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Agenda item 12(a)

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EXTERNAL RELATIONS

(a) Relations with the United Nations and the specialized agencies

Outcome of the 2007 second regular session of the United Nations Chief Executives Board for Coordination

Note by the Secretary-General

SUMMARY

Executive summary: This document reports on the outcome of this year's second regular session of the United Nations Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) held in New York on 27 October 2007

Action to be taken: Paragraph 18

Related documents: None

INTRODUCTION

1 The second regular session of the United Nations Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) for 2007 was held under the chairmanship of Mr. Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations at its Headquarters, in New York, on Friday, 26 October 2007. The Deputy Secretary-General, Mrs. Asha-Rose Migiro, was also in attendance. A private meeting was held in the afternoon of 26 October 2007 and on Saturday, 27 October 2007, a retreat of the Executive Heads of the various specialized agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system, with the participation of the IMO Secretary-General, also took place.

2 The CEB series of meetings were organized around the reports of the two High-level Committees, namely, the High-level Committee on Programmes (HLCP) and the High-level Committee on Management (HLCM), which had met in New York on 20 and 21 September 2007. IMO was represented at both meetings by the Directors of the Technical Co-operation Division and the Administrative Division, respectively.

PROGRAMME MATTERS

3 CEB was briefed by the Chairman of HLCP on its work, which covers a wide range of issues dealing with: (a) preparations for CEB (climate change, a climate neutral UN, Africa, aid-for-trade); and (b) follow-up to HLCP decisions and emerging issues (employment toolkit, UN-Energy, UN-Water, UN-Oceans, UN Communications Group, evaluation of the "One United Nations" pilot projects, disaster reduction, and support group on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities), among others.

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Climate change

4 CEB was informed that HLCP had undertaken preparations for CEB's discussions on the issue of the UN system's response to climate change; the preparations for the High-level Event on Climate Change convened by the United Nations Secretary-General, on 24 September 07; and the Bali Conference scheduled to take place in December. As a result, it called for the development of an overview document of the system's activities in response to climate change, as well as an approach paper that would provide a basis for the elaboration of a system-wide strategy.

5 In his intervention at the retreat, the Secretary-General conveyed IMO's support for the UN initiatives in focusing the attention of the global community on the subject of climate change and for convening the High-level Event. He also expressed support for the strategic approach and inventory developed through HLCP as an input to the Bali Conference. In this respect, he noted that the main thrust of the global community's action on climate change was to address mitigation and, in this connection, IMO was making its contribution by promoting a reduction in emissions of greenhouse gas (GHG) from ships. While this currently addresses principally CO₂, following the entry into force in 1989 of the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, IMO had taken action, through appropriate amendments to the SOLAS Convention, to phase out the use of halons and perfluorocarbons (PFCs) as fire-extinguishing media in new fire-fighting systems aboard ships.

6 He noted further that IMO adopted, through resolution A.963(23), *Policies and Practices related to the Reduction of Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Ships* in December 2003. It had sought to address mitigation strategies, including limitations on GHG. In addition, IMO, in consultation with other interested "ocean orientated" UN system agencies (e.g., IOC/UNESCO), as well as relevant NGOs (e.g., IAPH, IALA etc.), was giving increased attention to the impact of climate change and sea level rise on navigational aids and maritime transport infrastructure.

Evaluation Process for the "One UN Pilot Projects"

7 CEB members endorsed the proposed scope and process of the evaluation of the "One UN Pilot Projects", submitted by the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG), which called for a three-stage process, the first of which was to be an assessment, by March 2008, of the Delivering as One initiative. The second, a process evaluation of the pilot project experience, was anticipated by September 2009, while the third, an evaluation of the results and impacts of the pilots, would be provided in 2011. UNEG was requested, however, to review its timeline with the aim to issuing the evaluation of the results and impacts of the pilot experience by 2010. CEB encouraged those in a position to do so to contribute to the funding of the evaluation.

Support for African Development

8 The United Nations Deputy Secretary-General reported that an *ad hoc* body, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) Africa Steering and Working Group, had been established by the UN Secretary-General in order to galvanize support for the implementation of the MDGs and other internationally agreed goals in Africa. The work of the Group would proceed in five thematic groups, namely, health, education, agriculture and food security, infrastructure and statistical systems. The first main objective would be to draw up practical proposals to complement and support MDG-related activities by strengthening international mechanisms, resolving bottlenecks in existing ones and filling gaps. The five thematic working groups would be co-ordinated by organizations that had lead mandates. The second main objective was to identify practical steps to improve aid predictability, and the third was to

enhance support at the country level for improving policies for scaling up interventions to achieve the MDGs. A set of ten “Phase One” countries had been identified, two of which were also “One UN” pilots.

9 CEB members welcomed the initiative in launching the Africa MDG Steering and Working Group and pledged their support for the process. In so doing, they noted that it was important to fine-tune the message with respect to the achievement of MDGs in Africa and to distinguish between conflict and post-conflict countries and those stable countries where the chances of achieving the goals were much higher. CEB members also drew attention to the relevance of other existing processes, such as those related to climate observations and to the development needs of Africa, and highlighted the regional and sub-regional dimensions of the problems facing the continent.

10 In his intervention, the Secretary-General informed CEB that IMO, in dealing with capacity development in the maritime sector, is also guided by Africa’s priorities and objectives, as articulated at the ministerial level and cited the African Union (AU) Conference of Ministers responsible for maritime transport in Africa (held in Abuja, Nigeria, in February 2007) on the theme of the “Role of maritime transport in the development of Africa”. The Plan of Action adopted by that Conference has been integrated into the capacity-building programmes of IMO.

11 The Secretary-General also informed CEB that the Member States of IMO had fully recognized the important role of maritime transport in sustainable development and the achievement of the relevant MDGs, hence the consequential linkage with IMO’s technical co-operation programme through a resolution on the linkage between IMO’s Integrated Technical Co-operation Programme and the Millennium Development Goals, which is to be considered by the forthcoming IMO Assembly.

12 The Secretary-General took the opportunity to draw the attention of CEB to the problem of piracy against ships sailing in waters off the coast of Somalia and, in particular, ships carrying humanitarian aid to the country and the request of the IMO Council that the matter be brought to the attention of the Security Council.

Leading by Example: A Climate Neutral UN

13 CEB agreed to endorse the draft policy statement submitted by the Environmental Management Group (EMG). IMO’s position, particularly on allowing each agency to consult their governing body before commencing to implement the policy, was added to the policy statement.

14 The United Nations Secretary-General recalled that he had pledged, on World Environment Day (5 June 2007), to explore ways of making the UN more climate-friendly and environmentally sustainable, and to develop a climate-neutral approach to its premises and operations. His Policy Committee had tasked the Environmental Management Group, under the leadership of the Executive Director of UNEP, to carry out a study on how best to make the UN climate neutral. He added that, while the principle of this approach was widely shared and while he had received a number of positive signals for financial support from Member States, there was, as yet, a need for greater precision on the practical aspects of its implementation.

15 In the subsequent discussion, Executive Heads associated themselves with the United Nations Secretary-General’s initiative and outlined their individual contributions to climate neutrality. In particular, the following points were raised:

- an accelerated strategy had been agreed for the “Capital Master Plan”, bringing each stage forward and also aiming to reduce energy consumption at the UN Headquarters compound in New York by at least 40 percent. The private sector had been invited to donate its best technology to the UN;
- UNEP had been requested to assist in an environmental audit of the UN Headquarters in New York, covering procurement and renovations;
- ICAO would recommend and make available methodology for calculating emissions from air travel; its proposal would shortly be submitted to its Committee on Aviation Environmental Protection;
- to be successful, the initiative had to have the full and personal commitment of all Executive Heads. It should proceed along the lines of “promise less and deliver more,” with efforts being put into delivering the initiative first before publicizing it. Executive Heads should set the standard; and
- Staff Associations in several organizations were spearheading efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, to recycle and lower paper consumption. The initiative would also stimulate staff members to make small changes in their offices and homes that would be climate-friendly.

MANAGEMENT ISSUES

Harmonization and reform of UN System Business Practices

16 CEB welcomed the proposed plan of action for harmonization and reform of the business practices in the UN system and its methodological framework and endorsed the plan of action developed by HLCM, as well as follow-up action and implementation modalities recommended by the Committee. The key practices to be reformed aim at supporting the Delivering as One initiative and the related harmonization across the System to achieve efficiencies. The initiatives to be pursued include harmonization of staff regulations and rules, including contracts and cost recovery policies among others. IMO would monitor these developments and take on board those which are practicable.

Disclosure of information contained in Internal Audit Reports

17 CEB discussed the disclosure of information contained in Internal Audit Reports following intensive consultations among the UN system’s internal auditors. It agreed to move toward the development of a common policy for the disclosure of information that would also take into account the peculiarities among the various organizations and, in particular, consultations with their respective governing bodies.

Action requested of the Council

18 The Council is invited to note the information provided in this document and to comment as it may deem appropriate.