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Mandate Review: Co-Chairs' Interim Report

Prepared at the request of the President of the General Assembly

June 27, 2006

Mr. President:

Your Co-Chairs wish to provide an interim report of our work on your behalf in facilitating the review by member states of "...all mandates older than five years originating from resolutions of the General Assembly...", as directed by leaders in paragraph 163 (b) of the World Summit Outcome Document of September, 2005 (A/RES/60/1).

Over the past six months, member states have worked intensively in informal plenary sessions to address the many challenges posed by this unprecedented review of the U.N.'s program of work. They discussed extensively the Secretary-General's Report "Mandating and Delivering", dated 30 March, 2006. They repeatedly expressed their appreciation for the thorough and prompt work done by Assistant Secretary-General Robert Orr and his staff. Their work greatly assisted member states in addressing these issues. Member states were particularly grateful for the preparation by Mr. Orr's team of the electronic data base of mandates, which was of significant practical help in member states' deliberations.

We set forth below certain points that we wish to bring to your attention.

His Excellency
Mr. Jan Eliasson
President of the General Assembly
United Nations



THE PRESIDENT
OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

28 June 2006

Dear Colleague,

Under the able leadership of the two Co-Chairs I designated on Secretariat and Management Reform, namely, Ambassador Akram of Pakistan and Ambassador Rock of Canada, 12 Informal Consultations of the Plenary were held on the report of the Secretary-General on Mandating and delivering: analysis and recommendations to facilitate the review of mandates (A/60/733 and Corr.1).

Please find attached an Interim Report of the Co-Chairs on the work accomplished thus far and on the way ahead in the area of mandate review. I trust that the elements of the report will provide a basis for reaching an agreement.

The Co-Chairs will convene a meeting of the Informal Consultations of the Plenary on Thursday, 29 June 2006, at 10 a.m. in the Trusteeship Council Chamber to discuss the next steps to be taken on this matter.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jan Eliasson', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Jan Eliasson

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


1. Member States in the informal plenary agreed to a "Working Group" format to consider those mandates five years and older that have not been renewed. The Working Group has met on three occasions and a summary of its proceedings is attached hereto as **Annex A**.
2. Those mandates that are five years and older and not renewed constitute a small percentage of all General Assembly mandates. The Secretariat has estimated that they amount to approximately 7% of all GA mandates.
3. As to the remaining 93 % of GA mandates, the informal plenary has been unable for these many months to come to agreement that they should be reviewed because of differences among member states as to the scope of the mandate review exercise, based on differing interpretations of the World Summit Outcome Document.
4. Co-Chairs have worked to find common ground on this fundamental issue, so that the mandate review can proceed with the 93 % of the GA mandates.
5. There is no agreement among member states on this point at present. But the Co-Chairs have consulted informally with member states and have attached hereto as **Annex B** some ideas that have been advanced. We believe they merit consideration by all groups. We respectfully suggest that you may wish to circulate them informally to determine whether they find favour with member states.

We are grateful for the honour you have done us by asking us to serve in the capacity of co-chairs, and we hope you will find this interim report to be useful.

Yours very truly,



Munir Akram



Allan Rock

Mandate Review Working Group
Interim Report to the Plenary Co-Chairs

Process

- The Mandate Review Working Group was created June 22nd and has held three substantive sessions in the intervening period (June 23rd, June 26th, June 27th).
- Working Group discussions have focussed on the approximately 400 mandates originating in the General Assembly and falling within the category of mandates 'older than five years and not renewed'. This constitutes 4% of all UN mandates.
- These 400 mandates have been separated into 6 lists on the basis of their status of implementation, specifically:
 - Foundational mandates*
 - Completed mandates
 - Implemented/in-progress mandates
 - Not implemented mandates
 - Non-Applicable mandates
 - Mandates for which Status of Implementation is Unclear.

**A discrete list of "foundational mandates and foundational-related mandates" has also been provided for information purposes; however, the content of this list is replicated in the 5 categories that follow.*

- The working group has reviewed each of these lists.
- The working group also considered a specific proposal related to the Regular Programme of Technical Cooperation.
- Details of this preliminary work follow:

General Observations

- It was suggested that the guidelines and modalities by which the General Assembly is conducting its portion of the mandate review exercise should also be followed by other principal organs.
- There was a strong view expressed that Politically Sensitive Mandates should not be discussed by the working group.
- There was a ~~strong~~ view expressed that some mandates of an evolving nature within non-renewed category may need to be revisited in the context of the broader review.

Foundational Mandates

It was generally agreed that Foundational Mandates representing one-time tasks or events could be set aside (i.e. Identified in the Registry as completed/closed, with no further follow up action required and no further budgetary implications).

Foundational mandates or Founding-Related Mandates of a continuing nature (i.e. with a continuing impact on the work of the organization) need to be considered as “implemented - in progress” bearing in mind their evolving nature.

Completed Mandates

The GA working group agreed *ad ref* that the following* 66 mandates could be identified as discontinued, on the understanding that this removal would be non-prejudicial to: outputs, entities or processes previously created under these resolutions.

**Note: A full list of the 66 mandates is currently being prepared by the Secretariat.*

Proposals were made for the dispensation of the remaining mandates in the “Completed” category and will be subject to further consideration. These proposals included:

- 57 mandates to be transferred from the “Completed” list to the “not-applicable” list as they require either no implementation or implementation by entities outside the UN system
- 43 mandates to be transferred from the “completed” category to the “implementation- in progress” category:
- 38 mandates on which further information is required from the Secretariat

Implemented - In Progress

The working group has agreed to continue looking at these mandates with a view to identifying areas for early action

Not Implemented Mandates

It was agreed that this category of mandates is redundant and can be deleted. Of the three mandates on this list, two mandates were determined to be non-applicable, and the remaining mandate is was determined to belong more properly on the “No-Indication list”.

Non-Applicable Mandates

The list of non-applicable mandates includes:

- (i) Mandates originating in the GA for action by entities other than the Secretariat or implementing entities of the UN system, and;
- (ii) Mandates originating in the GA which are exhortative and do not call for any specific action or follow-up.

It was agreed that this list of mandates falls outside of the scope of the current mandate review exercise.

Mandates with No-Indication.

This list represents mandates for which it was not possible to collect information on the status of implementation during the compilation of the mandate registry.

The working group agreed to request the Secretariat to complete their research on this list no later than July 10th, as this information is required for the finalization of the GA's deliberation on the list of non-implemented.

Concrete Proposal(s) Considered

I. Regular Program of Technical Cooperation (RPTC)

Discussions were held on a proposal to discontinue the regular programme of technical cooperation and redirect said resources to the Development Account;

It was agreed by the working group that the RPTC requires comprehensive review on an expedited basis, in light of the relevant decisions of the General Assembly

**ANNEX B:
SOME INFORMAL IDEAS ON NEXT PHASE OF MANDATE REVIEW**

1. Confidence building measures:

- a) Mandate review not a cost-cutting exercise: purpose is to strengthen the UN.
- b) Resources freed up through consolidation/discontinuing mandates will be re-invested in same issue area.
- c) Politically sensitive mandates will be approached with caution, and the perspectives of those member states whose interests are directly engaged will be respected.

2. Scope of Phase 2 of Mandate Review

Member states agree that all mandates older than five years created by the General Assembly are to be reviewed during Phase 2 of the mandate review process, including those that have been renewed.

3. Linkage

The two preceding paragraphs are linked. In other words, the agreement by many member states to one has been given in consideration of the other, so that the two paragraphs stand together. Neither is acceptable standing alone.

4. Timing

- a) Phase 2 will begin as soon as practicable, but not later than July 15, 2006.
- b) Member states recognise that mandate review is an evolving process, as we learn by doing. Member states will use their best efforts to respect the time limits for mandate review outlined in the World Summit Outcome Document, while acknowledging that it may be necessary to extend the process beyond 2006.

5. Organisation of the Work

- a) The Working Group will complete its review of five year old, unrenewed mandates in an expeditious manner, and preferably before the end of July, 2006.

b) Phase 2 will address all mandates organised by “issue areas”. Member states will discuss and agree what these “issue areas” are at the outset of their work.

c) Some cross-cutting mandates may not fit readily into a specific issue area. Member states may wish to form an additional category to capture those mandates.

d) Discussions will include a review of key functions within each issue area.

e) The review of issue areas will include consideration of report-consolidation proposals, as applicable.

f) The sequence in which issue areas are to be reviewed will be discussed and agreed upon by member states.

6. Pilot Project

Member states will consider selecting an issue area for early review as a “pilot project”, in order to accumulate experience with mandate review, and build confidence in methodology.

June 27, 2006