



**ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL
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Item 12 - Coordination, programme and other questions - Report of coordination bodies

**Presentation of the Annual Overview Report of the United Nations
Chief Executives Board for Coordination for 2014
and
Briefing on the First Regular Session of CEB for 2015**

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10 June 2015

Mr. President,
Your Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,

It is with great pleasure that I present to you the Annual Overview Report of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) for 2014 (E/2015/71). I am also delighted to have the opportunity to brief you on the outcome of CEB's First Regular session for 2015 which was hosted by UNESCO in Paris at the end of April.

As you may recall, CEB is the longest-standing and highest level internal coordination mechanism in the United Nations. Established by ECOSOC in 1946, CEB serves as the main instrument for supporting and reinforcing the coordinating role of the United Nations intergovernmental bodies on social, economic, management and related matters. The Board brings together, under the leadership of the UN Secretary-General, the Executive Heads of the UN specialised agencies, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the World Trade Organisation, and the UN funds, and programmes. CEB's key role is to strengthen synergies and promote coherence and coordination among the organizations of the UN system on issues of system-wide concern. The work of the Board is supported by three high-level committees: the High-level Committee on Programmes (HLCP) which focuses on policy coherence; the High-level Committee on Management (HLCM) whose activities are supporting system-wide coordination on management and administrative matters; and the United Nations Development Group

(UNDG) which seeks to increase the effectiveness and impact of operational activities of the UN development system.

This year's report provides an overview of major activities in inter-agency cooperation within the framework of the CEB in 2014. As the report is before you, I will focus on salient aspects of CEB's work during the reporting period.

Mr. President,

As the international community continues to face a broad range of complex global challenges, effective and coordinated action is essential if the UN system is to deliver results that meet countries' needs. Throughout the past year, CEB continued its efforts to foster policy coherence and coordination in the UN system in support of Member State's priorities. In particular, CEB focused on promoting system-wide preparations for and follow-up to United Nations conferences and summits; strengthening policy coherence and coordination, specifically in areas of urbanization, youth employment, cybercrime and cybersecurity, and climate change; improving administrative and management functions of the UN system; and enhancing effectiveness, efficiency and impact of United Nations operational activities for development through continued contribution to the implementation of the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR).

Please allow me to highlight a number of key activities of the Board.

Accelerating implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) was again a key priority of CEB in 2014. As you may recall from my previous reports to this Council, the Board decided in the fall of 2012 to include a Review of MDG implementation at each of its forthcoming sessions through 2015. Under the leadership of the President of the World Bank and the Administrator of UNDP, each review seeks to address bottlenecks preventing progress in meeting the MDGs by identifying concrete steps for the UN system to reinforce their support to countries to achieve the goals. CEB had the opportunity to undertake two additional rounds of reviews in 2014. It examined progress towards MDG implementation in six countries: Colombia, Lao PDR and Yemen on hunger and poverty (MDG 1); Pakistan on education (MDG 2); the Philippines on maternal health (MDG 5); and Benin on water and sanitation (target of MDG 7). During their deliberations, CEB members pledged to scale up support and strengthen coordination in the countries. For example, in Lao PDR, UNDP, WFP and FAO are expanding an initiative by which agricultural information is made available to local and national radio stations in support of a programme to improve nutrition.

At its session in April, CEB held its fifth review of MDG implementation. This time, the review focused specifically on MDG 6 and included two countries and, for the first time, a sub-region: Bangladesh (Tuberculosis), the Democratic Republic of Congo (HIV/AIDS and malaria), and the group of Pacific Island countries (non-communicable diseases). In total, 16 countries and one sub-region (Pacific Islands) have been reviewed by the Board, since the initiative was launched, with a view to accelerate progress towards the MDGs. All countries reviewed so far have reported a positive impact of the review, including, greater focus on the MDG in question, strengthened engagement with national partners, and

enhanced collaboration and working together between the UN Country and World Bank teams on the ground.

Enhancing UN system-wide coordination and policy coherence in support of preparations for the post-2015 development agenda was another important activity of the Board in the past year. CEB reflected on the UN system's ability and readiness to support Member States in the transition to the new development agenda and considered measures to enhance the system's operational effectiveness to achieve sustainable development results. In particular, the Board focused its reflections on five interconnected elements that anchor sustainable development in any context. Those elements are universality, equality, human rights, integration and data. In addition, HLCP, HLCM and UNDG discussed steps to be taken to enhance the UN system's internal capacity to effectively respond to Member States' call for a universal and integrated development agenda. Within this context, consideration was given to the need to focus on policy advice and strengthening coherence through effective leveraging of available expertise and resources in middle income countries while deepening partnerships with LDCs on programme delivery and capacity building. Building and strengthening multi-stakeholder partnerships, advancing policy integration across the three dimensions of sustainable development and improving data access and availability were also seen as important measures of support.

The need to access quality data has been widely recognized as essential for monitoring development progress. The United Nations system is positioned to play a pivotal role in supporting the international community in monitoring progress towards global development objectives by better leveraging the wealth of data the system generates and publishes. Coordination and coherence is vital in this regard.

Building on work undertaken in 2014, CEB endorsed a UN system approach for a data revolution at its First Regular Session for 2015. The initiative, which was led by a core group of UN agencies (UNESCO, the World Bank Group, UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, the Regional Commissions and UN DESA), describes internal coordination activities that are expected to strengthen the UN system's capacity to utilize existing and emerging technologies and sources of data. Those activities include the development of a UN system data innovation laboratory led by UNICEF and WFP; the preparation of a data visualization project and the establishment of a World Forum on sustainable development data both led by UN-DESA; and the creation of a UN system data catalogue headed by the HLCM Secretariat. Better data – both in terms of quality and availability – will be crucial for improved reporting by the UN system on progress towards the achievement of the future sustainable development goals.

ECOSOC has consistently underscored the importance of hearing the voices of and engaging with small island developing states (SIDS) and least developed countries (LDCs). In 2014, CEB actively engaged in the Third International Conference on SIDS in September in Samoa by holding a joint CEB high-level event and issuing a joint statement in which UN system organizations pledged their commitment and support to the sustainable development of SIDS. In addition, the implementation of the Programme of Action for LDCs has been a standing item on the Board's agenda since 2013. Work is currently underway, in coordination with OHRLLS, to prepare a toolkit for further mainstreaming the Programme of Action into the work programmes of the UN system organizations.

Promoting system-wide coordination and coherence in the preparation of and follow-up to UN conferences and summits continued to be an area of focused attention by CEB. In 2014, the Board endorsed a joint statement to the World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, held in Sendai, Japan, and issued a joint statement at the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. In addition, CEB, through HLCP, started to prepare a coherent system-wide contribution to the Third UN Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III), to be held in October 2016 in Quito, Ecuador. Under the leadership of UN-Habitat, more than twenty UN system entities are pooling their expertise, knowledge and experience in this initiative with a view to providing Member States with a comprehensive and coordinated input on the topic of sustainable urban development.

CEB also expanded its consideration of the regional dimensions of the issues on the Board's agenda and deepened its engagement with the UN regional commissions. For example, in March 2014, HLCP held its twenty-seventh session in Santiago de Chile hosted by ECLAC. At that meeting, a joint seminar with the Executive Secretaries of the five regional commissions was organized to discuss the contribution of interregional policy cooperation to United Nations system coherence and coordination. The seminar emphasized the important role of the UN regional commissions to generate analysis and data and to serve as platforms for articulating emerging regional agendas, priorities and trends.

Mr. President,

Please allow me to share with you information on additional activities of CEB's subsidiary bodies.

Throughout the year, HLCP, HLCM and UNDG continued to work closely together to strengthen coordination across the system on programmatic, administrative and operational issues.

On programme activities, HLCP focused its system-wide coordination efforts on the issues of sustainable urbanization, youth employment, cybercrime and cybersecurity, and climate change.

Youth employment remains a global development challenge and a priority for Member States. Under the leadership of ILO, HLCP, in 2014, commenced work on a proposal for a UN system initiative on youth employment to promote greater policy coherence and coordination, and foster engagement with external partners and stakeholders. At its most recent session held in Geneva in March 2015, the Committee took additional steps towards the launching of a Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth by the end of the year. Major components of the initiative include the establishment of multi-stakeholder coalitions that can draw high-level attention to the issue of youth employment and promote country-level actions.

The Committee also advanced preparations of a UN system-wide input to the Habitat III conference. Under the leadership of UN-Habitat, work progressed on the joint paper on "urbanization and sustainable development." The Committee also proposed, and CEB agreed, to issue a CEB statement to the conference to affirm the UN system's commitment to supporting the emerging urban agenda.

Other areas of programmatic work in 2014 included the continued efforts by the UN system to enhance coherence and coordination in the area of climate change. HLCP, through its Working Group on Climate Change, supported Member States efforts to address climate change by organizing a series of joint UN system events and a joint “One UN Exhibit” to share information and experiences with participants in the 20th session of the Conference of Parties held in Lima, Peru in December 2014. The joint side events and technical briefings focused on topics ranging from food security to climate finance and highlighted UN system climate action. Further efforts to share UN system knowledge and expertise on climate change included the production of a joint UN publication on “How the UN System Supports Ambitious Action on Climate Change” and the compilation of over 400 UN system publications into one UN System Climate Change Library. This library is available on-line and has also been downloaded onto a certified carbon-neutral and sustainably sourced USB port for greater accessibility.

CEB itself afforded high-level attention to the topic of climate change at its April 2015 session. Building on the 2014 Climate Summit, the Board considered UN system-wide actions in support of Member States’ efforts to address climate change. Those actions included advancing climate action through the Lima Paris Action Agenda; facilitating South-South cooperation; and deepening UN system-wide coordination and coherence. CEB members also pledged their commitment to supporting Member States in implementing the future climate agreement in a coherent and integrated manner. In addition, CEB reaffirmed their resolve to become climate neutral by 2020.

Mr. President,

Please allow me to turn now to key coordination efforts by CEB in the areas of management and administration as well as operational activities which are carried out under the auspices of HLCM and UNDG, respectively. The work of both Committees is guided by the QCPR and its coherent implementation.

On operational matters, UNDG continued to afford highest priority to the coherent implementation of the QCPR across the UN system. In this context, UNDG enhanced its focus on South-South and triangular cooperation by establishing a dedicated UNDG Task Team on the subject. The Task Team supports a coordinated approach to the UN system’s work on South-South and triangular cooperation and seeks to strengthen the mainstreaming of this critical mode of cooperation into UN system operational activities.

UNDG also continued its efforts to promote operational coordination and effectiveness at the country level by developing and releasing a number of tools to guide UN country teams. Those tools included an integrated package of support for country teams to implement the Standard Operating Procedures and a monitoring and evaluation framework on the implementation of “Delivering as One”. Progress was also made in advancing common operations services and expanding common premises. To date, 191 UN Common Premises and 61 UN Houses have been established, leading to cost reductions and greater inter-agency collaboration at the county level. In addition, in 2014, UNDG focused on enhancing strategic planning and reporting on results of UN operations at the country level by developing – together with HLCM – a Business Operations Strategy. The Strategy serves as a voluntary framework for

enhancing the quality and cost-effectiveness of operational support processes, including procurement, ICT and logistics.

Turning now to management activities, HLCM continued its efforts to enhance the coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, accountability and credibility of the United Nations system through improvements in the administrative and management functions. The harmonization and simplification of business practices remains a priority for the Committee.

In 2014, a number of initiatives in the areas of common definitions of operating costs; risk management oversight and accountability; and organizational resilience management have been completed. In addition, work is underway to explore options to increase efficiency and contain costs of after-service-health-insurance, and to examine the feasibility of interoperability among existing enterprise resource planning systems in response to calls from the General Assembly. In the area of human resources management, inter-agency mobility of staff and the harmonization of recruitment and selection processes of locally recruited staff are areas of ongoing work.

Most recently at its March 2015 meeting held in Paris, HLCM also took concrete steps in support of the UN system's commitment to become climate neutral by 2020. The Committee unanimously endorsed a UN system-wide "Road Map for UN Climate Neutrality by 2020" and related goals towards enhancing environmental sustainability of UN operations. The roadmap highlights a series of actions to be carried out between 2015 and 2020 with the objective of achieving UN climate neutrality by 2020. Mindful that no one size fits all, the plan provides for approaches to measure and report on progress, including identification of baselines and targets, and the identification of best practices for funding sustainability measures.

HLCM also approved an Occupational Health and Safety Framework which had been developed by the UN system's Medical Directors. The Framework seeks to ensure that UN system organizations have effective tools for minimizing preventable staff harm, and to optimize the occupational safety and health conditions and working environments of the UN system's workforce. The Framework foresees a phased implementation between 2015 and 2018.

In support of the UN system approach for a data revolution that I had mentioned earlier, a central catalogue of data collected and generated by UN system organizations will be compiled by HLCM. The Data Catalogue aims to provide for an improved understanding of data coverage, inter-operability and data sharing initiatives. It also seeks to lay the foundations for initiatives building on a comprehensive analysis of available data. The Catalogue will provide the public with an up-to-date inventory of all open data assets published by the UN system (in humanitarian, development, normative and administrative areas), highlighting linkages between compatible data and linking directly to their source.

Mr. President, distinguished delegates,

In closing, I would like to reiterate CEB's commitment to working together in a coherent and coordinated manner to ensure that the UN system aligns its collective strengths to fulfil the mandates established by Member States.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate this opportunity to brief you and the Council on the work of the CEB. I will be happy to answer any questions you may have.