



THE JOINT
COORDINATING
COMMITTEE

United Nations

New York



Joint Statement by G-77 and NAM on Informal consultations of the General
Assembly on United Nations System-wide Coherence
H.E. Ambassador Abelardo Moreno

(Monday, 30 March, 2008)

Distinguished Co-Chairs,

On behalf of the Joint Coordinating Committee of the Group of 77 and China and the Non-Aligned Movement (JCC), I would like to thank you for convening this informal consultation.

Allow me to reiterate the willingness of the JCC to constructively engage in the intergovernmental consideration of the recommendations emanating from the High-Level Panel's Report and the Secretary-General's comments thereon and concerning exclusively "Delivering as one", harmonization of business practices, funding, governance, and gender equality and the empowerment of women. We are confident of your able leadership and fully trust that you will guide the process in an open, transparent and inclusive manner.

At this stage, when we are resuming the discussions on System-wide Coherence in the 63rd session of the General Assembly, the JCC reaffirms its comments recently made on 13 March, all its general and substantive comments voiced during the previous two year's informal plenary meetings of the General Assembly to consider the different aspects of the process, as well as the views conveyed in the letter addressed to the Secretary-General by the Co-Chairs of the JCC on 19 March 2007.

Through these consultations, we made clear our preference for an integrated process instead of a divided one. We emphasized that funding, development and governance are areas of priority interest for both the NAM and G-77.

We engaged in the discussions led by former Co-Chairs, on the understanding that all areas of the High-Level Panel's Report would be discussed before a final decision is reached, and at that point, we will have a single comprehensive decision.

We reiterate that the implementation of any of the recommendations contained in the Panel's report should follow intergovernmental consideration and agreement by the General Assembly and there should be no *a priori* decision with regard to when decisions will be made on the report because this should flow from the consultations. In other words, there should be no artificial deadlines.

These general positions highlighted before by the JCC in the informal plenary meetings of the General Assembly on system-wide coherence don't imply, of course, any limitation on the progress already made in this process.

Distinguished Co-Chairs,

The G-77 and NAM highly appreciate that these and other important views of the JCC were considered and endorsed in the resolution 62/277 of the General Assembly.

As it is clear in this resolution, the intergovernmental work of the General Assembly on system-wide coherence will focus exclusively and in an integrated manner on the five priority areas agreed upon for the continuation of this discussion. Our principled position on a single decision at the decision point in this process was also validated in the resolution.

The JCC would like to recall that this resolution also requests the Secretary-General to provide Member States with substantive papers on the issues of funding and governance, priority areas for the JCC in the context of this process. As we stated on 13 March, we believe that these papers will facilitate our discussions on these issues and we look forward to receiving them.

We express our appreciation for your intention to convene informal consultations to discuss these documents. Taking into account the great importance of both issues and their impact and interrelatedness to all the aspects of the system-wide coherence, it would be necessary to have these papers as soon as possible. That will contribute also to the deliberations on the other priority areas. We all need to achieve parallel progress in these priority areas of work for the benefit of the whole process.

We suggest the preparation of the program of work to be presented soon to Member States in order to allocate enough and equal time for the consideration of the five priority areas of the intergovernmental discussions on system-wide coherence, so as to contribute to make necessary progress in all aspects of this process. The JCC presents this suggestion with the certainty and the hope that it will contribute to the positive future advancement of this process.

Distinguished Co-Chairs,

At this new stage of the process, the JCC reiterates its expectation to have important general elements on the operational activities for development, it has been advocating for, included in the process.

For instance, we reaffirmed that sustainable development should remain the centerpiece of deliberations at the UN, and that the achievement of the Internationally Agreed Development Goals, including the MDGs, should continue to be the over-arching framework of the UN activities. We further emphasize the need for a strengthened global partnership for development, based on recognition of national leadership and ownership of national strategies that were acknowledged by the High Level Panel.

We reiterate, as also advocated by the High Level Panel, our position that development cooperation should be demand-driven and be pursued on the basis of the national

strategies and plans of developing countries. The JCC has always emphasized that UN development cooperation should be voluntary and grant-based in nature and that there should be no "one size-fits all" approach. The nature of development cooperation should be responsive to the specific needs, priorities and conditions of each country. The JCC would not support the introduction of new conditionalities through the reform process.

For the JCC, General Assembly resolution 62/208 on the TCPR of operational activities for development of the United Nations system constitutes the intergovernmentally agreed guiding policy framework for addressing the UN operational activities for development. This resolution stresses that reform efforts should enhance organizational efficiency and achieve concrete development results and that the value of UN operational activities for development should be assessed on the basis of their impact on the recipient countries. The JCC believes that reform of UN operational activities for development should be aimed at ensuring both efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of assistance. It should not be merely a cost-cutting exercise.

The most important component for operational activities for development is an expanding and adequate source of funding based on development assistance from the UN system and other sources responsive to the national development plans and programs of countries. It will be also important to preserve and implement the fundamental characteristics of the UN operational activities for development.

The JCC reiterates that, in the context of UN operational activities for development, cross-cutting issues that are not confined only to developing countries should not be misused to introduce new conditionalities on international development assistance, which are not acceptable to developing countries.

Developing countries have a great interest in a fair, rules-based international system. The enhanced UN system-wide coherence envisaged as a result of this collective exercise should strengthen the standard-setting role of our Organization in order to reinforce its normative capacities.

Distinguished Co-Chairs,

In this context, we wish to thank the Secretary-General for preparing the paper entitled "Further Details on Institutional Options for Strengthening the Institutional Arrangements for Support of Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women" in response to the request of resolution 62/277. We also thank the Deputy Secretary-General for conducting consultations for the preparation of this paper. Both the Group of 77 and China and the Non-Aligned Movement reaffirm the relevance of gender issues and their political importance in the work of the Organization and within our countries.

When the JCC supported before the request to the Secretary-General of providing non papers with answers to outstanding questions and additional information to address shortcomings in the area of gender equality and empowerment of women, it made similar requests to receive answers on other priority areas where there are outstanding questions pertaining to the system-wide coherence process. This approach was endorsed in resolution 62/277. The Secretariat needs to have then similar efficiency in providing information on these other areas to contribute to reach the necessary progress in the whole process.

We commend the great efforts of the Secretariat in explaining and detailing the various options to complement the structural changes proposed to the strengthening of the gender architecture of the United Nations system. We found that the new paper gives better justification on the matter.

While the JCC gives its general support to the strengthening of the gender architecture of the United Nations system, we look forward to deepening this discussion, engaging constructively in this regard. We think that the last paper deserves further consideration.

In this process, it would be useful a more analytical approach to the scenarios available in the document, with the support of precise empirical data and complementary and evidence-based information on the implications of the options presented for consideration, including on how these options contribute to improving efficiency and effectiveness.

We recognize and consider very positively that the Secretariat responded most of our questions. However, it would be convenient to address some questions stated before by the JCC that have not been fully addressed already by the Secretariat. That includes the importance of having further clarification, among other unclear and important issues, on:

- Funding
- the role of INSTRAW
- the proposed policy advisory and programming division and the relationship with DESA
- How the new entity will interact with CSW and CEDAW, as well as other relevant organs, funds and programmes of the UN system.
- How the inclusion of UNIFEM is going to cover the implementation of operational activities in the gender area.
- Why the Executive Director of UNIFEM is not participating in the current work of the CEB.
- What the monitoring role of the new entity, that seems to be focused only in the Country Teams, and which, by the way, are deployed in developing countries, will be.
- How the intergovernmental oversight and supervision of the proposed new structure will be conducted.

As the JCC highlighted before, the guidelines for the work on gender equality and women's empowerment should continue to be the same that have guided so far the UN on the issue, namely the Beijing Declaration and its Platform for Action as well as the mandates emanating from resolutions of the General Assembly and ECOSOC and their functional commissions, particularly the Commission on the Status of Women.

In this context, it is important to recognize the universal perspective of the work towards gender equality and women's empowerment.

Distinguished Co-Chairs,

Finally, we reiterate that the JCC will continue to participate actively and constructively in this process. We are ready to follow a program of work to address the focus areas of work in the process as well as any eventual decision we are all able to agree based on an integrated approach decided in resolution 62/277. We look forward to continued engagement on this matter.

Thank you.