



THE PRESIDENT  
OF THE  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

20 June 2011

Excellency,

The general debate of the 65th session of the General Assembly in September 2010 was dedicated to the topic of “reaffirming the central role of the United Nations in global governance”. This was followed by the adoption of a General Assembly resolution on “The United Nations in Global Governance”, which *inter alia* recognizes the need for inclusive, transparent and effective multilateral approaches to manage global challenges. As a contribution to further advancing the discussion on global governance, I am convening a high-level thematic debate on 28 June 2011, on “The United Nations in Global Governance”.

I am pleased to share with you the concept note and tentative programme of the informal thematic debate for your reference. Updated information about the event is available on the website of the President of the General Assembly.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Deiss'.

Joseph Deiss

All Permanent Representatives and  
Permanent Observers to the United Nations  
New York

**UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY 65<sup>TH</sup> SESSION**  
**THEMATIC DEBATE ON THE UNITED NATIONS IN GLOBAL GOVERNANCE**  
Tuesday, 28 June 2011 · New York

**Background**

The thematic debate on global governance is part of a series of initiatives on the topic of global governance by the President of the 65th General Assembly.

The general debate of the 65th General Assembly in September 2010 was dedicated to the topic of “reaffirming the central role of the United Nations in global governance”.

In the spirit of the same topic, the President of the General Assembly subsequently convened a number of informal plenary meetings to promote constructive interaction between the General Assembly and the G20. The meetings provided an informal platform for Member States to discuss their views on the G20 activities as well as the agenda and outcomes of the G20 Summits.

In December 2011, the General Assembly adopted a resolution on "The United Nations in Global Governance". The resolution recognizes the need for inclusive, transparent and effective multilateral approaches to manage global challenges. It also reaffirms the central role of the United Nations in ongoing efforts to find common solutions. The resolution requests the Secretary-General, to submit to the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly a report focusing on global economic governance and development.

The emphasis on global economic governance in the resolution reflects the high attention given by Member States to the tremendous challenges, the rapid changes and the new actors of today's global economy. The 2008 global financial and economic crisis highlighted the increasing interdependent nature of the global economy, its effect on almost all countries and the inter-linkages between the different economic policy spheres such as trade, investment, capital and financial products and employment.

The crisis has also heightened calls for reform of global economic governance. The existing multilateral institutions established within the international legal framework (i.e., United Nations system, the Bretton Woods Institutions, and the WTO) are seen as being too rigid, and unable to respond rapidly to global crisis. Their sectoral, partial and specialized approach is often seen to lead to inconsistencies and systemic incoherencies in global economic policies which do not reflect the current global economic realities. A more integrated, coordinated, inclusive, effective and efficient approach to addressing global economic challenges in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is needed.

Limitations to the current global economic governance framework have brought about many types of informal groupings, gatherings and international cooperation that facilitate timely collective action and response to current economic challenges. These informal groups such as the G8, G20, G24, and regional organizations, increasingly influence the current global economic governance. They work on integrated and coordinated decisions for all the members of the group and/or prepare joint positions for a decision and action to be taken in the formal governing organs of the treaty-based international organizations.

The global economy is only one of the challenges for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Other challenges facing the global community include climate change and environmental issues like biodiversity and resource scarcity, social and health issues like food security, migration and pandemics, security issues like global terrorism, non-proliferation, organized crime and cyber crime. All of them call for a

framework of governance that allows the effective management of such important global issues. The world in the 21<sup>st</sup> century has become more interconnected and interdependent. The challenges facing the international community in many issues affect all countries and their citizens. The many new actors and stakeholders involved in global governance are challenging the hegemony of traditional multilateral institutions, like the United Nations.

For sixty-years, the United Nations has played a central role in addressing many global issues. Confronted with new and future global challenges the UN needs to reposition itself and needs to build the capacity to live up to its mandate and ensure its decision-making process is more effective, efficient, transparent and inclusive.

In this context, expediting and ensuring success of ongoing processes to strengthen the General Assembly and the ECOSOC as well as reforming the Security Council and other relevant bodies and organizations such as the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) as well as the review of the work of the Human Rights Council and the Peace Building Commission is but a first urgent step. While this will allow the United Nations to better realize its full potential in addressing threats and challenges related to economic development and social progress, peace and security and human rights, UN reform will need to continue to be a constant work in progress in order to keep up with global developments. Only then can the UN prove that it is a modern, flexible and adaptable organization.

While strengthening and reforming the current institutional and intergovernmental framework is critical for shaping global governance, it is also important to strengthen interaction between all stakeholders. States and the private sector, civil society and regional actors must continuously interact and listen to each other outside the formal institutional walls.

## **Objectives**

The thematic debate will contribute to discussions on ways to strengthen the multilateral institutional and intergovernmental framework on global governance, particularly global economic governance.

The thematic debate also aims to provide inputs to the report on global governance that is being prepared by the Secretary-General to be presented at the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly.

## **Tentative programme**

The global governance thematic debate will take place on **Tuesday, 28 June 2011, in Conference Room 4** at the UN Headquarters in New York. The meeting will consist of two moderated high-level panel discussions. Member States will be given the opportunity to participate, to raise questions and share their views and perspectives during the panel discussions.

### *Panel I: Global economic governance - from rapid response to medium and long-term planning*

The current global economic challenges require a global economic governance framework that can balance the need for effective rapid responses and the ability to design effective and comprehensive global economic policies. It should also provide a balance between formal multilateral institutions established within an international legal framework such as the UN system, the Bretton Woods Institutions and the WTO, and informal approaches reflected in groupings such as the G20.

A key question facing the international community is how to establish effective global economic governance that ensures that objectives and policies mutually reinforce each other in support of sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth and social development. Furthermore the role and contribution of the United Nations, with its universal membership and unique legitimacy, to ensure synergies between the various economic spheres needs to be further developed.

Panelists and participants could discuss how the global economic governance architecture can/should evolve by addressing questions such as:

- Is the current global economic governance architecture sufficiently able to react to new global challenges?
- Which international economic challenges and problems require most urgently global solutions?
- How can the United Nations best work and interact with emerging informal multilateral structures?
- Can a strong and stable UN mechanism be established to ensure a coherent approach in the economic sphere such as concerning financial markets, macroeconomic policies, and capital flows?

*Panel II: The UN in 2025 – How can the UN remain relevant in addressing tomorrow’s global challenges?*

The challenges and opportunities facing the United Nations in the next sixty years will be very different to the previous sixty years. To remain effective and continue to have a central role in global governance the United Nations needs to ensure that it can address global challenges facing the international community in the 21<sup>st</sup> century in an efficient, effective and timely manner. Panelists will address how the United Nations intergovernmental functions can be enhanced to ensure its effectiveness while maintaining inclusiveness, transparency, and legitimacy. Also important is to strengthen the capacity of the United Nations institutional framework to ensure that it can implement its mandate in a transparent, effective and efficient manner.

Panelists and participants could discuss what the United Nations should look like in 2025 by addressing questions among others:

- What will be the major challenges and the type of response for the UN in the coming decades?
- How will the concept of effective multilateralism evolve in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?
- What role is envisaged for the UN with an increasing role of other actors and stakeholders in global governance?
- Is there a need for a new definition of “consensus”?
- Could constituency-based decision making be an option for the UN?
- How will the relationship between states, the private sector and civil society evolve?

**PROGRAMME**  
**THEMATIC DEBATE ON THE UNITED NATIONS IN GLOBAL GOVERNANCE**  
 Tuesday, 28 June 2011 · Conference Room 4 (NLB)

10.00	<p><i>Opening remarks by</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>H.E. Mr. Joseph Deiss</b>, President of the General Assembly</li> <li>- <b>H.E. Mr. Ban Ki-moon</b>, United Nations Secretary-General</li> </ul>
10.20 -1.00 p.m.	<p><i>Keynote speakers:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>H.E. Mr. Danilo Turk</b>, President of the Republic of Slovenia</li> <li>- <b>Mr. Pascal Lamy</b>, WTO Director General</li> </ul> <p><b>Panel Discussion I</b>  <i>“Economic global governance: from rapid response to medium and long-term planning”</i></p> <p>Moderator: TBC</p> <p>Panellists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Mrs. Heidemarie Wieczorek-Zeul</b>, Member of the Federal Parliament and former Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development, Germany</li> <li>- <b>Mr. Xavier Musca</b>, Secretary-General of the French President’s Office and G20 Sherpa of President Sarkozy, France</li> <li>- <b>Mr. Amar Bhattacharya</b>, Director, G24 Secretariat, Washington D.C.</li> </ul>
1.00 – 3.00 p.m.	<b>Lunch</b>
3.00 – 5.30 p.m.	<p><b>Panel Discussion II</b>  <i>“The UN in 2025 – How can the UN remain relevant in addressing tomorrow’s global challenges?”</i></p> <p>Moderator: TBC</p> <p>Panellists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Ambassador Celso Amorim</b>, Former Foreign Minister, Brazil</li> <li>- <b>Dr. Ramesh Thakur</b>, Professor of International Relations, Australian National University, Australia</li> <li>- <b>Mr. Richard H Stanley</b>, Chairman, Stanley Foundation, Iowa</li> <li>- <b>Dr. Adekeye Adebajo</b>, Executive Director of the Centre for Conflict Resolution (CCR) at the University of Cape Town, South Africa</li> </ul>
5.30 – 6.00 p.m.	<p><i>Closing remarks by:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Mr Sha Zukang</b>, UN Under-Secretary-General, DESA</li> <li>- <b>H.E. Mr. Joseph Deiss</b>, President of the General Assembly</li> </ul>