from Latin America and Asia have also been main beneficiaries of this increased capacity-building effort thanks to the extrabudgetary funding sources coming from the Spanish Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund and the UNESCO-Bulgaria Funds-in-Trust Agreement. The experienced resource persons from National Commissions helped to develop these training programmes. The discussion of the National Commissions' role in UNDAF processes was one of the key topics among the participants. In addition, training in Arab countries (Tunisia and Egypt) has been planned in close cooperation with ISESCO and UNESCO Field Offices.
- Efforts have been made to allow active and stronger National Commissions, mostly from developed countries, to assist less active National Commissions with modest resources **to share experiences, develop best practices and forge partnerships**. The inter-regional information meeting on "new approaches" on the organization of the Director-General's consultations with National Commissions on the preparation of the Draft C/5 held in Brussels and the Inter-Regional Workshop on a joint Headquarters-Field Office-National Commission public information strategy organized in Vienna were examples of such cross-region partnership among National Commissions.
- The biennial interregional information seminar was organized in early March 2009 at HQ, in which 35 new Secretaries-General of National Commissions from all regions participated. New training modalities were introduced with the help of several experienced Secretaries-General. The Director-General met with the participants, reiterating UNESCO's strong support to the Commissions in building their capacities and helping them in collaborating with the UNESCO Offices and UN Resident Coordinators in the "Delivering as One" context.
- **The Participation Programme**, as an important supplementary funding source, is being used by Member States to strengthen their National Commissions' capacities and activities (office equipment, training, publication, celebration of anniversaries/public

awareness raising, etc). For that purpose, around 60 requests were approved for a total of 888,500 US\$ during this biennium.

- The general assessment and comparative study of the world-wide network of National Commissions have been carried out in recent months, through a comprehensive survey of the Commissions' status, structure, resources, activities, managing capacities, outreach to stakeholders and partners, cooperation with UNESCO Field Offices and other UN as well as regional and interregional organizations. The result of this study is being included in the updated brochure ***“Architecture of National Commissions for UNESCO”*** which will be launched at the 35th General Conference. This new publication will contain some 80 National Commissions' organizational charts, as well as indicate challenges facing them in view of their effective participation in the “Delivering as One” process.

## CONCLUSIONS

The National Commissions, as liaison bodies between Member State Governments, a broader UNESCO family and civil society partners, are the unique network within the UN family and special resources for the Organization. Their direct participation in and contribution to UNESCO's programme design and delivery at country level have been constitutionally recognized for decades. For the benefit of both Member States and UNESCO, their position in and contribution to the ongoing UN common country programming needs to be ensured and promoted, where appropriate. The UNESCO-UNDP MoU provides a good momentum for involving them in UNDAF and other processes. The UNESCO Secretariat, the Member States and National Commissions should work together in this direction.

In order to enable National Commissions to effectively participate in the “Delivering as One” process, there is an urgent need to enhance the latter's status and structure, ensure their stability and continuity, build up their managing and outreach capacities, provide them with the related knowledge and skills, encourage them to collaborate openly and closely with a broader UNESCO family and civil society partners. Better communication, consultation and collaboration between the National Commissions and Field Offices are more than ever needed to ensure successful collaboration in these processes.

A significant number of capacity-building activities were implemented at interregional, regional and sub-regional levels by UNESCO in cooperation with National Commissions and stakeholders. Member States are invited to do more at national level to support their Commissions and enable them to play their expected role and duties. The forthcoming 35th General Conference will provide opportunity to review and enhance this positive trend, and to ensure future progress.



# What role for the National Commissions in a reforming UN system?

Hans d'Orville

Assistant Director-General for Strategic Planning

## Background: A new era for UN common country programming

Strengthening joint UN action and activities at the country-level has been at the center of recent UN system-wide reform initiatives, aiming at “Delivering as One” to enhance effectiveness, efficiency and quality of programme delivery for the benefit of Member States and in line with the national development priorities of each country.

The experience with the eight ‘Delivering as One’ pilot countries chosen at the request of the pilot countries’ governments and launched in January 2007 (Albania, Cape Verde, Mozambique, Pakistan, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uruguay, Viet Nam) has yielded a number of principles, lessons and conclusions as regards the functioning of the UN system, which have informed the 2007 *Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review (TCPR) of operational activities for development of the UN system*, adopted by consensus as United Nations General Assembly resolution 62/208.<sup>5</sup> Other countries have tried to emulate the principles of the “Delivering as One” as so-called self-starters (including Malawi, Papua New Guinea), but were never formally recognized as such. Subsequent to this resolution, the UN General Assembly adopted in November 2008 resolution 62/277 on system-wide coherence, which confirms the main provisions of the 2007 TCPR and provides further guidance on the issue.<sup>6</sup>

The following **guiding principles** emerged from the “Delivering as One” pilot countries (for a more detailed discussion, see also document 179 EX/42):

- (a) **critical importance of Government ownership and leadership**, as well as preponderance of **national priorities and objectives; emphasis on strengthening national capacities for implementation;**
- (b) **inclusiveness – in two respects:** one, all constituent parts of the United Nations system, including non-resident agencies in a particular country, must be brought together so as to offer to countries **the entire range of analytical, normative, technical and operational**

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5 A/RES/62/208 is contained in the Annex of this publication.

6 A/RES/62/277 is contained in the Annex of this publication.

**expertise residing in the United Nations system**; the other being the involvement of national line ministries, the natural counterparts to specialized agencies, in the *Delivering as One* exercises and in particular its steering or coordination committees;

- (c) **focus** on the attainment and pursuit of, as well as alignment with, the **internationally agreed development goals** (IADGs), including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs);
- (d) strong emphasis on **joint programming processes** and development and implementation of joint programmes; with UN **common programming increasingly becoming the rule of UN action and delivery at country-level**;
- (e) emphasis on the **normative-operational** linkages and the inherent feedback loop;
- (f) **implementation and sequencing of the four “Ones”** (One Plan/Programme, One Budgetary Framework, One Leader, and, where appropriate, One Office) **to rally around the One Plan/Programme as the pivot and guiding element** from which all the other Ones flow;
- (g) **pursuit of One Plan/Programme and stand-alone activities in single (or several) agency priority areas** not retained or chosen for the One Programme, if such stand-alone activities are justified by national priorities and do not lead to unnecessary fragmentation; **however any kind of two-track process** at the country level should be avoided, whereby the contributions of different United Nations organizations would be divided and categorized into distinctly separate documents (e.g. into a “One Plan” and a “One Plan-plus”);
- (h) **respect for the sectoral competences of the various specialized agencies** (“redlining”), especially by UNDP but also by other United Nations funds and programmes to avoid a mission creep;
- (i) **“firewalling”** of UNDP’s dual roles, on the one hand as the manager of the Resident Coordinator system and on the other hand as programme implementer and competitor for resources in its own right;
- (j) **no financial “floor” requirements** as a precondition for any technical agency to be part of or take lead in sectoral programming exercises – instead technical expertise/relevance to serve as paramount criterion for participation;
- (k) provision by UNDP of **Non-Resident Agency Coordination Analysts** in a number of countries to strengthen the input by a number of United Nations organizations;
- (l) need to integrate relevant components of **regional** programmes and **global** programmes (such as climate change) into national programming documents;

- (m) rigorous **results orientation** of the One Plan/Programme and throughout the joint planning and programming phases against nationally articulated objectives, based on harmonized methodologies.

While there will not be a designation of further ‘Delivering as One’ pilots, the lessons learned and new modalities found of working together in a more coherent fashion will henceforth be applied to a **new generation of UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) documents**, designed in an improved results-based fashion in order to respond better to national development priorities. The roll-out of new UNDAF documents for approximately 60 countries until 2012 will be a major opportunity and a major challenge for the UN system at large, and for UNESCO in particular, to enhance common country programming.

## Shortcomings of previous UNDAFs

From the perspective of UNESCO as a specialized agency, the major deficiencies in the past practices of CCA/UNDAF common country programming were:

- Insufficient inclusion of UNESCO’s domains in CCA/UNDAFs;
- Lack of involvement by UNESCO and hence of experience with joint programming in many countries;
- Lack of respect by some UN system partners for the technical competences that specialized agencies can bring to bear in common country programming processes and for the attainment of national priorities;
- Difficulties to remain involved in the work of UN country teams (UNCTs) in countries where UNESCO is non-resident;
- Absence of the input of National Commissions with their country-specific knowledge and expertise from common country programming processes.

Addressing the latter aspect shall be the main focus of this paper.

## National Commissions for UNESCO – a unique mechanism

National Commissions for UNESCO are a unique mechanism and modality in the United Nations system – no other organization disposes of a similar arrangement. National Commissions are government-housed and government-financed bodies for engagement with UNESCO at the country level. In addition to line ministries and NGOs working in UNESCO’s areas of competence, National Commissions can play an important role in terms of programme implementation in their respective countries, based on contractual arrangements with the UNESCO Secretariat, including through the Participation Programme. While UNESCO supports and assists National Commissions

on a wide range of issues, such as through capacity-building for a variety of skills, it is important to bear in mind that National Commissions are not part of the UNESCO Secretariat.

The important status and role of National Commissions is best captured by the UNESCO Medium Term Strategy for 2008-2013 (34 C/4) which states in its chapter on “Constituencies, partners and partnerships” that:

*“The network of National Commissions for UNESCO – a constituent element of UNESCO and unique in the United Nations system – has the capacity to facilitate contact and promote interface between Member States and the intellectual and professional communities in each country in order to forge broader alliances as well as to extend the outreach of UNESCO in each Member State. National Commissions contribute significantly to the pursuit of the Organization’s objectives and the conceptualization, implementation and delivery of its programmes at the regional, subregional and national levels. UNESCO will continue to strengthen the operational capacities and competencies of the National Commissions and to use them in programme delivery, communication, partnering and mobilization and management of extrabudgetary resources, and enhance the networking and cooperation among them to empower their activities. **Efforts will also be made to draw on their expertise in United Nations common country level programming exercises.**” (para. 142)*

It continues to emphasize that in line with the Cardoso Report on United Nations – Civil Society Relations (“We the People: Civil Society, the United Nations, and Global Governance”, A 58/817), UNESCO will promote a genuine *culture of partnerships* and encourage tripartite partnerships among civil society, National Commissions and field offices to attain its goals and objectives” (para 145 of document 34 C/4). Accordingly, UNESCO commits to the following expected outcomes:

- Capacities of National Commissions strengthened;
- Programme delivered with direct involvement of and contributions by National Commissions;
- Expertise of National Commissions integrated in United Nations common country programming exercises;
- Partners and partnerships mobilized to contribute to the strategic programme objectives of UNESCO.

#### ► **Possible obstacles to the involvement of National Commissions in UN common country programming**

Despite their recognized competence and capacities in many, but not all countries, National Commissions (with very few exceptions) have been excluded from common country programming exercises by UN country teams.

The effective involvement of National Commissions depends to varying degrees on the positions taken by their respective governments (both centrally and by line ministries), the UN Resident

Coordinator (RC) – almost in all cases identical with the UNDP Resident Representative - and the UN country team (UNCT) as a whole, as well as the responsible UNESCO Field Office Director/Head.

The following factors may have impeded the effective involvement of National Commissions in the common UN programming processes in many countries:

**1.** Obstacles on the **government** side may be:

- Central ministries (planning, finance, foreign affairs, public investment) are vested with the lead role for engagement with UN country teams, whereas line ministries (with the Education Ministry usually serving as the base for National Commissions) as principal interlocutors with UNESCO tend to be excluded or marginalised;
- Central ministries do not sufficiently take into account the role and contributions of line ministries;
- Often times, line ministries are neither consulted nor involved in negotiations and meetings of government representatives with UN country teams;
- Even if a National Commission is involved, a challenge arises how to involve and draw on the expertise from all line ministries involved covering the entire range of UNESCO's competence (next to education also culture, the sciences, and communication and information);
- In addition, there may be cases where conflicts between some (line) ministries and the National Commissions preclude an involvement of National Commissions in negotiations with UNCTs.

**2.** Obstacles related to the **UN Resident Coordinator** and the **UN country team** may be:

- The RC and the UNCT see no reason why to involve National Commissions in intra-UN system efforts and discussions, if UNESCO is already present as a member of a UNCT. In countries where UNESCO has non-resident agency (NRA) status, this might offer a possibility for a more flexible and National Commission-friendly arrangement;
- Some UNCT members might wonder why there should be a special arrangement for UNESCO, given that they themselves could also bring their privileged national partners to the table (e.g. UNICEF National Committees, national Advisory Bodies of various other organizations);
- Some might question whether National Commissions as a government entity can truly be part of the United Nations and the United Nations country team given the UN commitment to neutrality and impartial advice, as well as an advocate of, and a direct link to, civil society. Instead, it might be suggested that it would be much more appropriate if National Commissions were to strive to be included in governmental delegations and negotiating parties with UNCTs.

### 3. Obstacles on the side of the **UNESCO Field Office Head/Director** might be:

- Where UNESCO is a resident agency:
- Difficulties to involve the National Commission in UNCT meetings when UNESCO is already present and represented in all relevant UNCT structures;
- Difficulties in using the potential of the National Commission as an effective mobilizer of country-based knowledge and expert advice and as a link to civil society;
- Where UNESCO is a non-resident agency:
- A difficulty may arise in delegating UN agency-specific responsibilities while ensuring accountability;
- Unclear reporting lines: how can it be satisfactorily arranged that National Commissions – which are *de iure* and *de facto* part of a government structure - report to the UNESCO representative based in another country on matters of interest for UNESCO.

In addition, there might be a sometime negative perception and assessment by the UNESCO Field Office Head/Director as to the capacity, performance track record and past delivery quality of some National Commissions.

#### ► **New opportunities for mobilizing the input of National Commissions**

Effective involvement of National Commissions in UN common country programming should take into account several factors that have shaped a new policy environment for common UN action at the country level.

A major opportunity – if not potential sea change – for National Commission engagement was created by the *Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on a Strategic Partnership Agreement between the United Nations development programme (UNDP) and UNESCO*, (document 181 EX/INF.12) which was signed by UNESCO Director-General Koïchiro Matsuura and the then-UNDP Administrator Kemal Derviş on 24 October 2008. Aiming at furthering collaboration and building on synergies between the two Organizations, especially at country level, the MoU states in Article III.2 that:

*“The parties [UNDP and UNESCO] shall collaborate fully with each other and the UNCT, national authorities, and partners concerned in the in the execution of activities with a view to realizing the expected results described in the UNDAF and related project documents, annual work plans, joint programme and/or contribution documentation according to UNDP regulations, rules, policies and procedures. **The RC/Resident Representative (RR) may invite a UNESCO national commission member(s) to attend certain UNCT meetings, especially in countries where UNESCO is a non-resident agency (NRA) when relevant programming issues are being discussed and commission participation is deemed useful.**”*

This becomes especially relevant in view of UNDP's role as a manager of the RC system. However, the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding between UNESCO and UNDP must also be seen in conjunction with the new *Management and Accountability Framework of the UN development and RC System* (M&A Framework) that has been adopted by the UN Development Group (UNDG) – one of the three pillars of the UN Chief Executives Board/CEB) in August 2008, together with a specific implementation plan. The M&A Framework clarifies who is accountable on what and to whom at country, regional and global levels, and contains provisions establishing a 'functional firewall' between UNDP's role as a manager of the RC system, and UNDP's own operational role in a country. Any action at country-level, including through National Commissions, must be in line with the accountability lines defined in the M&A Framework.

National Commission engagement is furthermore facilitated by a **Memorandum of Understanding between UNESCO and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)**, signed by UNESCO Director-General Koïchiro Matsuura and Mr Achim Steiner, Executive Director of UNEP on 4 April 2009, and stating that “[t]he Parties [UNESCO and UNEP] will pay particular attention to joint work with relevant line ministries at the country level, especially science and environment ministries, **as well as with UNESCO National Commissions** and other UNESCO networks (e.g. institutes and centres under the auspices of UNESCO (category 2 centres), UNESCO chairs or the Associated Schools Programme/ASP), as appropriate” (Article 3.3).

Another opportunity arises with the **UNDG CCA/UNDAF Guidelines for UN Country Teams**, which represents the major inter-agency guidance document on the CCA/UNDAF planning and implementation process. These Guidelines have been updated by the UNDG Working Group on Programming Issues (WGPI) in February 2009 to reflect various developments that have occurred since their original formulation in 2007. Among others, the new guidelines include – at the request of UNESCO – a provision emphasizing that “[t]he Resident Coordinator may invite agencies’ national co-operating bodies to join UNCT meetings when dealing with relevant programmatic issues” (para 9) – paving the way for the potential participation of National Commissions in UNCT activities and meetings, in particular with respect to the elaboration of CCA/UNDAFs, when invited by the Resident Coordinator. The expected roll-out of some 60 UNDAF documents over the next three years represents a critical opportunity to reinforce and broaden the participation of UNESCO National Commissions in common country programming exercises.

## Making it work

The recently agreed provisions of both the updated CCA/UNDAF guidelines and the Memorandum of Understanding between UNESCO and UNDP can be instrumental in overcoming many of the obstacles identified above, which have been impeding the involvement of National Commissions in UNCT activities. As a first step, the above-mentioned documents have to be disseminated among Resident Coordinators, UNDP staff and UNESCO staff, both at headquarters and in the field, emphasizing the National Commission-relevant provisions. UNESCO has already taken action in this regard and UNESCO representatives should apprise the RCs concerned and their UNCT

colleagues of the new possibilities envisaged for National Commissions. The MoU with UNEP offers new collaborative possibilities and joint programming opportunities at the country level for UNESCO as a whole and specifically also for National Commissions in programme areas which hitherto have not been satisfactorily included in UNDAFs.

More often than not, the implementation of the MoUs, but in particular the Memorandum of Understanding between UNESCO and UNDP, will entail a “culture” change among all different protagonists: UNESCO Field Office Heads/Directors will need to be proactive in prodding RCs to invite National Commissions to identified appropriate occasions, especially where UNESCO is a non-resident agency. National Commissions, on the other hand, must be made aware of the relevant provisions of the Memorandum of Understanding and share them with their lead central and line ministries.

With respect to Article III.2 of the MoU with UNDP, the *modus operandi* will be that a RC would normally invite representatives of National Commissions at the suggestion of Heads/ Directors of UNESCO Field Offices. Consequently, National Commissions would deal and engage with the RC respectively the UNCT through the UNESCO representative.

It should be borne in mind that UNDAFs are a product of negotiations between the Government and the UNCT (with input also from civil society partners) where Governments hold the overall lead and where an empowered RC brings together the UNCT and its contribution. The various components and deliverables of an UNDAF cannot be designed in isolation or through unilateral input by specific sectors. Hence, National Commissions must be part and parcel of a wider collaborative effort. Rather than directly participating in negotiations with the Government on the content of the UNDAF, National Commissions should see their role in the provision of sectoral advice on specific country problems and needs at the request and invitation of the UNESCO representative, the UNCT and the RC. At the same time, National Commissions should understand and seize the great opportunity, through wise interactions, to benefit from and draw upon the enormous pool of policy advice and expertise residing with the UNCT.

Without a coordinated, harmonious and mutually supportive cooperation between UNESCO Field Offices and National Commissions, the desired impact of the above provisions on UN common country programming will unlikely be effective.

As the Regional Directors Teams (RDT) of UN system organizations assume an increasingly important and strategic role in overseeing and providing feedback and quality control for country-level activities, a new and additional layer of actors is being added. Following an agreement reached with the Director of the UN-Development Coordination Office (UN-DOC), and most RDT Chairs, that UNESCO be represented by the two Directors of its Regional Offices for Education and for Science in each region, UNESCO has started to be systematically engaged in the Regional Directors Teams in most regions. UNESCO’s members of the RDTs can help sensitize their fellow RDT members as to the potentially constructive role of National Commissions in selected national exercises, thereby ensuring that the reach out to National Commissions becomes one criterion in evaluating the quality of country programmes and their implementation, where appropriate.



## Challenges for National Commissions

For their part, National Commissions are called to work on the integration of UNESCO's areas of competence into national development strategies, derived from national development challenges and priorities. It is essential to avoid mixing these primordial priorities with the – separate and often more limited – priorities which a particular National Commission may have developed and adopted for itself.

Another challenge when advocating for the inclusion of UNESCO into the UNDAF relates to the fact that UNESCO's areas of competence and potential contributions across all five major programmes fall under the purview of various different (line) ministries, and in some cases might be difficult to distill from national development strategies.

One of the most significant challenges of common country programming to date is the difficulty to integrate regional dimensions of programming, especially in the field of science where UNESCO has an acknowledged lead role. National Commissions need to be aware of UNESCO's comparative advantage in this regard.

Above all, National Commissions must strive to build their own capacities needed for an effective involvement in UNCT activities, including acquiring a profound knowledge of the various mechanisms, guidance notes and other policies relevant for UN common country programming exercises. This will be the foundation for developing a meaningful substantive contribution to common country programming exercises, especially in supporting the new trend towards joint programming on specific programme deliverables involving several UN organizations. Extrabudgetary support may be essential to allow the new and expanded capacity-building requirements in this field. Likewise, innovative mechanisms such as twinning arrangements among National Commissions from industrialized and from developing countries could be explored.



# Annexes



**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING  
BETWEEN  
THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (UNDP)  
AND  
THE UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION (UNESCO)**

This Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) is entered into by the United Nations Development Programme (hereinafter referred to as “UNDP”), a subsidiary organ of the United Nations, an intergovernmental organization established by its Member States, and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (hereinafter referred to as “UNESCO”), a specialized agency of the United Nations. UNDP and UNESCO are hereinafter jointly referred to as the “Parties”.

**WHEREAS** both organizations are guided by General Assembly resolution 62/208, the “Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, 2007” (hereinafter referred to as “TCPR”) and all organizations of the United Nations system are committed to the pursuit and implementation of the Millennium Declaration and the 2005 World Summit Outcome document;

**WHEREAS** based on its 1946 Constitution, the mission statement approved by the UNESCO General Conference at its 34<sup>th</sup> session, as contained in UNESCO’s Medium-Term Strategy for 2008 – 2013 (document 34 C/4) states that UNESCO “as a Specialized Agency of the United Nations contributes to the building of peace, the eradication of poverty, sustainable development and intercultural dialogue through education, the sciences, culture, communication and information”;

**WHEREAS** UNESCO’s Medium-Term Strategy sets out the Organization’s functions, two global priorities – Africa and gender equality – and fourteen strategic programme objectives as well as the Organization’s commitment to contribute to UN system reform and in particular coherence at global, regional, sub-regional and country levels;

**WHEREAS** UNESCO is authorized under Article XI of its Constitution to cooperate with other intergovernmental organizations and to this end has entered into an agreement establishing working relations with the United Nations in 1946;

**WHEREAS** the 2007 TCPR and the World Summit Outcome Document have guided the formulation of UNDP’s Strategic Plan, 2008-2011, which promotes an effective, efficient and coherent UN, focusing its programmatic contributions towards poverty reduction and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals/Internationally Agreed Development Goals (MDGs/IADGs), through democratic governance, poverty reduction, crisis prevention and recovery, and environment and sustainable development whereby UNDP embraces national



ownership, capacity development, effective aid management, gender equality and empowerment of women, and South-South cooperation;

**WHEREAS** UNDP has the capacity to provide a host of administrative, financial and logistical support services at the country level for partner UN agencies;

**WHEREAS** the management of the Resident Coordinator system is firmly anchored in UNDP, providing enhanced UN coordination at country level under the guidance of the undg as the integrated third pillar of the Chief Executives Board (CEB) and assisting governments to access expertise available within the UN system, including through non-resident agencies, which support national development priorities and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and other related joint programming documents;

**WHEREAS** the Parties already have a demonstrated long history of cooperation exemplified by the status of UNESCO as an Executing Agency of UNDP under the 1990 Executing Agency Agreement between the Parties, as agreed in an exchange of letters between the Parties, and subsequently in numerous inter-agency activities globally and at the country level;

**WHEREAS** the Parties wish to conclude a strategic partnership agreement covering the global, regional and country levels so as to enhance the contribution of each Organization toward national development priorities. Such initiatives aim at strengthening the coherence of the UN system by promoting synergies to increase the quality and effectiveness of programme delivery through complementary and joint programming efforts;

**WHEREAS** the Parties along with other organizations of the UN system and other partners share similar development objectives to assist national governments meet the MDGs/IADGs, through cooperation in areas of mutual concern and effectiveness of coordinated development efforts.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, the Parties agree to cooperate as follows:

#### **Article I Purpose**

1.1 The purpose of this MOU is to provide a framework of cooperation and facilitate collaboration between the Parties, on a non-exclusive basis, to enable national governments to access UN expertise, based on national development priorities and plans contributing to UNDAF outcomes and supporting complementary UN system programming.

## **Article II**

### **Areas of Cooperation**

2.1 The Parties agree to cooperate in areas of common interest, further to and within each Organization's respective mandate. The Parties undertake to cooperate through complementary and/or joint programming efforts supporting UNDAF outcomes in areas where UNDP capacity development and UNESCO technical expertise demonstrate an added value and can significantly contribute to UNDAF results and other common UN regional or global result areas. Areas of cooperation may include, but are not limited to:

i) Poverty reduction and the achievement of the MDGs/IADGs:

- Education for All, including educational planning, literacy, secondary education, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) specifically towards Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), teacher training and HIV and AIDS education
- Culture and development, with particular emphasis on sustaining cultural diversity in all its aspects as well as inter-cultural dialogue and cultural industries
- Building knowledge societies through communication and information, fostering freedom of expression and the role of the media in poverty reduction
- Gender equality and gender mainstreaming.

ii) Preservation of peace through educational, scientific, cultural and informational initiatives, in particular in post-conflict situations.

iii) Environment and sustainable development:

- Biodiversity governance and management
- Integrated water resource management
- Marine and coastal resource management
- Building scientific knowledge base and monitoring capacities.

iv) Knowledge management through enhanced collaboration on common access to data and information as well as technical expertise, training materials, and good practices.

v) Resource mobilization, and the formulation of partnerships, including with actors from civil society and the private sector, for joint programmes.

2.2. The Parties agree to continue to co-operate through their appropriate mechanisms and structures to promote strengthened development effectiveness at the global, regional, sub-regional and country levels as needed.



2.3 This MOU shall be brought to the attention of the staff of both organizations, in particular Resident Coordinators (RCs), UNDP Country Directors (CDs) and heads of UNESCO field offices. UNDP and UNESCO will collaborate to make available policy guidance and tools, information, and training, including pertinent modules, to enable members of the country teams, in particular in countries where UNESCO is non-resident, to be fully knowledgeable of UNESCO programmes and expertise.

2.4 The Parties will explore cooperation in the areas of staffing in furtherance to the purpose of this MOU including the possible secondment of their respective staff.

### **Article III Programme Implementation**

3.1 The Parties concur that United Nations Country Team (UNCT) joint programming holds considerable potential for responding effectively to national priorities and building synergies. Joint programming can address cross-cutting themes, normative issues and normative-operational linkages, upstream policy work and advice required by governments. The Parties shall explore, together with the UNCT, potential joint programme opportunities based on UNDAF outcomes. UNESCO results, in line with UNDAF outcomes and along with the other UN agencies operating in country, will be reported on a yearly basis as part of the UN Annual Report.

3.2 The Parties shall collaborate fully with each other and the UNCT, national authorities, and partners concerned in the execution of activities with a view to realizing the expected results described in the UNDAF and related project documents, annual work plans, joint programme and/or contribution documentation according to UNDP regulations, rules, policies and procedures. The RC/Resident Representative (RR) may invite a UNESCO national commission member(s) to attend certain UNCT meetings, especially in countries where UNESCO is a non-resident agency (NRA) when relevant programming issues are being discussed and commission participation is deemed useful.

3.3 At the regional level, UNESCO will strive to provide its input to the work of the Regional Directors' (Managers) Team (RDTs/RMTs). UNESCO may request UNDP Regional Directors to bring UNESCO's concerns and views to the respective (RDT/RMT) when they are unable to do so themselves.

3.4 At HQ level, to support common programmatic initiatives, the Parties will explore opportunities and exchange information related to developing and strengthening their cooperation identifying innovative sources of funding to support areas for joint programmes.

3.5 Substantive areas of cooperation and the methods through which collaborative initiatives, strategies and support may be realized between the Parties will be elaborated by focal points



designated by the respective Parties. The UNDP Bureau for Development Policy (BDP) will act as the focal point within UNDP and the Bureau of Strategic Planning (BSP) will be the focal point at UNESCO. The focal points will provide the strategic direction of cooperation, monitor the implementation of the MOU and provide regular feedback to their respective institutions. Modifications to programming will be adjusted based on host government, UNCT, and RDT guidance for the subsequent year.

3.6 Accordingly, the Parties may agree upon, through their focal points, the launch of special initiatives or joint action, globally and regionally and in collaboration with partner governments, and cooperate closely in the context of common country programming exercises with the UNCT in accordance with the respective regulations, rules, policies, and procedures of the Parties.

3.7 Each Party shall be responsible for its acts and omissions in connection with this MOU and its implementation.

3.8 UNESCO's legal status, privileges and immunities, and operational activities shall be subject to its agreement with the concerned government(s).

#### **Article IV Collection and Utilization of Statistical Information**

4.1 Subject to 5.1 below, the Parties recognize the value and necessity of sharing statistical and scientific information and of avoiding duplication in their collection, analysis, publication and distribution. This will provide a solid knowledge base that can be made available to RCs and UNCTs.

4.2 To this end, the Parties will co-ordinate their efforts with the UNCT and national authorities to ensure the best utilization of data available or to be collected, in an effort to reduce the burden on the governments and other organizations.

#### **Article V Consultation and Exchange of Information**

5.1 Consultation and exchange of information and documents under this Article shall be without prejudice to arrangements which may be in place to safeguard the confidential and restricted character of certain information and documents. Such arrangements will survive the termination of this MOU and of any agreements signed by the Parties within the scope of this collaboration.





5.2 The Parties shall consult with each other on a regular basis on matters which might affect the successful completion of activities. The Parties shall review the progress of activities being carried out and plan future activities as deemed appropriate responding to national priorities and UNDAF outcomes.

#### **Article VI Visibility**

6.1 The Parties agree to acknowledge the role and contribution of each Organization in all public information documentation relating to instances of such cooperation and use each Organization's name and emblem in documentation related to the cooperation in accordance with the current policies of each Organization and with United Nations Development Group (UNDG) policies.

#### **Article VII Term, Termination, Amendment**

7.1 This MOU shall enter into effect upon its signature by both Parties and shall remain valid until terminated. Either Party may terminate this MOU by giving not less than sixty days notice in writing to the other Party. Such termination shall become effective on the date specified in the termination notice.

7.2 In the event of termination of the MOU, any cost-sharing, project cooperation agreements, and any project documents concluded pursuant to this MOU, may also be terminated in accordance with the termination provisions. In such cases, the Parties shall take the necessary steps to ensure that the activities carried out under the MOU, any cost-sharing agreements, or project documents are brought to a prompt and orderly conclusion in accordance with the respective regulations and rules of the Parties, as applicable.

7.3 This MOU may be amended only by mutual written agreement of the Parties.

7.4 This MOU shall be reviewed on an annual basis. The Parties may, by exchange of letters, amend any of the provisions of this MOU or enter into supplementary arrangements designed to extend or reduce the scope of the present MOU.



## **Article VIII Notices and Addresses**

8.1 Any notice or request required or permitted to be given or made under this MOU shall be in writing. Such notice or request shall be deemed to have been duly given or made when it shall have been delivered by hand, certified mail, or overnight courier to the party to which it is required to be given or made at the address specified below or such other address as shall be hereafter notified.

**For UNDP:**                   Assistant Secretary-General and Director  
Bureau for Development Policy  
United Nations Development Programme  
304 East 45<sup>th</sup> Street  
New York, New York 10017, USA

**For UNESCO:**             Assistant Director General for Strategic Planning  
UNESCO  
7, Place de Fontenoy  
F-75352 Paris 07 SP, France

## **Article IX Miscellaneous**

9.1 This MOU and any related agreements comprise the complete understanding of the Parties in respect of the subject matter in this MOU and supersede all prior agreements. Any dispute over the interpretation or application of any provision herein contained shall be settled through negotiations or by such other means as the Parties shall mutually agree. Failure by either Party to enforce a provision of this MOU shall not constitute a waiver of any other provision of this MOU. The invalidity or unenforceability of any provision of this MOU shall not affect the validity or enforceability of any other provision of the MOU.

## **Article X Entry into Force**

10.1 This MOU may be signed in counterparts, each of which shall be deemed an original and both of which duly executed shall constitute one entire document, and shall enter into force and effect on the date ("Effective Date") in which it is duly signed by both parties.



**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, the duly authorized representatives of the Parties affix their signatures below.

**FOR UNDP:**  
Kemal Dervis

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kemal Dervis', written over a horizontal line.

Date

24-10-08

**FOR UNESCO:**  
Koïchiro Matsuura

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Koïchiro Matsuura', written over a horizontal line.

Date

24-10-2008

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING  
BETWEEN  
THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME (UNEP)  
AND  
THE UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND  
CULTURAL ORGANIZATION (UNESCO)**

This Memorandum of Understanding, (hereinafter referred to as “MoU”) is entered into by the United Nations Environment Programme (hereinafter referred to as “UNEP”), a subsidiary organ of the United Nations and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (hereinafter referred to as “UNESCO”), a specialized agency of the United Nations.

**WHEREAS** based on its 1946 Constitution, the mission statement approved by UNESCO General Conference at its 34<sup>th</sup> session, as contained in UNESCO’s Medium-Term Strategy for 2008–2013 (document 34 C/4) states that UNESCO “as a Specialized Agency of the United Nations contributes to the building of peace, eradication of poverty, sustainable development and intercultural dialogue through education, the sciences, culture, communication and information”;

**WHEREAS** UNESCO’s Medium-term Strategy for 2008-2013 determines for the Organization’s work five overarching objectives:

- Attaining quality education for all and lifelong learning,
- Mobilizing science knowledge and policy for sustainable development,
- Addressing emerging social and ethical challenges,
- Fostering cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue and a culture of peace,
- Building inclusive knowledge societies through information and communication

and 14 strategic programme objectives:

- Strengthening UNESCO’s global lead and coordination role for EFA and providing support to national leadership in favor of EFA,
- Developing policies, capacities and tools for quality education for all, and lifelong learning as well as promoting education for sustainable development,
- Leveraging scientific knowledge for the benefit of the environment and the management of natural resources,
- Fostering policies and capacity-building in science, technology and innovation,
- Contributing to disaster preparedness and mitigation,
- Promoting principles, practices and ethical norms relevant for scientific and technological development,
- Enhancing research-policy linkages on social transformations,
- Fostering research on critical emerging ethical and social issues,
- Strengthening the contribution of culture to sustainable development,

- Demonstrating the importance of exchange and dialogue among cultures to social cohesion and reconciliation in order to develop a culture of peace,
- Sustainably protecting and enhancing cultural heritage,
- Enhancing universal access to information and knowledge,
- Fostering pluralistic, free and independent media and infostructures,
- Support through UNESCO's domains to countries in post-conflict situations and post-disaster situations;

**WHEREAS** the UN General Assembly by its resolution 2997 (XXVII) of 15 December 1972 established UNEP and its Governing Council , *inter alia*, to (a) promote international co-operation in the field of the environment; (b) provide general policy guidance for the direction and co-ordination of environmental programmes within the United Nations system; (c) keep under review the world environmental situation in order to ensure that emerging environmental problems of wide international significance receive appropriate and adequate consideration by Governments; (d) promote the contribution of the relevant international scientific and other professional communities to the acquisition, assessment and exchange of environmental knowledge and information and, as appropriate, to the technical aspects of the formulation and implementation of environmental programmes within the United Nations system; and (e) maintain under continuing review the impact of national and international environmental policies and measures on developing countries, as well as the problem of additional costs that may be incurred by developing countries in the implementation of environmental programmes and projects, and to ensure that such programmes and projects shall be compatible with the development plans and priorities of those countries;

**WHEREAS** UNESCO is authorized under Article XI of its Constitution to cooperate with other intergovernmental organizations and to this end has entered into an agreement establishing working relations with the United Nations in 1946;

**WHEREAS** UNEP's Medium-term Strategy 2010–2013 sets out the next phase in the evolution of UNEP by providing a clear, results-based focus on a new programme of work that addresses the following six cross-cutting thematic priorities:

- (a) Climate change;
- (b) Disasters and conflicts;
- (c) Ecosystem management;
- (d) Environmental governance;
- (e) Harmful substances and hazardous waste;
- (f) Resource efficiency – sustainable consumption and production;

**WHEREAS** UNESCO and UNEP (hereinafter collectively referred to as the "Parties") have maintained a longstanding and effective collaboration with their distinct, yet complementary roles in the UN system involving the application of sciences in solving the problems of the environment, reinforcing

capacities and supporting policy- and decision-making at the national, regional and international levels, drawing on the best scientific knowledge available and on multi-scale assessments of thematic and crosscutting issues;

**WHEREAS** the Executive Heads of UNESCO and UNEP, inspired by UN General Assembly Resolution 57/254 declaring 2005 – 2014 the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD) for which UNESCO was designated as lead agency of the UN system, signed, in February 2005, a joint statement for collaboration during the Decade, underlining UNEP’s key role in defining and promoting the environmental perspectives of ESD and in coordinating related advocacy, including through networks and alliances of environmental organisations;

**WHEREAS** the Parties recognize their roles in the achievement of paragraph 169 of the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document and its decision to explore the possibility of a coherent institutional framework to address the need for more efficient environmental activities in the UN system, “including a more integrated structure, building on existing institutions and internationally agreed instruments, as well as treaty bodies and the specialized agencies”;

**WHEREAS** the Executive Heads of UNESCO and UNEP are fully committed to UN reform, strengthening UN system-wide coherence and “delivering as one”, carried forward under the auspices of the Chief Executives’ Board (CEB) and its subsidiary bodies, especially the UN Development Group (UNDG).

**NOW, THEREFORE**, the parties agree to cooperate as follows:

## **Article I Purpose**

1.1 The purpose of this MOU is to provide a framework of cooperation and facilitate collaboration between the Parties, on a non-exclusive basis, to enable national governments to access UN expertise, based on national development priorities and plans, contributing to United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) outcomes and supporting complementary UNcommon country programming processes; and to undertake scientific research, monitoring and assessments and to provide policy advice to all Governments;

## **Article II Areas of Cooperation**

2.1 Within the scope of each Party’s relevant rules and regulations, the Parties agree to cooperate in areas of common interest, further to and within each Organization’s respective mandate. Particular focus will be given to the creation and maintenance of the scientific knowledge base, the formulation of national policies in the fields of science, environment, technology and

innovation, education for responsible consumption patterns, the monitoring and benchmarking of trends and advocacy.

2.2. The Parties undertake to cooperate also through complementary and/or joint programming efforts supporting national, regional and global initiatives and UNDAF outcomes in areas where UNEP's and UNESCO's joint capacities and expertise can add value.

2.3 Specific areas of joint collaboration may include, but are not limited to:

i. Climate change

- Linking the scientific knowledge base for climate change – maintained and refined by UNESCO's Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) together with the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) in the context of the CEB approach as well as by the International Hydrological Programme (IHP) – with UNEP's advocacy and policy advisory role;
- Strengthening the capacities of developing countries, both in the assessment and monitoring of climate change and the formulation of pertinent policies;
- Reinforcing joint efforts to strengthen the adaptation capacities of vulnerable communities, with a focus on indigenous peoples and Small Island Developing States (SIDS), and the role of local and indigenous knowledge in enhancing community-based responses;
- Cooperating within the framework of the CEB/HLCP process on areas where UNEP plays a convening/ co-convening role (Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD) in Developing Countries, Capacity Building, Climate Neutral UN and Public Awareness) and where UNESCO plays a convening/ co-convening role (Science, Assessment, Monitoring and Early Warning);
- Promoting the role and contribution of education in the context of climate change action;
- Following-up to the International Experts Meeting on Climate Change and Arctic Sustainable Development: Scientific, Social, Cultural and Educational Challenges (Monaco, 3-6 March 2009);
- Cooperation on the UNEP Climate Change Adaptation Network Initiative;
- Raising awareness and build the capacity of media professionals, including public service broadcasters, to report on climate change issues in a scientifically well-founded way.

ii. Multi-scale environmental assessments

- Joint promotion of Earth observations and Earth systems sciences linked with development of policy advice;
- Strengthening the science-policy interface at multiple scales with specific focus on providing advice to decision-makers and building

the capacity of scientists from developing countries to undertake multi-scale integrated environmental assessments using appropriate methodologies;

- Capitalizing on synergies between the assessment processes led/coordinated by the Parties;
- Joint programming activities linked with the Follow-up Implementation Initiative to the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment;

iii. Freshwater

- Joint collaboration in the context of the UN-Water mechanism;
- Joint support and contribution to the World Water Assessment Programme and the preparation of the World Water Report;
- Maximizing complementarities and synergies in national water resource management plans and policies as well as capacity-building, especially through cooperation with and participation in UNESCO's International Hydrological Programme (IHP), focusing also on ecohydrology approaches in watershed management, integrated water resources management (IWRM) at the river basin level, and water resources adaptation strategies;
- Cooperation on water resources adaptation strategies and policies to mitigate the impact of global changes on the hydrological cycle and on water resources in transboundary and other river basins and aquifers;
- Exploration of the possibility to establish a joint global programme on freshwater with combined fund mobilization.

iv. Ocean and coastal issues

- Joint support and development to the UN-Oceans mechanism and activities (with IOC);
- Joint support and contribution (with IOC) to the Regular Process for the Global Reporting and Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment, including socio-economic aspects, leading to the development of the first global integrated ocean assessment by 2014; Exchanging information on coastal/near-shore marine water quality and the implementation of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (GPA);
- Partnering with IOC in the development of methodology for the assessment of transboundary waters (open oceans);
- Participation and cooperation in the development of the Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS), including relevant panels and activities;
- Cooperation between the Ocean Sciences and Ocean Observation programmes of IOC, including GOOS, and the UNEP Regional Seas programme;



- Joint activities with respect to the assessment of the impact of climate change on the oceans and the development of policy responses at various levels;
  - Joint sponsorship of the Joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Environmental Protection;
  - Collaboration on the promotion of Integrated Ocean and Coastal Management principles, specifically in the development of initiatives related to i) marine spatial planning, ii) marine-protected areas, and iii) mitigation of coastal hazards and risk reduction;
  - Joint programmes on the development of ecosystem-based management tools and initiatives addressing coastal and ocean environmental issues and resource use;
- v. Urban and coastal environmental issues
- Involvement of UNEP in UNESCO's work on urban, coastal zone and small island ecosystems under Programmes such as the Man and Biosphere Programme (MAB), the International Hydrological Programme (IHP), Management of Social Transformations (MOST) and LINKS;
  - Joint presentation at the Shanghai World Expo in 2010.
- vi. Biodiversity and ecosystem services
- Collaboration in the international initiative to strengthen the science-policy interface on biodiversity and ecosystem services;
  - Joint efforts to reduce the rate of biodiversity loss and joint organization of events to be held during the International Year of Biodiversity in 2010;
  - Use of the MAB World Network of Biosphere Reserves for innovative linkages between biodiversity conservation as well as climate change mitigation and adaptation, particularly in the framework of the UNESCO-UNEP-UNU-ICSU partnership on Human and Ecosystem Well-being (HEW);
  - Strengthening of Great Apes Survival Partnership (GRASP), of which UNEP and UNESCO provide the joint secretariat, in particular through regular consultation between UNEP and UNESCO Nairobi.
- vii. World Heritage
- Strengthening of cooperation between UNESCO's World Heritage Centre (WHC) and UNEP in the field of biodiversity-related conventions;
  - Strengthening of cooperation between UNESCO's World Heritage Centre (WHC) and UNEP on important biodiversity-rich World Heritage sites in danger;
  - Inclusion of World Heritage sites and biosphere reserves within the UNEP Global Environmental Report Outlook (GEO);

- Management of interoperable databases linking spatial data held by UNEP with activities by UNESCO's World Heritage Centre and Man and the Biosphere Programme (MAB).

viii. Education, awareness-raising and training

- Strengthening of joint activities in the context of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD), with a special focus on climate change and on education for responsible consumption and lifestyles, building also on the existing UNEP/UNESCO YouthXchange project;
- Enhancing the work of the UN Inter-agency Committee for DESD (IAC/DESD);
- Identification of best practices in mainstreaming environmental and sustainability issues in educational programmes, in particular in higher education institutions;
- Enhancing the delivery of environmental education, training and awareness-raising drawing on technology-supported learning and the UNeLearn network;
- Promoting synergies of DESD with international initiatives such as the Marrakech Process for Sustainable Consumption and Production;
- Strengthening of collaboration on media literacy and communications for sustainability;
- Strengthening of regional partnerships in support of education, research and outreach, such as the joint UNEP-Tongji Institute of Environment for Sustainable Development (IESD), and of regional and sub-regional environmental education action plans and strategies;
- Collaboration in water education programmes aimed at capacity-building and postgraduate education (with UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education);
- Collaboration on UNEP's proposal for a Green Economy and Green Jobs, including in UNESCO programmes on life-long learning and vocational training;

ix. Access to environmental information

- Strengthening joint activities in the context of the outcome of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS);
- Enhancing access to information through better utilization of information and communication technologies;
- Use of Encyclopaedia of Life Support Systems (EOLSS).

- x. Disaster preparedness
  - Joint efforts to establish early warning systems for natural disaster preparedness, including collaboration on IOC-coordinated development of tsunami warning and mitigation system;
  - Contribution by UNEP to UNESCO's education programmes for disaster preparedness and mitigation.
- xi Energy
  - Joint efforts to provide assistance to developing countries in the field of new and renewable energies, with emphasis on energy policy, capacity-building and educational programmes;
  - Joint assistance to developing countries in formulating policies for more informed energy choices;
  - Collaboration in context of UNESCO's Global Renewable Energy Education and Training (GREET) Programme as well as regional initiatives aimed at sharing of best practices;
  - Collaboration and organization of joint events on alternative and renewable energy.
- xii. Gender and environment
  - Promotion of gender equality in all areas of joint interest and in particular in phases of natural disaster management, in biodiversity conservation, climate change adaptation and sustainable use of resources.

2.2 The Parties agree to continue to cooperate through their appropriate mechanisms and structures to promote strengthened environmental development effectiveness at global, regional, sub-regional and country levels as needed.

2.3 This MOU shall be brought to the attention of the staff of both Organizations, in particular the Directors of UNEP Regional Offices and the Heads of UNESCO Field Offices. UNEP and UNESCO will collaborate to provide guidance, information and learning tools to staff members concerned so as to enhance cooperation in the agreed fields.

2.4 Within the scope of each Party's relevant rules, regulations and business processes, the Parties will explore opportunities to cooperate in the areas of staffing in furtherance to the purpose of this MOU, including the possible secondment of their respective staff.

### **Article III Programme Planning and Implementation**

3.1 At the country level, the Parties recognize the particular importance of the UNCT and the potential of joint programming and its implementation for responding effectively to national priorities and capacity building synergies, both through national development plans and UN joint country programming

exercises. Joint programming can address cross-cutting themes, normative issues and normative-operational linkages, upstream policy work and advice required by governments.

3.2. The Parties shall explore and promote, within the context of UNCTs, the inclusion of deliverables and UNDAF outcomes related to the building of national capacities for environment-related scientific knowledge bases, related monitoring and assessment, as well as the inclusion of the formulation of national/regional environment policies, with distinct poverty-environment linkages.

3.3. The Parties will pay particular attention to joint work with relevant line ministries at the country level, especially science and environment ministries, as well as with **UNESCO National Commissions** and other UNESCO networks (e.g. institutes and centres under the auspices of UNESCO (category 2 centers), UNESCO chairs or the Associated Schools Programme/ASP), as appropriate.

3.4. Both Parties will also promote cooperation and exchange of information among their respective representatives at the regional, sub-regional, and country levels (both within UNCTs and in the case of limited activities outside the UNCT framework) and in the context of Regional Directors' (Managers) Teams (RDTs/RMTs).

3.5 At Headquarters level, the Parties also agree to support common programmatic initiatives and to exchange information to develop and strengthen cooperation, as deemed appropriate.

3.6 Substantive areas of cooperation and methods through which collaborative initiatives, strategies and support may be realized between the Parties will be elaborated by focal points designated by the respective Parties. The Deputy Executive Director will act as the focal point within UNEP and the Assistant Director-General for Strategic Planning will be the focal point at UNESCO. The focal points will provide the strategic direction of cooperation, monitor the implementation of the MOU and provide regular feedback to their respective institutions.

3.7 The Parties may agree upon, through their focal points, the launch of special initiatives or joint actions, globally and regionally and in collaboration with the partner governments, and cooperate closely in the context of common country programming exercises with UNCTs in accordance with respective rules, policies and procedures of the Parties.

3.8 Each Party shall be responsible for its acts and omissions in connection with the implementation of this MOU.

3.9 For each party, the operational activities shall be subject to its agreement with the concerned governments.

## **Article IV Collection and Utilization of Statistical Information**

4.1 Subject to 5.1 below the Parties recognize the value and need for sharing statistical and scientific information in order to avoid duplication in collection, analysis, publication and distribution of such information.

4.2 To this end the Parties will coordinate their efforts to ensure efficient data collection, maintenance and management, while supporting governments' capacity in data collection and analysis, including capacities to produce and use earth observations. As regards statistics, the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) will serve as focal point for UNESCO.

## **Article V Consultation and Exchange of Information**

5.1 Consultation and exchange of information and documents under this Article shall be without prejudice to arrangements which may be in place to safeguard the confidential and restricted character of certain information and documents. Such arrangements will survive the termination of this MOU and any agreement signed by the Parties within the scope of this collaboration.

5.2 The Parties shall consult with each other on a regular basis on matters which might affect the successful completion of the joint initiatives and collaboration agreed upon in this MoU. The Parties shall hold regular bilateral meetings to review the progress of joint collaboration being carried out and plan future activities in the priority areas of cooperation mentioned in Article II above. Implementation of any specific activities/subsequent projects/programmes pursuant to this MOU shall necessitate the execution of appropriate legal agreements between the Parties.

5.3 The Parties will collaborate to enhance networking and information exchange so as to improve, *inter alia*, the accessibility and inter-operability of information with particular focus on early warning systems to cope with natural disasters.

## **Article VI Visibility**

6.1 The Parties agree to acknowledge the role and contribution of each Organization in all public information documentation relating to instances of such cooperation and use each Organization's name and emblem in documentation related to the cooperation in accordance with the current policies of each Organization and with the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) policies.

## **Article VII Term, Termination, Amendment**

7.1 This MOU shall enter into effect upon signature by both Parties and shall remain valid for a period of five years. Either Party may terminate this MOU by giving not less than sixty (60) days notice in writing to the other Party. Such termination shall become effective on the date specified in the termination note.

7.2 In the event of termination of the MOU, any subsequent cost-sharing, project cooperation agreements, and any project documents concluded between the Parties pursuant to this MOU, may also be terminated in accordance with the termination provision stipulated therein. In such cases, the Parties shall take the necessary steps to ensure that the activities carried out under the MOU, any cost-sharing agreement, or project documents are brought to a prompt and orderly conclusion in accordance with the respective regulations and rules of the Parties, as applicable.

7.3 This MOU may be amended only by mutual written agreement of the Parties. The Parties may, by exchange of letters (EOL), amend any of the provisions of this MOU or enter into supplementary arrangements designed to extend the scope of the present MOU.

7.4 This MOU shall be reviewed on an annual basis.

## **Article VIII Notices and Addresses**

8.1 Any notice or request required or permitted to be given or made under this MOU shall be in writing. Such notice or request shall be deemed to have been duly given or made when it shall have been delivered by hand, certified mail, or overnight courier to the party to which it is required to be given or made at the address specified below or such other address as shall be hereafter notified.

For UNEP: Deputy Executive Director  
UNEP  
PO Box 30552  
Nairobi 00100, Kenya

For UNESCO: Assistant Director General for Strategic Planning  
UNESCO  
7, Place de Fontenoy  
F-75352 Paris 07 SP, France

## **Article IX Miscellaneous**

9.1 This MOU comprises the complete understanding of the Parties in respect of the subject matter and supersedes all prior organization-wide agreements

between the Parties. Any dispute over the interpretation or application of any provision herein contained shall be settled through negotiations or by such other means as the Parties shall mutually agree. Failure by either Party to enforce a provision of this MOU shall not waive any other provision of the MOU. The invalidity or unenforceability of any other provision of this MOU shall not affect the validity or enforceability of any other provision of the MOU.

## **Article X Entry into Force**

10.1 This MOU shall be signed in two copies, each of which shall be deemed an original and this MOU shall enter into force upon signature by the Parties being effective from the date of the latest signature, and shall remain valid for a period of five years, unless terminated earlier pursuant to Article VII above.

**IN WITNESS THEREOF**, the duly authorized representatives of the Parties affix their signatures below.

For UNEP:

For UNESCO:

Achim Steiner  
Executive Director

Koichiro Matsuura  
Director-General

Dated 3 April 2009

Dated 3 April 2009

## Meeting of National Commissions for UNESCO from "Delivering as One" Pilot Countries and UNDAF Roll-out Countries

Hanoi, Viet Nam, 11-13 November 2008

### Report of the meeting

1. Representatives of 18 National Commissions for UNESCO from UN Delivering as One pilot countries, United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) rollout countries and observers from two European National Commissions met in Hanoi, Viet Nam, from 11 to 13 November 2008. The objective of the Meeting was to analyze past experiences and best practices with regard to the involvement of National Commissions for UNESCO in country programming processes, and to develop strategies for future active participation of National Commissions in upcoming UNDAF and other country programming exercises and their implementation. The participants deliberated on these issues with the presence and assistance of members of UNESCO Secretariat, both from Headquarters (HQ) and from field offices concerned, as well as UN agencies present in Viet Nam (see attached Agenda and List of Participants).

2. To this end, the participants discussed their respective experiences with UN common country programming processes, identifying constraints and difficulties as well as best practices and lessons learnt. They acknowledged in particular the new prospects opened by the provision in the recently signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between UNESCO and UNDP of a specific clause to the effect that UN Resident Coordinators may invite representatives of National Commissions for UNESCO to take part in the work of the UN Country Team (UNCT) where relevant. This development contains both an important opportunity and a considerable challenge. The challenge is mainly for the National Commissions themselves, which need to be proactive in order to engage all relevant actors for fostering their relevance and involvement and to be prepared for their contribution to the UNCT deliberations. Bearing this in mind, they adopted the following recommendations:

3. The participants to the Hanoi meeting

#### **3.1. Recommend to the UNESCO Secretariat to:**

a) Inform all Member States and UNESCO Field Offices of the MOU recently signed between the Director-General of UNESCO and the Administrator of UNDP, and advocate for the National Commissions' active participation in the UN common country programming process, whether UNESCO is a resident or a non-resident agency in the country;



b) Enhance the managing capacities of and broaden the scope of training for the National Commissions and that of related field offices, by using regular budget, Participation Programme (PP) funding and extrabudgetary resources so that they are appropriately trained to fulfill their responsibilities related to the UNDAF and other processes. To this end, develop appropriate training modules and their relevant materials, including a practical manual on UN common country programming processes and the role of the National Commissions therein. Training should thus shift from the traditional one on Headquarters, the Secretariat and the five Programme Sectors to an innovative training on the UN reform that links UNESCO programmes to the programmes of other UN agencies, involving also the Field Office directors and other experts in this regard;

c) Ensure that the existing Guidelines for interface and cooperation between UNESCO field offices and National Commissions for UNESCO (contained in an annex to document 174 EX/34) are fully implemented with regard to the responsibility of Field Office (FO) directors to keep National Commissions fully informed on the work of the United Nations Country Team (UNCT), particularly concerning the elaboration of the UNDAF and similar documents, through regular meetings, exchange of information and other formal and informal occasions;

d) Invite the Field Office directors to introduce the Secretary-General of the National Commission to the UN Resident Coordinator so that they can be invited to attend UNCT meetings when relevant as suggested by the UNESCO-UNDP MOU; information on the status, functions and structure of the National Commission should be provided by the UNESCO Secretariat to all relevant UN partners;

e) Inform the Decentralization Review Task Force (DRTF) on these recommendations on the positioning of National Commissions in UNDAF and other UN common country programming processes.

### **3.2. Recommend to National Commissions to:**

a) Enhance at the national level advocacy on UNESCO's norms, standards and ethical positions, in order to make UNESCO's competences, mandate and expertise better known and reflected in the UNDAF and other processes where relevant to national development strategies and priorities;

b) Liaise with line ministries relevant to UNESCO's fields of competence in order to ensure that they are involved in the dialogue with the UNCT for the development of the UNDAF and other processes;

c) Mobilize the broader UNESCO family and other national partners (Associated Schools Project network, UNESCO Chairs, UNESCO Clubs, Civil Society Organizations (CSO), Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) and others), so that their possibilities for partnership are taken into account in UN common country programming processes where relevant, with special attention to enhancing the visibility of the Organization in a coherent manner;

d) Maintain regular contact with the relevant Field Office (FO) by using any opportunity, formal and informal, face to face or remotely, regardless of UNESCO being a Resident Agency (RA) or a Non-Resident Agency (NRA);

e) Ensure that their staff acquire necessary knowledge and skills needed to fulfill the responsibilities arising from participation in common country programming processes with a view to promoting a consistent approach, quality delivery and execution of the programme as well as their improved impact;

### **3.3. Recommend to Member States to:**

a) Enhance the status and structure of the National Commissions to allow them to effectively participate in the UNDAF and other processes;

b) Strengthen the necessary capacities, resources and skills of the National Commissions so that they can closely liaise and work with other government bodies and organizations as well as with all relevant stakeholders and other members of the broader UNESCO family, and create an enabling environment for National Commissions to carry out their mandate completely;

c) Further promote networking and partnership, especially through North-South and North-South-South cooperation among National Commissions, to exchange best practices in participating in the UN Delivering as One processes, and in particular UNDAF and other related or equivalent processes;

d) Improve the sharing of relevant information and data, including country analytical assessments, with the field offices involved in UNDAF and other processes.

Done in Hanoi, 13 November 2008



**Meeting of National Commissions for UNESCO from developed and well-resourced countries, 20 January 2009, UNESCO HQ, Paris**

**Presentation of outcomes to the Decentralization Review Task Force (DRTF)**

**Second Phase, 4th Meeting, on 21 January 2009.**

1. The representatives of 14 National Commissions participated in this one-day meeting. The National Commissions of Lebanon, Swaziland, and Vietnam also attended as observers and contributed to the discussions. The UNESCO Secretariat was represented by the Sector of External Relations (ERC) and the Bureau of Strategic Planning (BSP). The meeting was opened by Ahmed Sayyad, ADG/ERC.
2. Mr Luis Ramallo, President of the Spanish Commission for UNESCO, was elected Chair, Mr Roland Bernecker, Secretary-General of the German Commission for UNESCO, was elected Rapporteur of this Meeting.

**1. General Remarks**

3. Representatives of National Commissions thanked the Secretariat for the opportunity to discuss the issue of strengthening the network of National Commissions with a view to enhancing their contribution to UNESCO's decentralization strategy. Mr Bernecker took the occasion to particularly thank ERC, BFC and BSP for the excellent cooperation in the frame of the project to strengthen capacities of National Commissions in Africa.
4. Participants of the meeting pointed out that the international crisis the world is facing today makes it even more clear that UNESCO stands for the basic values that need to be promoted on a global level and that the Organization has a great responsibility through its mandate for fundamental issues that need to be addressed in order to create a better future for humanity. With regard to the review of its decentralization strategy, the main question therefore is how to strengthen the impact of the Organization's action in UNESCO's Member States. The best advocacy is to have strong outcomes and lasting results. Well functioning National Commissions are an effective tool to create that impact at a national level.
5. In the process of joint UN country programming UNESCO cannot be seen a funding agency, although it mobilises extra-budgetary funding for its activities. While UNESCO is determining its consolidated role in that process, it should place emphasis on becoming the defining authority among the UN agencies for the joint UN work – the “think tank” of the team. National Commissions, with their outreach capacities, can have a particular role in marshalling knowledge and expertise at the national level. The essential matter is that UNESCO has above all to be an authoritative world leader in its areas of competence. That means to decide what the challenges are and what are realistic goals to meet those challenges. UNESCO should also promote the best policies, set the necessary agreed international standards, help build capacity in countries and monitor collective global efforts. UNESCO has the potential for a global leadership role in all its areas. As one participant put it: *UNESCO doit gagner la bataille de l'expertise.*

6. It was felt that the wide range of topics raised during the meeting needed further reflection and discussions by all parties concerned in the context of latest developments. The possibility of presenting a draft resolution to the General Conference in this regard was also proposed.

## **II. National Commissions in a decentralized UNESCO**

7. It was pointed out that National Commissions are decentralized UNESCO. This is particularly the case in Member States where there are no field offices. National Commissions are the eyes, the ears and – in many respects – the voice of UNESCO in its Member States.
8. By its Constitution, UNESCO is an Organization explicitly set up to reach out through a participative approach: “a peace based exclusively upon the political and economic arrangements of governments would not be a peace which could secure the unanimous, lasting and sincere support of the peoples of the world, and that the peace must therefore be founded, if it is not to fail, upon the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind.” In this context, National Commissions as actors that link governments, civil societies and the multilateral arena are to be seen as a genuine part of UNESCO’s overall architecture.
9. It was pointed out that National Commissions are a unique network in the UN system, creating a comparative advantage for UNESCO with regard to other UN-Organizations. Among others, the following features have been emphasized by representatives of National Commissions:
  - a) National Commissions are a unique and efficient tool to link the governmental dimension to civil society; they can effectively reach out to civil society
  - b) They can mobilize and coordinate expertise on the national level and organize intellectual input into UNESCO
  - c) They are a network of networks
  - d) They create visibility for UNESCO in Member States through publications, projects and PR-activities and by translating relevant information into the national context
  - e) They coordinate the wider UNESCO family on a national level (ASP schools, Chairs, Clubs and Associations, Committees of scientific programs) and supervise the use of the name and logo of UNESCO by these actors on a national level
  - f) They build advocacy for UNESCO in governments and parliaments
  - g) They initiate partnerships with private partners
  - h) They can mobilize funds for UNESCO related activities
  - i) They can implement projects, in partnership with local stakeholders, UNESCO Secretariat and/or with other National Commissions.

## **III. Some concrete proposals for a strategy to strengthen the effective contribution of National Commissions to a decentralized UNESCO**

10. Although National Commissions are different in each country, it is useful to share some standards for their efficient functioning, for example:
  - a) National Commissions should be well structured and equipped with minimum financial resources.
  - b) A well trained Secretary-General with a mandate of at least 5 years and one professional staff for each of UNESCO’s major programmes

- c) Experience is one of the main assets of National Commissions' staff. Therefore, frequent changes of professional staff in National Commissions are to be seen as a main impediment to their effectiveness; there is clear evidence of a close relation between the quality of work of a National Commission and the number of years of tenure of its professional staff, especially with regard to the Secretary-General. Effective mechanisms should be developed to ensure stability in the Secretariats of National Commissions.
  - d) Inter-sectoral outreach of National Commissions is essential. A however limited autonomy in the administrative linkage to a national ministry allows National Commissions to establish good relations to all ministries concerned by UNESCO's large mandate. A National Commission should not, through the attachment to a particular ministry, be limited to work exclusively in one of the Organization's major programmes
  - e) Experience shows that it is necessary to address governments in order to enhance the status of National Commissions.
11. UNESCO and Member States should support and strengthen the worldwide network of National Commissions.
  12. UNESCO Secretariat can play the role of a clearing house for gathering, systemizing and disseminating good practices in the field of National Commission (with regard to structure, management, regional and interregional cooperation, training needs, etc.).
  13. National Commissions work in an extremely complex setting at the interface of many different stakeholders and institutions; therefore, training and capacity building are seen to be crucial for the strengthening of National Commissions, for example:
    - a) Training and capacity building for National Commissions must be developed in the perspective of a long term programme, not as a set of single activities
    - b) Regular and extrabudgetary resources should be mobilized for such a comprehensive training programme
    - c) Training has to be made more effective, interactive and focused on the real need of National Commissions; e.g. a new formula of the regular training of new Secretaries-General should be developed (this is already being undertaken by ERC)
    - d) Funds from the Participation Programme should be earmarked for training and capacity building of National Commissions
    - e) A few days of training could be attached to the regional consultations of National Commissions
    - f) Exchange of staff between National Commissions should be promoted and organized; in this regard, UNESCO could establish fellowships for new Secretaries-General
    - g) A mentoring programme could be formalized to create relationships between National Commissions and to provide coaching and support
    - h) Inter-regional cooperation between National Commissions should be promoted, whereby two-way support and equal partnership among National Commissions from different regions should be encouraged
    - i) Resource persons could be appointed as advisors for National Commissions in a region

j) Support should be also provided to the capacity-building of the local partners of National Commissions.

14. The cooperation of National Commissions in regional clusters should be enhanced. In the case of Europe and North America, it was proposed to consider to group National Commissions into clusters to promote sub-regional cooperation and partnerships.
15. National Commissions could be encouraged to undertake projects jointly. More Participation Programme funds should be used for projects jointly organized by some National Commissions and involving other National Commissions, thus enhancing project management skills and cooperational links within the network.
16. A proposal was put forward to advertise selected projects from the regular biennial programme and budget of UNESCO through a call for applications to National Commissions; these could apply to implement the project and, if possible, bring in supplementary extrabudgetary resources.

#### **IV. The role of National Commissions in the UNDAF process**

17. Representatives of National Commissions congratulated UNESCO on the conclusion of a Memorandum of Understanding with UNDP and appreciated the efforts of UNESCO to enhance the involvement of National Commissions in the UNDAF process.
18. The ongoing UN-reform is a very complex and technical process; information and training of National Commissions with regard to all aspects of the UNDAF process is being seen as crucial. Representatives of National Commissions concerned stated a lack of transparency in the process.
19. A new partnership has to be build between Field Offices of UNESCO and National Commissions. Things have developed already in a very constructive way. Examples show that where people are willing to cooperate, relations very soon become effective. It is necessary to create a spirit of mutual supportiveness between Field Offices and National Commissions. As a matter of governance, this question should be addressed by the high-level management of UNESCO's Secretariat. Stronger links between Category I and II Institutes of UNESCO and National Commissions should be also established.
20. Partners of UNESCO in the UN-system, notably members of the UN Country Team in each Member State, have to be better informed on UNESCO's specificities, e.g. with regard to the added value of National Commissions and their international and national networks and expertise.
21. National Commissions from developed countries should nurture closer links with ministries in their countries dealing with ODA and National Commissions from developing countries should advocate "UNESCO's topics" within their National Development Plans.
22. It is essential to associate National Commissions in the UNDAF process in a pragmatic and flexible way, avoiding "one size fits all" approach and taking advantage of National Commissions' expertise about the national context and their privileged access to relevant national stakeholders.

## V. Conclusion

23. National Commissions are a modern instrument of governance, truly reflecting the participatory approach of UNESCO as laid down in its Constitution, and creating a strong link between governments, civil society and multilateral cooperation. They especially support the intellectual function of the Organization by mobilizing national expertise and they create awareness and advocacy for UNESCO in its Member States. We have to find more intelligent ways to maximize this resource for the Organization.



24 April 2009

Ref.: CL/3870

**Subject: Towards the effective participation of National Commissions  
in the “Delivering as One” process**

Sir/Madam,

The ongoing United Nations system-wide reform process, notably the current drive for uniting efforts and resources for “Delivering as One” through joint programming at the country level, offers new opportunities and creates additional challenges for the Organization, Member States and the worldwide network of National Commissions for UNESCO. The Organization endeavours to find innovative approaches in order to maximize its participation in the new generation of United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) processes currently being launched and to extend over the next two to three years and, more importantly, to harness strong national ownership for common programmes.

With this in mind, UNESCO signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Strategic Partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) last October (copy attached herewith), which stipulates *inter alia* that the United Nations Resident Coordinators may invite representatives of National Commissions for UNESCO to take part in the discussions of the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) when relevant programming issues are discussed and Commissions’ participation is deemed useful, especially in countries where UNESCO is a non-resident agency.

This agreement with UNDP is obviously a major achievement for UNESCO, but its successful implementation depends on a number of factors, including on the efficiency of National Commissions and their capacity to engage their members and local partners to foster their contribution to UNESCO’s decentralization process and the UNCT deliberations.

The idea of the establishment of a National Commission in each Member State is enshrined in UNESCO’s Constitution. Over the past 60 years, national and international contexts have evolved considerably, creating new tasks and additional responsibilities for National Commissions. However, not all Commissions have been adequately equipped to assume these expanding duties. The significant difference that exists today between the 195 National Commissions, in terms of their outreach capabilities and operational capacities, is the key challenge that needs to be addressed urgently. A good balance should be struck between the volume and complexity of tasks entrusted to the National Commissions and the actual status, resources and capacities placed at their disposal.

The Organization continues to invest morally and financially, when and where required, to support the capacity-building of National Commissions. As mandated by the governing bodies, a substantial amount of funds is spent every biennium for that purpose. For instance, in the 2008-2009 biennium alone, we intend to train at least 200 Secretaries-General and officials of National Commissions. However, UNESCO's investment becomes less effective if governments do not take sustained measures to turn their Commissions into strong, dynamic entities. The impact of our training programmes will be much reduced if over one third of the Secretaries-General continue to change their jobs every biennium.

The recent fora organized by UNESCO, notably the meeting of National Commissions for UNESCO from the "Delivering as One" pilot countries and UNDAF roll-out countries (Hanoi, Viet Nam, 11-13 November 2008, report enclosed), as well as the meeting of National Commissions for UNESCO from developed and well-resourced countries (Paris, 20 January 2009), reached similar conclusions, indicating that governments should provide their Commissions with the following basic fundamentals and minimum standards so as to enable them to act proactively:

- enhanced status and structure, with solid outreach capacity to all line ministries and government agencies, as well as to local intellectual communities and civil society partners;
- stability in the leadership, so that the Secretaries-General of National Commissions stay in office full-time for a minimum of four years;
- sufficient human resources, so that the secretariats of National Commissions have at least one full-time programme specialist for each area of UNESCO's competence.

In this connection, I should like to urge you to take appropriate measures, wherever required, to support your National Commissions as part of your government's responsibility, so that they are reinforced to perform efficiently. The UNESCO Secretariat is ready to provide any possible assistance in this important endeavour.

It would be highly appreciated if you or your respective National Commission would inform UNESCO, before the end of this year, of the measures taken or envisaged to meet the above-mentioned standards, which are essential for the promotion of National Commissions as efficient and credible actors, especially among other United Nations system organizations.

I hope that I can count on your personal support and commitment in this endeavour.

Yours sincerely,

Koïchiro Matsuura  
Director-General

Enclosures: 2

cc: National Commissions for UNESCO  
Permanent Delegations to UNESCO  
UNESCO Field Offices

**REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL  
TO THE 182ND SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD  
ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REFORM PROCESS  
REVIEW OF THE DECENTRALIZATION STRATEGY  
(Document 182 EX/6; Part II)**

26 August 2009

**Extract**

**III NEW CHALLENGES POSED BY THE UNITED NATIONS COUNTRY-LEVEL REFORM**

**III.5 Impact on cooperation with National Commissions and other country level partners**

76. Within the new United Nations dynamics at country level, National Commissions play a vital role in advising UNESCO field offices on country priorities, acting as a source of information, as well as facilitating consultations with line ministries and mobilizing national expertise to help shape UNESCO's inputs to United Nations common country programming processes. In their capacity as national bodies connected to national governments, National Commissions also advocate, among ministries working in UNESCO's fields of competence and coordinating ministries (e.g. planning, economy and finance as appropriate), on the Organization's norms and standards, ethical positions and priorities within their National Development Plans, as well as on assigning leadership to the Organization in relevant United Nations common country programmes. This role should be seen as potentially all the more important in countries where UNESCO is non-resident.

77. To play the above roles to the full, National Commissions need to be well aware of the complexity and technicality of the United Nations common country processes. UNESCO field offices have therefore the responsibility to ensure that National Commissions are fully informed and regularly updated, and to encourage them to take on a complementary role compatible to their national status and accountability. They also have to inform UNCTs of the added value of UNESCO National Commissions and of their international and national networks, reach-out and expertise, and advocate for the participation of National Commissions, when deemed useful, in certain UNCT and thematic working group meetings in line with the Memorandum of Understanding on Strategic Partnership between UNESCO and UNDP signed in October 2008. A strengthened spirit of coordination, mutual support, open dialogue and consultation between field offices and National Commissions is called for, with due consideration of their respective natures and accountabilities. As national bodies accountable to governments, National Commissions cannot be assimilated to United Nations agencies even in countries where UNESCO has no presence. Their national nature, however, constitutes a strength for UNESCO as they are uniquely placed to advocate for UNESCO within governments.

78. Associating National Commissions of developing countries with United Nations common country programming processes should be done in a pragmatic and flexible manner avoiding a "one size fits all" approach. Such flexibility is important as National Commissions are different in each country, with varying strengths and weaknesses. Therefore, the level and nature of their involvement can differ widely according to such factors as the presence of a UNESCO office in the country, the National Commission's overall capacity, expertise, human and financial resources, and privileged access to relevant national stakeholders. A major obstacle to the involvement of many National Commissions still resides in their

capacities which need to be considerably strengthened. In addition to adequate qualified staff for each UNESCO field of competence, appropriate mechanisms to ensure stability in their secretariats, as well as intersectoral outreach and recognized status at national level, appropriate support should continue to be provided to National Commissions. Stronger advocacy to governments of Member States for the empowerment of National Commissions, training and capacity-building are seen to be crucial in this respect. Innovative approaches to training within long-term programmes (and not as a set of single activities) focused on the real needs of National Commissions, and with mentoring schemes and partnerships among National Commissions from different regions, should be pursued. As a first step, priority should be given to a comprehensive assessment and mapping of capacities and expertise of National Commissions, and the development of training materials and practical guides on United Nations common country processes, as well as the review of the “Architecture of National Commissions for UNESCO” and of the “Guidelines for interface and cooperation between UNESCO field offices and National Commissions for UNESCO”, to adapt them to the context of the United Nations country-level reform.

79. National Commissions from developed and well-resourced countries also have a role to play with regard to the United Nations reform at country level and the overall decentralization strategy of UNESCO. They should nurture closer links with ministries in their countries dealing with ODA to advocate for UNESCO's ideals and priority programmes and projects. They could also develop training initiatives and programmes aimed at strengthening capacities of National Commissions in developing countries and mobilize funds to this effect, as some have already started doing, notably the National Commissions of Germany and Spain.

80. As regards the broader UNESCO family and other national-level partners, they are recognized as essential partners to promote UNESCO's values, norms and standards. UNESCO Chairs, national committees of UNESCO intergovernmental programmes as well as national NGOs and civil society organizations, should be consulted by field offices when elaborating United Nations common country programmes and involved in their implementation, on a case-by-case basis depending on their widely varying capacities and expertise. Where possible, National Commissions should seek to carry out a coordination function in this regard. The contribution of components of this broader family could also be sought in terms of advocacy and local fundraising. Examples of fruitful cooperation and good practices include the assignment by the UNESCO Centre of the Basque Country of 120 highly qualified young Basque volunteers in 45 UNESCO field offices within the last 10 years, as well as the cooperation between the UNESCO-NGO Liaison Committee and the UNESCO Office in Santiago for conducting an impact analysis of the economic crisis on the education for all process in Latin America. Mapping of national civil society partners affiliated to NGOs having official relations with UNESCO, as well as raising their awareness of the United Nations reform at country level, are seen as priority actions to strengthen relationships between them and UNESCO field offices and National Commissions. As to the latter, many still have to develop their capacity to reach out to civil society.



## General Assembly

Distr.: General  
14 March 2008

Sixty-second session  
Agenda item 59 (b)

### Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[on the report of the Second Committee (A/62/424/Add.2)]

#### **62/208. Triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system**

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolutions 44/211 of 22 December 1989, 47/199 of 22 December 1992, 50/120 of 20 December 1995, 52/203 of 18 December 1997, 52/12 B of 19 December 1997, 53/192 of 15 December 1998, 56/201 of 21 December 2001 and 59/250 of 22 December 2004, Economic and Social Council resolutions 2005/7 of 20 July 2005 and 2006/14 of 26 July 2006 and other relevant resolutions,

*Reaffirming* the importance of the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities, through which the General Assembly establishes key system-wide policy orientations for the development cooperation and country-level modalities of the United Nations system,

*Reaffirming also* the need to strengthen the United Nations with a view to enhancing its authority and efficiency, as well as its capacity to address effectively, and in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the full range of development challenges of our time,

*Recalling* the commitment of Member States to enhance the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, accountability and credibility of the United Nations system as a shared goal and interest,

*Recalling also* the need to provide the United Nations system with adequate and timely resources with a view to enabling it to carry out its mandates,

*Reaffirming* the need to ensure, in a coherent and timely manner, the full implementation of all the elements of its resolutions 44/211, 47/199, 50/120, 53/192, 56/201 and 59/250, and the parts of its resolution 52/12 B, relevant to operational activities for development, which should be considered as an integral part of the present resolution,

*Recalling* the role of the Economic and Social Council in providing coordination and guidance to the United Nations system to ensure that those policy orientations are implemented on a system-wide basis in accordance with the present resolution and General Assembly resolutions 48/162 of 20 December 1993, 50/227 of 24 May 1996, 57/270 B of 23 June 2003 and 61/16 of 20 November 2006,

*Recalling also* the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields, such as the United Nations

Millennium Declaration of 2000,<sup>1</sup> the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development of 2002,<sup>2</sup> the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (“Johannesburg Plan of Implementation”) of 2002,<sup>3</sup> the 2005 World Summit Outcome,<sup>4</sup> and its resolution 60/265 of 30 June 2006 on follow-up to the development outcome of the 2005 World Summit, including the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals,

*Recognizing* the vital role played by these conferences and summits in shaping a broad development vision and in identifying commonly agreed objectives, which have contributed to our understanding of and actions to overcome the challenges to improving human life in different parts of the world,

*Reaffirming* that each country must take primary responsibility for its own development and that the role of national policies and development strategies cannot be overemphasized in the achievement of sustainable development, and recognizing that national efforts should be complemented by supportive global programmes, measures and policies aimed at expanding the development opportunities of developing countries, while taking into account national conditions and ensuring respect for national ownership, strategies and sovereignty,

*Recognizing* that the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, offer a framework for planning, reviewing and assessing the activities of the United Nations for development,

*Recognizing also* that development, peace and security and human rights are interlinked and mutually reinforcing, and reaffirming that development is a central goal in itself and that it constitutes a key element of the overarching framework of the United Nations operational activities for development,

*Recognizing further* that the private sector and civil society, including non-governmental organizations, can positively contribute to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, and encouraging their further contribution in supporting national development efforts in accordance with national plans and priorities,

*Recognizing* that new technologies, including information and communications technologies, present an opportunity to accelerate development, especially in developing countries, and noting that access to those technologies remains uneven and that a digital divide still prevails,

*Reiterating* the importance of the development of national capacities to eradicate poverty and pursue sustained and equitable economic growth and sustainable development as a central goal of the development cooperation of the United Nations system,

*Recognizing* that current trends in development assistance, including sector-wide approaches and budget support, pose challenges to the United Nations, and stressing that the United Nations can play a role in assisting developing countries to manage these aid modalities,

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<sup>1</sup> See resolution 55/2.

<sup>2</sup> *Report of the International Conference on Financing for Development, Monterrey, Mexico, 18-22 March 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.02.II.A.7), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

<sup>3</sup> *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August–4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 2, annex.

<sup>4</sup> See resolution 60/1.

*Recognizing also* the urgent and specific needs of the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States,

*Recognizing further* the special needs of Africa,

## I

### Introduction

1. *Takes note with appreciation* of the reports of the Secretary-General on the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system<sup>5</sup> and on the comprehensive statistical analysis of the financing of operational activities for development of the United Nations system;<sup>6</sup>

2. *Notes* the advances that the United Nations development system is making in the implementation of General Assembly resolution 59/250, and calls upon the United Nations system to accelerate its full implementation, taking into account the provisions of the present resolution;

3. *Reaffirms* that the fundamental characteristics of the operational activities for development of the United Nations system should be, inter alia, their universal, voluntary and grant nature, their neutrality and their multilateralism, as well as their ability to respond to the development needs of programme countries in a flexible manner, and that the operational activities are carried out for the benefit of programme countries, at the request of those countries and in accordance with their own policies and priorities for development;

4. *Underscores* that there is no “one size fits all” approach to development and that development assistance by the United Nations development system should be able to respond to the varying development needs of programme countries and should be in alignment with their national development plans and strategies in accordance with its mandates;

5. *Recognizes* that the strength of the United Nations operational system lies in its legitimacy, at the country level, as a neutral, objective and trusted partner for both programme countries and donor countries;

6. *Stresses* that national Governments have the primary responsibility for their countries’ development and for coordinating, on the basis of national strategies and priorities, all types of external assistance, including that provided by multilateral organizations, in order to effectively integrate such assistance into their development processes;

7. *Emphasizes* that the operational activities for development of the United Nations system should be valued and assessed on the basis of their impact on the programme countries as contributions to enhance their capacity to pursue poverty eradication, sustained economic growth and sustainable development;

8. *Decides* that, with the agreement and consent of the host country, the United Nations development system should assist national Governments in creating an enabling environment in which the links and cooperation between national Governments, the United Nations development system, civil society, national non-governmental organizations and the private sector that are involved in the

<sup>5</sup> A/62/73-E/2007/52 and A/62/253.

<sup>6</sup> A/62/74-E/2007/54 and A/62/326.

development process are strengthened, including, as appropriate, during the United Nations Development Assistance Framework preparation process, with a view to seeking new and innovative solutions to development problems in accordance with national policies and priorities;

9. *Stresses* that the purpose of reform is to make the United Nations development system more efficient and effective in its support to developing countries to achieve the internationally agreed development goals, on the basis of their national development strategies, and stresses also that reform efforts should enhance organizational efficiency and achieve concrete development results;

10. *Requests* the United Nations development system to continue its efforts to respond to national development plans, policies and priorities, which constitute the only viable frame of reference for programming operational activities at the country level, and to pursue full integration of operational activities for development at the country level with national planning and programming, under the leadership of national Governments, at all stages of the process, while ensuring the full involvement of all relevant stakeholders at the national level;

11. *Recognizes* that strengthening the role and capacity of the United Nations development system to assist countries in achieving their development goals requires continuing improvement in its effectiveness, efficiency, coherence and impact, along with a significant increase in resources and an expansion of its resource base on a continuous, more predictable and assured basis;

12. *Encourages* the Secretary-General, through the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination and the United Nations Development Group, as appropriate, to make efforts to enhance the coherence, effectiveness and efficiency of the United Nations development system;

13. *Recognizes* that the individual United Nations funds, programmes and agencies have specific experience and expertise, derived from, and in line with, their mandates and strategic plans, and stresses, in this regard, that improvement of coordination and coherence at the country level should be undertaken in a manner that recognizes the respective mandates and roles and enhances the effective utilization of resources and the unique expertise of all United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies;

14. *Urges* all Member States to pursue full implementation of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, and recognizes the positive contribution that these goals can make in providing direction to the operational activities for development of the United Nations system in accordance with national development efforts and priorities;

15. *Recognizes* that the transition from relief to development represents a complex challenge as regards the universal achievement of the Millennium Development Goals;

16. *Also recognizes* the importance of consistent, reliable and comprehensive statistical data and analysis about the United Nations operational activities in order to provide an understanding of evolutions and trends contributing to sound policy decisions;



## II

### Funding for operational activities of the United Nations development system

17. *Acknowledges* efforts by developed countries to increase resources for development, including commitments by some developed countries to increase official development assistance, notes with concern the overall decline in official development assistance in 2006, calls for the fulfilment of all official development assistance commitments, including the commitments by many developed countries to achieve the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national income for official development assistance by 2015 and to reach at least 0.5 per cent of gross national income for official development assistance by 2010, as well as the target of 0.15 per cent to 0.20 per cent for least developed countries, and urges those developed countries that have not yet done so to make concrete efforts in this regard in accordance with their commitments;

18. *Stresses* that core resources, because of their untied nature, continue to be the bedrock of the operational activities for development of the United Nations system, and in this regard notes with concern that the share of core contributions to United Nations funds and programmes has declined in recent years, and recognizes the need for organizations to address, on a continuous basis, the imbalance between core and non-core resources;

19. *Urges* donor countries and other countries in a position to do so to substantially increase their voluntary contributions to the core/regular budgets of the United Nations development system, in particular its funds, programmes and specialized agencies, and to contribute on a multi-year basis, in a sustained and predictable manner;

20. *Notes* that non-core resources represent an important supplement to the regular resource base of the United Nations development system to support operational activities for development, thus contributing to an increase in total resources, while recognizing that non-core resources are not a substitute for core resources and that unearmarked contributions are vital for the coherence and harmonization of the operational activities for development;

21. *Also notes*, in this regard, that the increased use of restrictively earmarked non-core resources reduces the influence of the governing bodies and can lead to the fragmentation of operational activities for development of the United Nations system and can thus constrain their effectiveness;

22. *Recognizes* the establishment of thematic trust funds, multi-donor trust funds and other voluntary non-earmarked funding mechanisms linked to organization-specific funding frameworks and strategies established by the respective governing bodies as funding modalities complementary to regular budgets;

23. *Requests* the United Nations funds and programmes, and urges the specialized agencies to avoid using core/regular resources to cover costs related to the management of extrabudgetary funds and their programme activities;

24. *Stresses* that the mobilization and management of extrabudgetary resources should not adversely impact the quality of the delivery of the programme of work of the funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations development system;

25. *Notes with concern* that, based on assessed contributions, the regular budgets of many specialized agencies have been stagnating, and invites countries to

consider increasing their contributions to the budgets of the specialized agencies in order to enable the United Nations development system to respond in a more comprehensive and effective manner to the demands of the United Nations development agenda;

26. *Recognizes* the urgent and specific needs of low-income countries, in particular the least developed countries, and stresses the need to continue to assist those countries, including through the existing institutions and funding mechanisms of the United Nations development system;

27. *Also recognizes* that middle-income developing countries still face significant challenges in the area of poverty eradication and that efforts to address those challenges should be supported in order to ensure that achievements made to date are sustained, including through support to the effective development of comprehensive cooperation policies;

28. *Requests* the Secretary-General, making use of existing capacities within the Secretariat and, if necessary, voluntary contributions:

(a) To continue to broaden and improve the coverage, timeliness, reliability, quality and comparability of system-wide financial data, definitions and classifications for the financial reporting of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, in a coherent way;

(b) To build a comprehensive, sustainable and consistent financial data and reporting system for the operational activities for development of all the relevant organizations and entities of the United Nations system;

(c) To include, in this regard, in the report to be submitted to the Economic and Social Council in 2008 a concise assessment of progress made and a description of planned activities;

(d) To invite Member States to contribute to the support of the work mentioned above;

29. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to undertake, in full consultation with Member States, measures:

(a) To promote an adequate and expanding base of development assistance from the United Nations system, taking into account, inter alia, the development priorities of programme countries;

(b) To promote the continuation of the upward trend in real contributions to operational activities for development to identify obstacles to the achievement of that goal and to make appropriate recommendations in this regard;

(c) To promote the predictability and the multi-year pledging of funding for operational activities for development;

(d) To promote an appropriate balance between core and non-core contributions;

30. *Further requests* the Secretary-General to submit a report, pursuant to paragraph 29 above, to the sixty-third session of the General Assembly;

31. *Calls upon* developed countries to ensure that information on their efforts to increase the volume of official development assistance is made available to the relevant United Nations intergovernmental bodies;

32. *Emphasizes* that increasing financial contributions to the United Nations development system is key to achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, and in this regard recognizes the mutually reinforcing links between increased effectiveness, efficiency and coherence of the United Nations development system, achieving concrete results in assisting developing countries to eradicate poverty and achieve sustained economic growth and sustainable development through operational activities for development and the overall resourcing of the United Nations development system;

33. *Stresses* the importance for the United Nations development system to improve strategic planning, while noting that results-based management, accountability and transparency of the United Nations development system are an integral part of sound management;

34. *Emphasizes* that funding of operational activities for development of the United Nations system should focus on long-term development challenges based on national development strategies;

### III

#### **Contribution of United Nations operational activities to national capacity development and development effectiveness**

##### **A. Capacity-building and development**

35. *Recognizes* that capacity development and ownership of national development strategies are essential for the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, and calls upon United Nations organizations to provide further support to the efforts of developing countries to establish and/or maintain effective national institutions and to support the implementation and, as necessary, the devising of national strategies for capacity-building;

36. *Stresses* that capacity development is a core function of the United Nations development system, and in this regard requests the Secretary-General, in consultation with Member States, to take measures to ensure a coherent and coordinated approach by the United Nations development system in its support to capacity development efforts of programme countries;

37. *Calls upon* the United Nations development system to further support capacity-building and capacity development of developing countries, upon their request, to effectively coordinate and evaluate the impact of external development assistance in line with national development plans and priorities;

38. *Requests* the United Nations development system to support the development of specific frameworks aimed at enabling programme countries, upon their request, to design, monitor and evaluate results in the development of their capacities to achieve national development goals and strategies;

39. *Calls upon* United Nations organizations to adopt measures that ensure sustainability in capacity-building activities, and reiterates that the United Nations development system should use, to the fullest extent possible, national execution and available national expertise and technologies as the norm in the implementation of operational activities by focusing on national structures and avoiding, wherever possible, the practice of establishing parallel implementation units outside of national and local institutions;

40. *Calls upon* the United Nations development system to continue to strengthen national execution bearing in mind the importance of building national capacity, simplifying procedures and aligning them with national procedures;

41. *Requests* the United Nations development system to strengthen its procurement systems, guided by best practices, and to progressively rely on national systems for procurement;

42. *Also requests* the United Nations development system, in consultation with Member States, to create and report on a specific, measurable, achievable and time-bound results framework to measure capacity-building initiatives and activities of the United Nations development system in developing countries;

43. *Encourages* the funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations development system to intensify collaboration at the country and regional levels to achieve more effective use of their expertise, resources and actions towards strengthening national capacities, in accordance with national priorities and development plans, including through the common country assessment, when required, and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework;

44. *Welcomes* efforts and initiatives to enhance the quality of aid and to increase its impact, including the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, and calls for concrete, effective and timely action in implementing all agreed commitments on aid effectiveness, with clear monitoring and deadlines;

45. *Stresses* that programme countries, in order to meet the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration,<sup>1</sup> should have access to new and emerging technologies, which requires technology transfer, technical cooperation and the building and nurturing of scientific and technological capacity to participate in the development and adaptation of these technologies to local conditions, and in this regard urges Member States and the United Nations system to support the promotion and transfer of new and emerging technologies to programme countries;

46. *Requests* the United Nations development system to strengthen its role in facilitating access of developing countries to new and emerging technologies;

47. *Urges* all organizations of the United Nations development system to intensify inter-agency sharing of information at the system-wide level on good practices and experiences gained, results achieved, benchmarks and indicators and monitoring and evaluation criteria concerning their capacity-building and capacity development activities;

## **B. South-South cooperation and development of national capacities**

48. *Reaffirms* the increased importance of South-South cooperation, and in this regard encourages the funds, programmes, specialized agencies and other entities of the United Nations system involved to mainstream support to South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation to help developing countries, at their request and with their ownership and leadership, to develop capacities to maximize the benefits and impact of South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation in order to achieve their national goals, with special emphasis on internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals;

49. *Calls upon* donors and Member States in a position to do so to strengthen their support for South-South cooperation, including triangular cooperation,

especially by mobilizing financial resources on a sustainable basis and by providing technical assistance;

50. *Invites* all Member States and the United Nations development system to actively participate in the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation;

51. *Requests* the United Nations development system to intensify its information-sharing and reporting on support to and results achieved through South-South cooperation, including triangular cooperation;

52. *Stresses* that further efforts are required to better understand the approaches and the potential of South-South cooperation to enhance development effectiveness, including through national capacity development;

53. *Also stresses* the importance of strengthening the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation within the United Nations Development Programme, and calls upon the United Nations development system to provide the Special Unit with further support to enable it to fulfil its mandate;

54. *Welcomes* the fact that the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation continues to facilitate the wide diffusion of and access to information relating to experiences, best practices and potential partners in South-South cooperation on the Web of Information for Development, its electronic databank;

55. *Invites* Member States and the United Nations development system to celebrate the United Nations Day for South-South Cooperation in an appropriate manner;

### **C. Gender equality and women's empowerment**

56. *Reiterates its call upon* the organizations of the United Nations development system, within their organizational mandates, to mainstream a gender perspective and to pursue gender equality and the empowerment of women in their country programmes, planning instruments and sector-wide programmes and to articulate specific country-level goals and targets in this field in accordance with national development strategies;

57. *Encourages* the governing bodies of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes to ensure that gender perspectives are integrated into all aspects of their monitoring functions in relation to policies and strategies, medium-term plans, multi-year funding frameworks and operational activities, including those relating to the implementation of the Millennium Declaration and the outcomes of major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic and social fields;

58. *Takes note* of the adoption by the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination of the United Nations system-wide policy on gender equality and the empowerment of women and strategy on gender mainstreaming,<sup>7</sup> and the efforts made by the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality;

59. *Calls upon* the United Nations development system to consider the role of men and boys in gender mainstreaming policies;

60. *Requests* the United Nations development system to further enhance the effectiveness of gender specialist resources, gender focal points and gender theme

<sup>7</sup> CEB/2006/2 and Corr.1, annex.

groups, inter alia, by establishing clear mandates, ensuring adequate training, access to information and to adequate and stable resources and by increasing the support and participation of senior staff;

61. *Calls upon* the organizations of the United Nations development system, within their organizational mandates, to further improve their institutional accountability mechanisms and to include intergovernmentally agreed gender equality results and gender-sensitive indicators in their strategic frameworks;

62. *Calls upon* the United Nations development system to further improve qualitative and quantitative reporting on gender equality, including gender disaggregated data;

63. *Requests* the Secretary-General to ensure that the annual report of resident coordinators includes adequate and concise information on progress on the above;

64. *Calls upon* the United Nations development system to avail itself of the technical experience of the United Nations Development Fund for Women on gender issues;

65. *Urges* the organizations of the United Nations development system, in accordance with their respective mandates, to take a coherent and coordinated approach in their work on gender-related issues and to share good practices, tools and methodologies through appropriate means;

66. *Calls upon* the organizations of the United Nations development system to continue efforts to achieve gender balance in appointments within the United Nations system at the central, regional and country levels for positions that affect operational activities for development, including appointments of resident coordinators and other high-level posts, with due regard to representation of women from programme countries, in particular developing countries, and keeping in mind the principle of equitable geographic representation;

#### **D. Transition from relief to development**

67. *Stresses* the need for transitional activities to be undertaken under national ownership, and requests the United Nations development system to contribute in this regard to the development of national capacities at all levels to manage the transition process;

68. *Recognizes* that the United Nations development system has a vital role to play in situations of transition from relief to development;

69. *Requests* the United Nations development system, upon the request of affected countries, to respond to countries affected by disasters or conflicts in transition from relief to development in support of national priorities, while recognizing the differences in these situations;

70. *Also requests* the United Nations development system, in responding to countries in transition from relief to development, to tailor support to country-specific needs and to develop approaches in order to effectively provide support for early recovery, in accordance with national strategies, policies and requirements, while assisting in restoring or developing national capacity;

71. *Requests* the organizations of the United Nations development system to strengthen interdepartmental and inter-agency coordination in order to ensure an integrated, coherent and coordinated approach to assistance at the country level,

which takes account of the complexity of challenges that countries in those circumstances face and the country-specific character of those challenges;

72. *Also requests* the organizations of the United Nations development system to support, at the request of national Governments of countries in transition from relief to development, national capacity-building efforts and to report on their initiatives and activities in annual reporting to their respective governing bodies;

73. *Encourages* the United Nations system and the Bretton Woods institutions to continue their efforts to improve coordination with regard to the transition from relief to development, including, where relevant, the development of joint responses for post-disaster and post-conflict need assessments, programme planning, implementation and monitoring, including funding mechanisms, to deliver more effective support and to lower transaction costs for countries in the transition from relief to development;

74. *Requests* the United Nations development system to take measures, in line with guidance provided by Member States, that further strengthen the coherence, relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and timeliness of operational activities of the United Nations development system in countries in transition from relief to development;

75. *Notes*, in this regard, the need for the United Nations development system to consider ways to improve the effectiveness of its resource mobilization for transition from relief to development;

76. *Recognizes*, in this regard, the important role that the effective and responsive resident coordinator/humanitarian coordinator systems can play in situations of transition from relief to development;

77. *Calls upon* the relevant United Nations entities to further increase efforts, where appropriate, with due consideration of national data, to harmonize data collection and information management during the transition phase from relief to development and to make that information available to the Member State concerned;

78. *Requests* the United Nations development system to build its support capacity for early recovery in situations from relief to development, while noting the role that the United Nations Development Programme can play in this regard;

79. *Recognizes* that the exchange of expertise and experiences among countries of the South enables countries in situations of transition from relief to development to benefit from the experiences of other developing countries, and encourages the further development of South-South cooperation modalities, including triangular cooperation modalities, in this regard, while recognizing the need to adapt experiences to national contexts;

80. *Invites* the United Nations development system to take into account in its assistance to countries emerging from conflict that are on the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission, the advisory role that the Commission can play in relation to peacebuilding and recovery strategies, with a view to helping countries lay the foundation for their economic and social recovery and development and ensuring national ownership of the peacebuilding process;

81. *Urges* United Nations agencies and the donor community, in coordination with the national authorities, to begin planning the transition to development and taking measures supportive of that transition, such as institutional and capacity-building measures, from the beginning of the relief phase;

82. *Urges* all donors and countries in a position to do so to consider more coordinated and flexible approaches to the funding of operational activities for development in situations of transition from relief to development, making use of multiple resource mobilization instruments, and stresses that contributions to humanitarian assistance should not be provided at the expense of development assistance and that sufficient resources for humanitarian assistance should be made available by the international community;

83. *Stresses* the need for adequate, predictable and timely funding of operational activities for development in countries in situations from relief to development, and calls upon donors and countries in a position to do so to provide timely, predictable and sustained financial contributions for the operational activities of the United Nations system for early recovery and long-term development for countries in transition from relief to development;

84. *Requests* the resident coordinator system and the United Nations country teams, at the request of national Governments and in coordination with them, to promote the inclusion of prevention strategies in national development plans, bearing in mind the importance of national ownership and capacity-building at all levels;

85. *Encourages* Member States and relevant United Nations organizations to integrate disaster risk reduction into their respective activities, including measures aimed at restoring and improving services and infrastructure as part of the early recovery and transition phase;

#### IV

##### **Improved functioning of the United Nations development system**

###### **A. Coherence, effectiveness and relevance**

86. *Underscores* that the ownership, leadership and full participation of national authorities in the preparation and development of all planning and programming documents of the United Nations development system, including the common country assessment and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, are key to guaranteeing that they respond to the national development plans and strategies, and requests the United Nations development system to use the Framework and its results matrix, where applicable and with the agreement of the programme country, as the common programming tool for country-level contributions of the funds and programmes towards the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, to be fully endorsed and countersigned by the national authorities;

87. *Recalls* the potential of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework and its results matrix as the collective, coherent and integrated programming and monitoring framework for the operations of the United Nations development system at the country level, bringing increased opportunities for joint initiatives, including joint programming, and urges the United Nations development system to fully utilize such opportunities in the interest of enhancing aid efficiency and aid effectiveness;

88. *Emphasizes*, in this regard, that planning and programming frameworks of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, including the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, need to be fully aligned with national development planning cycles, whenever possible, and that they should make use of and strengthen national capacities and mechanisms;



89. *Underscores* the fact that the resident coordinator system is owned by the United Nations development system as a whole, and that its functioning should be participatory, collegial and accountable;

90. *Recognizes* the central role of resident coordinators in making possible the coordination of United Nations operational activities for development at the country level to improve the effectiveness of their response to the national development priorities of programme countries, including through appropriate resources and accountability;

91. *Reaffirms* that the resident coordinator system, within the framework of national ownership, has a key role to play in the effective and efficient functioning of the United Nations system at the country level, including in the formulation of the common country assessment and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, and is a key instrument for the efficient and effective coordination of the operational activities for development of the United Nations system;

92. *Urges* the United Nations development system to provide further financial, technical and organizational support for the resident coordinator system, and requests the Secretary-General, in consultation with the members of the United Nations Development Group, to ensure that resident coordinators have the necessary resources to fulfil their role effectively;

93. *Notes* that coordination activities, while beneficial, represent transaction costs that are borne by both programme countries and the organizations of the United Nations system, and requests the Secretary-General to report on an annual basis to the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session on the functioning of the resident coordinator system, including costs and benefits;

94. *Encourages* efforts by the United Nations development system to improve the selection and training process of resident coordinators, and requests the Secretary-General to report on this subject to the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session in 2009;

95. *Also encourages* the use of advanced information and communications technologies, including knowledge management, that will facilitate the contribution of United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies, including non-resident agencies, to the United Nations Development Assistance Framework and other planning frameworks and mechanisms, as well as overall information-sharing;

96. *Underscores* that the resident coordinator, supported by the United Nations country team, should report to national authorities on progress made against results agreed in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework;

97. *Also underscores* the importance of ensuring that the strategic plans of funds and programmes are consistent with and guided by the comprehensive policy review, which establishes the main intergovernmentally agreed parameters of the operational activities for development of the United Nations system;

98. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in this regard, to report to the General Assembly on the implications of aligning the strategic planning cycles of the United Nations funds and programmes with the comprehensive policy review and to provide recommendations on changing the comprehensive policy review from a three-year to a four-year cycle, in order for the Assembly to make a well-informed decision during its sixty-third session;

99. *Welcomes* the efforts made by the United Nations development system in the use of the common country assessment and the United Nations Development

Assistance Framework and the alignment of the Framework cycle with national planning processes and frameworks in an increasing number of countries, and notes the efforts made to improve coherence, coordination and harmonization in the United Nations development system, including at the country level;

100. *Invites* the United Nations system and the Bretton Woods institutions to explore further ways to enhance cooperation, collaboration and coordination, including through the greater harmonization of strategic frameworks, instruments, modalities and partnership arrangements, in full accordance with the priorities of the recipient Governments, and in this regard emphasizes the importance of ensuring, under the leadership of national authorities, greater consistency between the strategic frameworks developed by the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes and the Bretton Woods institutions, while maintaining the institutional integrity and organizational mandates of each organization and the national poverty reduction strategies, including poverty reduction strategy papers, where they exist;

101. *Emphasizes* that programme countries should have access to and benefit from the full range of mandates and resources of the United Nations development system, whereby the national Governments should determine which resident and non-resident United Nations organizations will best respond to specific needs and priorities of the individual country, including in the case of non-resident agencies, through hosting arrangements with resident organizations, as appropriate;

102. *Calls upon* the Secretary-General to improve the transparency and competitiveness of the recruitment processes for senior high-level posts in the United Nations development system in order to find the best candidates both inside and outside the United Nations system, and in this regard calls upon the chief executives of the United Nations specialized agencies, funds and programmes to fully cooperate with the Secretary-General, through the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, in harmonizing recruitment processes for senior officials by 2009, making the selection criteria transparent and ensuring that, for candidates with equivalent competencies, gender and geographical balance are duly taken into account;

103. *Encourages* that the United Nations development system be invited to participate, *ex officio*, in current and new aid modalities and coordination mechanisms, at the request of the programme country, and invites the United Nations development system to enhance its participation in this regard;

104. *Requests* the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme, in the exercise of responsibilities for the management of the resident coordinator system, which continues to be firmly anchored in the United Nations Development Programme:

(a) To establish appropriate mechanisms to ensure that the cost of the resident coordinator system does not reduce resources that are destined for development programmes in programme countries;

(b) To ensure, where possible, that cost savings, as a result of joint efforts and coordination, will accrue to development programmes;

105. *Recalls* the mandate of the United Nations Development Programme, within the existing programming arrangement, to appoint country directors to run its core activities, including fund-raising, so as to assure that resident coordinators are fully available for their tasks;

## **B. Regional dimensions**

106. *Recognizes* the contribution of interregional, regional and subregional cooperation to addressing development challenges related to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals;

107. *Encourages*, in this regard, the United Nations development system to strengthen collaboration with regional and subregional intergovernmental organizations and regional banks, as appropriate and consistent with their respective mandates;

108. *Requests* the United Nations regional commissions to further develop their analytical capacities to support country-level development initiatives at the request of the programme countries, and to support measures for more intensive inter-agency collaboration at the regional and subregional levels;

109. *Recognizes*, in regard to the functioning of the United Nations development system, the importance of aligning regional technical support structures and the regional bureaux to provide support to the United Nations country teams, including enhanced technical, programme and administrative support, increasing their collaboration at the regional level, including through co-location, where appropriate and consistent with the needs of the programme countries of the regions concerned, and identifying appropriate mechanisms at the subregional level, where appropriate and in close consultation with the programme countries concerned, to respond to specific challenges that cannot be adequately responded to at the regional hubs;

110. *Requests* the funds, programmes and specialized agencies and other entities of the United Nations development system at the regional level and the regional commissions to further strengthen cooperation and coordination among each other at the regional level and with their respective headquarters, inter alia, through closer cooperation within the resident coordinator system and in close consultation with Governments of the countries concerned and, where appropriate, to include the funds, programmes and specialized agencies that are not represented at the regional level;

111. *Calls upon* the organizations of the United Nations development system, its regional commissions and other regional and subregional entities, as appropriate and consistent with their mandates, to intensify their cooperation and to adopt more collaborative approaches to support country-level development initiatives at the request of recipient countries, in particular through closer collaboration within the resident coordinator system and by improving mechanisms for access to the technical capacities of the United Nations system at the regional and subregional levels;

## **C. Transaction costs and efficiency**

112. *Requests* the executive boards and governing bodies of the United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies to assess the progress achieved, including costs and benefits, in the area of simplification and harmonization of the United Nations development system at the global, regional and country levels, analyse the potential impacts on development programming and report to the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session on an annual basis;

113. *Calls upon* the United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies to continue to harmonize and simplify their rules and procedures, wherever this can lead to a significant reduction in the administrative and procedural burden on the organizations and national partners, bearing in mind the special circumstances of programme countries, and to enhance the efficiency, accountability and transparency of the United Nations development system;

114. *Also calls upon* the United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies to ensure, to the extent possible, that savings resulting from reductions in transaction and overhead costs accrue to development programmes in programme countries;

115. *Recognizes* that the growth of non-core/supplementary/extrabudgetary funding and of the number of associated projects increases transaction costs and is an important factor that can hinder efforts to maximize efficiency of the United Nations development system;

116. *Requests* the executive boards of the United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies to review the issue of cost recovery to ensure that core resources do not subsidize the projects undertaken through non-core/supplementary/extrabudgetary funding;

117. *Requests* the United Nations development system to further standardize and harmonize the concepts, practices and cost classifications related to transaction cost and cost recovery, while maintaining the principle of full cost recovery in the administration of all non-core/supplementary/extrabudgetary contributions, including in joint programmes;

118. *Encourages* the United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies, as appropriate and in consultation with programme countries, to further lower transaction costs, to conduct missions, analytical work and evaluations at the country level jointly, to provide their capacity development support through coordinated programmes consistent with the requests of programme countries and national priorities and to promote joint training and sharing of lessons learned;

119. *Encourages* the United Nations development system to make increased use of national public and private systems for support services, including for procurement, security, information technology, telecommunications, travel and banking, as well as, when appropriate, for planning, reporting and evaluation, and also encourages the United Nations development system to avoid and significantly reduce the number of its parallel project implementation units in programme countries as a means of strengthening national capacities and reducing transaction costs;

120. *Encourages* the funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations system to step up their efforts, in consultation with national Governments of programme countries and in accordance with their development needs and priorities, to rationalize their country presence through common premises, co-location and, where appropriate, to implement the joint office model and expand common shared support services and business units, in order to reduce United Nations overhead and transaction costs for national Governments;

121. *Encourages* the continuing development of harmonized approaches such as the adoption of the International Public Sector Accounting Standards, the standardization of audit definitions and ratings and the harmonized approach to cash transfers, calls upon the United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies to further harmonize and simplify their business practices, and recognizes the

importance of harmonizing human resources management, enterprise resource planning systems, finance, administration, procurement, security, information technology, telecommunications, travel and banking, and of making use of information and communications technologies to the fullest extent possible in order to reduce travel costs and other recurring communications costs;

122. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the Economic and Social Council, at its substantive session in 2008, a programme of work for the full implementation of the above-mentioned actions, to be completed before the end of 2010, including a specific, measurable, achievable and time-bound results framework, benchmarks, responsibilities and provisions to phase out redundant rules and procedures, as well as a timetable to monitor the progress made towards meeting these targets;

#### **D. Country-level capacity of the United Nations development system**

123. *Reiterates* the need for the range and level of skills and expertise assembled by the United Nations system at the country level to be commensurate with that needed to deliver on the priorities specified in each country's United Nations Development Assistance Framework or country programme documents, in line with the national development strategies and plans, including poverty reduction strategy papers, where they exist, and to correspond to the technical backstopping and capacity-building needs and requirements of developing countries;

124. *Encourages* the organizations of the United Nations development system to take all necessary measures in their human resources policies to ensure that United Nations staff involved in operational activities at the country level have the skills and expertise required for effective management, policy advisory and other capacity development work, in line with national development priorities and plans;

125. *Stresses* the need for the United Nations development system to adopt comprehensive policies and strategies for human resources and workforce planning and development, and in this regard requests the Secretary-General to prepare a report identifying human resources challenges within the development system at the country level and formulating recommendations for improvements;

126. *Requests* the Secretary-General, through the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, to continue and intensify efforts related to inter-agency staff mobility, re-profiling and redeployment of staff, as well as training and skills upgrading, notably at the United Nations System Staff College at Turin, Italy;

127. *Underscores* the importance of the use of national professional staff and national consultants, wherever feasible and to the advantage of the programme countries;

128. *Encourages* the United Nations development system to further promote, develop and support knowledge management systems, so that programme countries can avail themselves of knowledge and expertise that is not readily accessible at the country level, including resources readily available at the regional level and from non-resident agencies;

#### **E. Evaluation of operational activities for development**

129. *Emphasizes* that programme countries should have greater ownership and leadership in the evaluation of all forms of assistance, including that provided by the United Nations development system, and requests the United Nations development

system to pursue and intensify its efforts to strengthen evaluation capacities in programme countries;

130. *Notes* the endorsement in 2005 of the norms and standards for evaluation by the United Nations system through the United Nations Evaluation Group, constituting a contribution to strengthening evaluation as a United Nations system function;

131. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to assess the effectiveness of the operational activities for development of the United Nations system, including, in particular, by assessing the effective use of all capacities available to provide a comprehensive and flexible response to the demand of developing countries for development support, and to report on the results of this assessment in the context of the next comprehensive policy review;

132. *Recognizes* the need to optimize the linking of evaluation to performance in the achievement of development goals, and encourages the United Nations development system to strengthen its evaluation activities, with particular focus on development results, including through the effective use of the results matrix of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, the systematic use of monitoring and evaluation approaches at the system-wide level and the promotion of collaborative approaches to evaluation, including joint evaluations;

133. *Emphasizes* the importance of the independence and impartiality of the evaluation function within the United Nations system;

134. *Reaffirms* that the effectiveness of operational activities should be assessed by their impact on the poverty eradication efforts, economic growth and sustainable development of programme countries;

135. *Recalls* the need for country-level evaluations of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework at the end of the programming cycle, based on the results matrix of the Framework, with the full participation and leadership of the recipient Government;

136. *Requests* the United Nations development system to further develop guidance and oversight mechanisms for the funding, planning and implementation of the monitoring and evaluation of United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks, with a view to assessing their contribution to national development and the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals;

137. *Encourages* all United Nations organizations involved in operational activities for development that have not already done so to adopt, as appropriate, monitoring and evaluation policies that are in line with system-wide norms and standards and to make the necessary financial and institutional arrangements for the creation and/or strengthening of independent, credible and useful evaluation functions within each organization;

138. *Encourages* the United Nations development system to further strengthen evaluation, with the agreement of the governing bodies of the funds, programmes and agencies, and in this regard encourages the United Nations development system to continue efforts to strengthen evaluation across the system and to promote a culture of evaluation;

139. *Notes* the voluntary efforts to improve coherence, coordination and harmonization in the United Nations development system, including at the request of some "programme country pilot"; encourages the Secretary-General to support

“programme country pilot” countries to evaluate and exchange their experiences, with the support of the United Nations Evaluation Group; and emphasizes, in addition, the need for an independent evaluation of lessons learned from such efforts, for consideration by Member States, without prejudice to a future intergovernmental decision;

## V

### Follow-up

140. *Reaffirms* that the governing bodies of the funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations development system should take appropriate actions for the full implementation of the present resolution, in line with paragraphs 91 and 92 of resolution 56/201;

141. *Requests* the Secretary-General, after consultation with the funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations system, to submit a report to the Economic and Social Council, at its substantive session of 2008, on an appropriate management process, containing clear guidelines, targets, benchmarks and time frames for the full implementation of the present resolution, that defines results to be achieved through the implementation of the present resolution in a format that will allow for adequate monitoring and evaluation of these results, and interdepartmental and inter-agency measures that need to be set in motion, for the implementation of the present resolution;

142. *Also requests* the Secretary-General, on the basis of information provided by the funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations development system, to submit to the Economic and Social Council, at its substantive sessions of 2009 and 2010, detailed reports on results achieved and measures and processes implemented in follow-up to the present resolution on the triennial comprehensive policy review in order to evaluate the implementation of the resolution, with a view to ensuring its full implementation;

143. *Further requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session, through the Economic and Social Council, a comprehensive analysis of the implementation of the present resolution in the context of the triennial comprehensive policy review, inter alia, by making use of relevant documentation, and to make appropriate recommendations.

*78th plenary meeting  
19 December 2007*



# General Assembly

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Sixty-second session  
Agenda item 116

## Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[without reference to a Main Committee (A/62/L.51)]

### 62/277. System-wide coherence

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* the consensus 2005 World Summit Outcome,<sup>1</sup>

*Recalling also* its consensus resolution 62/208 of 19 December 2007 on the triennial comprehensive policy review,

*Commending* the pragmatic, transparent, balanced and inclusive approach taken by the Co-Chairs of the consultative follow-up process by the General Assembly on system-wide coherence, the Permanent Representatives of Ireland and the United Republic of Tanzania to the United Nations, to their work on behalf of the Assembly, which built upon the efforts of their distinguished predecessors, the Permanent Representatives of Barbados and Luxembourg to the United Nations, at the sixty-first session of the General Assembly,

*Having considered* the paper on “Institutional options to strengthen United Nations work on gender equality and the empowerment of women”, which the Deputy Secretary-General provided to the President of the General Assembly on 23 July 2008 in response to a consensus request from Member States,

*Looking forward* to the independent evaluation foreseen in its resolution 62/208, which will help it to form a comprehensive view of the “Delivering as one” approach to the provision of development assistance through the United Nations system and, in the meantime, acknowledging the interim assessment of progress made and challenges remaining in this regard, as contained in the “Maputo Declaration”,<sup>2</sup> issued in May 2008 by a number of least developed and middle income countries which have voluntarily embraced this approach,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the High-level Panel on United Nations System-wide Coherence<sup>3</sup> and the report of the Secretary-General containing his comments thereon;<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See resolution 60/1.

<sup>2</sup> See A/63/85-E/2008/83.

<sup>3</sup> See A/61/583.

<sup>4</sup> A/61/836.



2. *Welcomes* the report presented by the Co-Chairs of the consultative follow-up process by the General Assembly on system-wide coherence, the Permanent Representatives of Ireland and the United Republic of Tanzania to the United Nations, to the President of the General Assembly on 21 July 2008,<sup>5</sup> the conclusions and recommendations of which are contained in the annex to the present resolution;

3. *Decides*, accordingly, that the continuing and deepening intergovernmental work of the General Assembly on system-wide coherence will focus exclusively and in an integrated manner on “Delivering as one” at country and regional levels, harmonization of business practices, funding, governance, and gender equality and the empowerment of women;

4. *Requests* the Secretary-General, drawing on the resources and expertise of the United Nations system and building on the outcome of its triennial comprehensive policy review, to provide to Member States substantive papers on the issues of funding and governance, as those issues arise in the context of system-wide coherence, with a view to facilitating substantive action by the General Assembly during the sixty-third session;

5. *Welcomes*, in this overall context, the paper on “Institutional options to strengthen United Nations work on gender equality and the empowerment of women”, which the Deputy Secretary-General provided to the President of the General Assembly on 23 July 2008, and requests the Secretary-General to provide a further, detailed modalities paper in respect of the options set out in the Deputy Secretary-General’s paper, covering funding, governance structure, staffing, specific functions, relationship with the Commission on the Status of Women and other relevant bodies and, having regard to the totality of views expressed by Member States in informal plenary consultations on 8 September 2008, focusing in particular on the “composite entity” option with a view to facilitating substantive action by the General Assembly during the sixty-third session;

6. *Resolves*, at the conclusion of its entire process on system-wide coherence, to review and take stock of all of its prior actions and deliberations in a single resolution or decision.

*122nd plenary meeting  
15 September 2008*

## **Annex**

### **Conclusions and recommendations of the Co-Chairs of the consultative follow-up process by the General Assembly on system-wide coherence, the Permanent Representatives of Ireland and the United Republic of Tanzania to the United Nations**

1. As the Co-Chairs for system-wide coherence at the sixty-second session of the General Assembly we have sought to conduct an open, transparent, balanced and inclusive process of consultations among the entire membership. Our aim has been to present a report that, by and large, will sit well with all parts of the Assembly in that all groupings of States should be able to feel that the report addresses seriously

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<sup>5</sup> See A/63/362.

many of their principal priorities and concerns. In this way we have sought to facilitate a balanced and fair compromise outcome to the deliberations of the Assembly during the sixty-second session.

2. The following conclusions and recommendations flow from the present report overall, but are perhaps best seen in tandem with the introductory section. The landmark 2006 report of the High-level Panel on United Nations System-wide Coherence,<sup>3</sup> while a very important contribution to the work of the General Assembly to increase coherence across the United Nations system, did not launch that work. The Millennium Summit and the 2005 World Summit as well as consensus positions of the Assembly, not least the triennial comprehensive policy reviews, constitute much of the bedrock for building further progress in this area.

3. Since the outset of the sixty-second session, the broad membership has signalled that the continuing efforts on system-wide coherence should focus on four priority areas, namely (a) the United Nations delivering as one at the country level with the related aspect of harmonization of business practices; (b) funding; (c) governance; and (d) gender equality and the empowerment of women.

4. The present report should be taken together with the paper on gender (in its institutional dimension) which is being provided by the Secretary-General to Member States in response to their request of 16 June 2008.<sup>6</sup>

5. As for “Delivering as one”, we have sought to provide the Member States with an accurate and up-to-date picture of the process as it is actually developing on the ground in upwards of thirty developing countries and not simply as it is perceived from afar. We have been helped in this by our on-the-ground consultations with Heads of State and Government, Cabinet ministers, parliamentarians, United Nations country teams, development partners and others in some eight developing countries. We have also conferred at length with United Nations agency heads in New York, Geneva, Rome, Paris and Vienna. We have taken careful note of the “Maputo Declaration” issued in May 2008 by pilot and other developing countries, in which they formally request the Assembly to encourage them in the “Delivering as one” approach that they have voluntarily embraced in partnership with the United Nations system.

6. Our conclusion is that the experience of “Delivering as one” to date (that is to say, halfway through its second year) at the country level is clearly and preponderantly positive, even if a number of challenges remain to be fully addressed in regard to each of the “four ones”. We note that this view is shared by the large and growing number of developing countries which are applying the “Delivering as one” approach and proactively moving towards implementing the consensus resolution on the triennial comprehensive policy review. They state that important principles are in fact being observed in practice, including national ownership and leadership and “no one size fits all”. Through the “Delivering as one” approach United Nations country team activities are being aligned to an unprecedented degree with the national development strategies and policies of the developing countries concerned. Assistance is being delivered with greater effectiveness, savings are being realized and greater reductions in transaction costs are clearly in prospect.

7. At the same time the picture that emerges at present is interim in nature since the independent evaluation of “Delivering as one”, as foreseen by the 2007 triennial

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<sup>6</sup> The paper, entitled “Institutional options to strengthen United Nations work on gender equality and the empowerment of women”, was provided on 23 July 2008.

comprehensive policy review, will come only towards the end of 2009 and, in any event, concrete development outputs arising from a new way of doing business take longer than eighteen months to emerge definitively.

8. It seems to us clear that the Assembly ought to be in a position during the sixty-second session to give a positive political impetus to “Delivering as one”, thereby giving encouragement to those many developing countries which have voluntarily embraced this approach, and to enjoin the United Nations development system to continue to pursue it. Moving forward, it will be essential to safeguard the principles underlying “Delivering as one”, in particular that of enhancing national ownership and leadership in the design and implementation of United Nations development system support programmes at the country level. The international community should by the same token be encouraged to continue to respond positively through additional commitments where the combination of strong national leadership and an empowered United Nations country team, delivering as one, together generate a better-aligned and more effective United Nations programme of support.

9. For the most part, the funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the system, at the leadership level, have gradually become increasingly engaged with and supportive of the “Delivering as one” approach. The atmosphere in which they collaborate within the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination under the chairmanship of the Secretary-General has been transformed for the better as they and their collaborators continue consideration of the implications of the “four ones” (one programme, one budgetary framework and fund, one leader and one office) at the country level. At the same time, it is to be recommended that headquarters levels across the system empower the respective country-level agency representatives with much greater latitude, flexibility and encouragement to advance a more coherent and therefore more effective delivery of United Nations system assistance on the ground in line with the “Delivering as one” approach.

10. In all of this, the particular situations affecting middle-income countries should receive adequate attention.

11. Turning to the issue of funding in the context of system-wide coherence, there clearly need to be greater flows of and greater predictability in funding. In general, overall commitments made solemnly and repeatedly need to be implemented more faithfully. Commendation is due to those development partners which have made concrete contributions to advancing the “Delivering as one” approach at the country level in response to the strategies, priorities, policies and plans of the developing countries concerned. At the same time, support for “Delivering as one” at the country level must not be at the expense of core funding to agencies through their headquarters. Overall, there needs to be a significantly improved balance between core and non-core funding. Funds, programmes and specialized agencies should be invited, if necessary through changes in statute, rules and/or regulations, to give effect to the consensus view in the General Assembly that savings realized at the country level ought to be ploughed back into programmatic development work in the countries where the savings are realized. In this and in other ways, “Delivering as one” must deliver more.

12. As for intergovernmental governance at the central level, we have detected no palpable appetite in the General Assembly for establishing new intergovernmental bodies, including the putative Sustainable Development Board which was recommended by the High-level Panel. At the same time the new realities emerging

from a growing number of developing countries applying the “Delivering as one” approach at the country level will need to be accommodated and addressed more effectively by the existing boards and not least by the Economic and Social Council. In the light of the ongoing and emerging nature of the “Delivering as one” approach, it may be necessary to continue and to deepen discussion of these issues during the sixty-third session.

13. If, in that context, the Assembly focuses first on the functions that need to be discharged centrally and intergovernmentally in the “Delivering as one” approach, it will perhaps then be easier to address the question of which institutions, as these continue to adapt, are best placed to discharge the functions in question.

14. We also believe that the United Nations system and the Bretton Woods institutions ought to be consistently encouraged to develop, in a pragmatic manner, a far greater degree of cooperation and collaboration in the context described in the present report. Some progress is already being made. This needs to be developed and enlarged.

15. As for gender equality and the empowerment of women, we recommend that the Assembly be invited to address the matter, including in the light of the Secretary-General’s paper on the institutional dimension,<sup>6</sup> in open, informal plenary consultations at an early opportunity, perhaps early in September. During the sixty-second session the Member States have advanced together, by agreement, in their consideration of the issue of gender equality and women’s empowerment. With assistance from the Secretary-General, they have identified critical gaps in the way the system assists Member States in implementing globally agreed mandates and their own internationally made commitments in this area. With further open and genuine discussion the Assembly may be in a position, before the conclusion of its sixty-second session, to signal in general terms, but nevertheless clearly, which institutional option or combination of options, perhaps with adjustments, it wishes to pursue. Detailed working through of such an agreed approach could then be taken up and completed at the sixty-third session. We have the very strong impression that no Government, whether for substantive or “tactical” reasons, would wish to stand in the way of a consensus to advance the issue of gender equality and the empowerment of women through a measured but significant step forward.

16. We believe that in the light of the present report and the Secretary-General’s options paper on gender equality and the empowerment of women (in its institutional aspect)<sup>6</sup> Member States ought to be equipped for decision-making during the sixty-second session. With these substantive elements in hand, Member States are also better placed to weigh the format of the decision-making of the Assembly.

17. In the first instance, and on the basis of the foregoing report and these conclusions, Member States may, during the sixty-second session, wish to address, perhaps in a package decision, the four core priority areas listed in paragraph 3 above, which they have highlighted throughout.

18. The same decision could signal that henceforth, in the context of intergovernmental discussion on system-wide coherence, the Assembly will focus exclusively on these priority areas and will exclude from this context the issues of environment/environmental governance, humanitarian assistance and human rights, in line with the considerations set out in the present report.

# Acronyms

The following abbreviations are used in the main text and in the annexes. This list does not include the acronyms of UN agencies, which are listed at: [www.un.org](http://www.un.org)

CAP	Consolidated Appeal Process
CCA	Common Country Assessment
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DBS	Direct Budget Support
DOCO	Development Operations Coordination Office
ExCom	Executive Committee Agency (UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, WFP)
HACT	Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers
HRBA	Human Rights Based Approach
JAS	Joint Assistance Strategy
JSM	Joint Strategy Meeting
MD	Millennium Declaration
MDGR	Millennium Development Goals Report
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
M & E	Monitoring & Evaluation
NDP	National Development Plan
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
PFM	Public Financial Management System
PRS/PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy/ Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PSG	Peer Support Group
QSA	Quality Support and Assurance
RBM	Results Based Management
SMART	Specific – Measurable – Achievable – Relevant – Time-bound
SWAP	Sector Wide Approach
SWOT	Strengths – Weaknesses – Opportunities – Threats
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDG	United Nations Development Group