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REFORM AT THE UNITED NATIONS (Overall masthead title)

Reform under Ban Ki-Moon:

A Stronger United Nations for a Better World (New Home Page title)

“Every day we are reminded of the need for a strengthened United Nations, as we face a growing array of new challenges, including humanitarian crises, human rights violations, armed conflicts and important health and environmental concerns. Seldom has the United Nations been called upon to do so much for so many. I am determined to breathe new life and inject renewed confidence into a strengthened United Nations firmly anchored in the twenty-first century, and which is effective, efficient, coherent and accountable.” Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon

REFORM A TOP PRIORITY

Reform of the United Nations – enhancing its relevance and effectiveness for the world’s people in the 21st Century – is a priority concern of the Member States. At the 2005 World Summit <http://www.un.org/summit2005/> world leaders reaffirmed their commitment to a strengthened United Nations with enhanced authority and capacity to effectively and rapidly respond to the full range of global challenges of our time. With the Organization engaged with a range of pressing global issues in every part of the world, a renewed, revitalized and more responsive United Nations is needed more than ever.

In January 2008, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon outlined <http://www.un.org/ga/president/62/issues/reform.shtml> the broad fronts on which the United Nations needs to advance if it is to meet the challenges facing the Member States and their peoples in the 21st Century. In areas like the environment, public health and human security, the world is facing threats and challenges that respect no boundaries. But by their nature, these challenges also expand the possibilities for collective action by States and other entities and actors, such as civil society and the private sector, enabling the UN to be the focus for concerted action to advance the common good. The UN is only meaningful to people if it is effective and relevant. Therefore, working to deliver concrete results in making people’s lives safer, healthier, more prosperous and free from fear and injustice must be a priority. Finally, progress on these fronts can only be assured through the full accountability of all parties to each other. Strengthening the Organization requires joint action by Member States, the UN’s senior officials and staff, and others. Member States are discussing a number of issues that fall within the remit of the respective Charter organs. Side-by-side, the Secretary-General, in consultation with Member States, is also moving forward to ensure that an efficient, relevant and accountable UN is working to meet the challenges of today and tomorrow. These efforts are outlined below, with links to further information.

MOVING FORWARD ON DEVELOPMENTAL CHALLENGES

The Secretary-General and the Member States have emphasized the need to reenergize the fight against poverty and strengthen the development pillar of the United Nations. The 2005 World Summit underscored the critical role played by the major United Nations summits and conferences, particularly the Millennium Summit, in shaping a shared vision of development and in agreeing on common development objectives, including the internationally agreed development goals of which the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>) are an integral part. The resulting UN Development Agenda promises development for all. The development pillar of the UN must remain strong to keep this promise.

Addressing the needs of the poorest of the world

“We stand at the mid-point of the race to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. A strong and sustained effort now can mean the difference between the success and failure of our grand endeavour.”

- The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/> agreed to by Member States in 2000 represent the most ambitious international commitments to addressing the world’s main development challenges. The Secretary-General has called for a redoubling of efforts by all actors to advance the realization of these Goals.
- The progress in the achievement of the Goals, however, remains uneven. In particular, Africa – the home to most least developed countries – remains off track.
- To respond to this challenge, the Secretary-General launched in September 2007 an innovative partnership arrangement in the form of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) Africa Steering Group <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=23809&Cr=millennium&Cr1=dvelopment>. For the first time, the leadership of the United Nations, the World Bank <http://www.worldbank.org/> and the International Monetary Fund <http://www.imf.org/external/index.htm>, has been brought together with the leaders of the African Union, the African Development Bank, the European Commission, the Islamic Development Bank and the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development to follow through on existing commitments to tackle the special needs of Africa and accelerate efforts to achieve the MDGs in the continent.
- The Steering Group resolved to focus its efforts on three main areas:
 - i) To identify effective mechanisms to implement commitments in the areas of health, education, infrastructure, agriculture and food security, and statistical systems;
 - ii) To improve aid predictability so that African governments can make long-term plans for additional hospitals, schools and for the training of the health-care workforce; and

- iii) To strengthen and create synergies between and among joint efforts at the country level.
- The MDG Africa Steering Group will continue to be supported by the MDG Africa Working Group, chaired by the Deputy Secretary-General and comprising representatives of the UN system and other major multilateral organizations.
 - In a similar effort to maintain momentum for the achievement of the MDGs, the Secretary-General will jointly with the President of the General Assembly, convene a High-Level Event (HLE) on 25 September 2008. The HLE will be a critical part of the 2008 calendar of major events focused on implementation of existing development commitments and on the effectiveness of development cooperation in supporting achievement of agreed development goals. Moreover, it will be a forum for world leaders to announce the practical steps they will take to translate commitments into action. By asking world leaders to announce their concrete plans and proposals, the HLE will help accelerate implementation and follow through.
 - Follow-up to and implementation of UN conferences and summits, through the intergovernmental processes in the General Assembly www.un.org/ga and the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) www.un.org/ecosoc/, will continue as a key course of action. ECOSOC in its Annual Ministerial Review (AMR) in 2008 will pay special attention to MDG 7 which is sustainable development.
 - In addition, following a decision of the 62nd General Assembly (A/RES/62/203), the Secretariat will prepare a road map for the fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, including its modalities and preparatory process.
 - The Secretary-General has also called for an improved focus in the work of the Secretariat on the needs of the poorest of the world's poor, the "bottom billion" left behind by economic expansion nationally and globally.

Providing leadership in achieving international development goals

"There is no alternative to economic and social development as the foundation for a peaceful and just world. The development pillar of the UN must be strong if the entire UN system is to effectively carry out its noble mission."

In order to ensure that the UN can provide leadership in galvanizing progress on the MDGs and development more broadly, the effectiveness of the organization must be enhanced.

- With his strong commitment to the UN Secretariat's work on economic, social and sustainable development, and in accordance with General Assembly resolution 62/236, the Secretary-General has presented to Member States a comprehensive proposal to improve the effective and efficient delivery of mandates of the development-related activities of the UN Secretariat. The Secretary-General's proposal includes the Department of Economic and Social Affairs <http://www.un.org/esa/desa/>, the UN Conference on Trade and

- Development <http://www.unctad.org/>, UN Regional Commissions <http://www.un.org/Depts/rcnyo/newsletter/home.htm> and the Development Account <http://www.un.org/esa/devaccount/>. The Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to mobilize adequate resources from all sources to support mandates related to the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States <http://www.un.org/ohrlls/>.
- This exercise is in line with ongoing efforts to reinforce UN leadership on development objectives through:
 - i) Improving capacity, efficiency, coherence and impact at the institutional and programmatic levels;
 - ii) Fostering greater synergy among development activities of the larger UN system;
 - iii) Strengthening linkages in the three main areas of the UN's work – development, peace and security, and human rights; and
 - iv) Reinforcing partnerships with key stakeholders and public information activities to further enhance the UN's development profile. These efforts will result in better positioning the United Nations to deal more effectively with the needs and challenges of the 21st century.

 - The achievement of MDGs will remain high on the Secretary-General's agenda.
 - Poverty, globalization, environmental degradation and the effects of climate change will remain an essential part of the UN's work on equitable and inclusive economic and social development, as well as responding to the vulnerabilities of women, persons with disabilities and indigenous peoples.
 - Climate change <http://www.un.org/climatechange> is the defining challenge of our time. The United Nations is pressing for a comprehensive global framework to deal with the threat of climate change in the post-2012 period, after the Kyoto Protocol expires. The United Nations continues to provide leadership in this area. The Secretary-General has announced that all UN bodies will implement a programme towards becoming carbon neutral, and will invest in credits that will be channelled into the adaptation fund of the Kyoto Protocol.
 - Global health, including maternal and child health and pandemics like HIV/AIDS and Avian Flu, poses an enormous challenge, with an ever increasing scope for solutions. Investment in health is a cornerstone of economic growth, human development and global security. Efforts will be made to improve the coherence of actions to fully take advantage of the recent vast injections of financial and human resources into global health activities.
 - The Secretary-General has indicated his intent to rationalize Secretariat arrangements to more coherently serve the interests and needs of vulnerable countries. There will be sharper focus on countries with special needs, including those in Africa, Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing Countries, whose economic, social and environmental vulnerabilities remain a major challenge to development, peace and security.

- Regional dimensions of development and economic cooperation among developing countries at regional and inter-regional levels will receive further attention in the work of the United Nations.
- Major upcoming UN conferences and events on development, including the UNCTAD-XII Conference <http://www.unctadxii.org/en/> and the Financing for Development Review Conference <http://www.un.org/esa/ffd> will further enhance the UN Development Agenda, especially with regard to the interrelated issues of finance, development assistance and debt, trade and commodities, investment and technology.
- The Deputy Secretary-General's Consultations on the Development Agenda will continue to support coordinated efforts to advance the UN Development Agenda and strengthen the development pillar of the Organization. As part of the ongoing review of the Executive Committees, attention will be given to improving the effectiveness of the Executive Committee on Economic and Social Affairs.

STRENGTHENING UN EFFORTS TO MAINTAIN PEACE AND SECURITY

The Secretary-General has expressed his resolve to strengthen the United Nations ability to play its role to the fullest extent in conflict prevention, peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding – these are all part of a continuum, and the approach must be integrated, coordinated and comprehensive. Enhancing the UN's capacity for preventive diplomacy and supporting sustainable peace processes will help to build long-term solutions and enable the Organization to respond more effectively to conflict situations. Similarly, strengthening the UN's capacity to support Member States efforts to implement the UN's Global Counter-terrorism Strategy will provide the foundation for a united international stand against terrorism.

Strengthening capacity to manage and sustain peacekeeping operations

“Because of the surge in demand, our system is dramatically strained and over-stretched. What kind of peace operations do we want to see in the future? These reforms would enable us to meet the growing demands placed on us with strengthened capacity, consolidated support, and a system that is more effective, transparent and accountable.”

- The stability provided by UN peacekeeping <http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/> is vital for millions of people all over the world. No other multinational actor deploys comparable numbers of civilian and military personnel; no bilateral partner engages in so many field operations of such scope and complexity.
- To help meet these unprecedented challenges, the General Assembly approved the Secretary-General's proposal
<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=23098&Cr=peacekeep&Cr1=> to restructure the Department of Peacekeeping Operations; creating a Department of Field Support (DFS) to consolidate the support functions of recruitment for field

personnel, including senior appointments, procurement and financial management. DFS' establishment <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2007/ga10602.doc.htm> will ensure more effective and accountable management of resources and improved responsiveness to field support requirements.

- The Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) <http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/> will focus on providing effective mission management, strategic planning and policy guidance and will foster partnerships with UN and non-UN actors, including maintaining close liaison with regional organizations. Key sectors within DPKO, such as Rule of Law and Security Institutions, Military Affairs and Police have all been strengthened. But further resources will be necessary as peacekeeping continues to expand.
- The Department of Field Support will allow the system to provide more effective logistical, personnel, financial and communications and information technology support to the UN's missions in the field. Through the establishment of Integrated Operational Teams (IOTs) the two Departments will work as one to ensure maximum efficiency, promote both accountability and transparency, and maintain clear reporting lines to facilitate the overall harmonization of efforts.

Enhancing capacity for preventive diplomacy, mediation, peace-making and peacebuilding

“Strengthening the UN's capacity to step in - to resolve conflicts earlier rather than later - is among the smartest investments we can make.”

The United Nations needs to strengthen its capacity not only to stabilize situations through the deployment of forces after peace agreements are reached, but also to prevent and resolve conflict through political means. The Secretary-General wants to better equip and better position the United Nations to prevent and resolve conflicts at an early stage, before they escalate into larger and costlier tragedies.

- To this end, the Secretary-General unveiled in November 2007 a proposal to strengthen and restructure the Department of Political Affairs http://www.un.org/News/briefings/docs/2007/071106_Pascoe.doc.htm (A/62/521) <http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N07/578/98/PDF/N0757898.pdf?OpenElement>, to transform it into a more mobile and field-oriented structure, allowing for more proactive and effective use of the tools of preventive diplomacy, including mediation and the good offices of the Secretary-General. Some of the elements of the restructuring plan are:
 - Strengthened regional affairs desks;
 - Greater mobility to deploy in areas of potential conflict;
 - Enhanced management and oversight capacity of current field operations;
 - Gradual establishment, in close consultation with Member States, of regional offices that can work closely with Governments and regional organizations on conflict prevention and resolution;
 - Improved capacity to work with Governments to identify potential problems before they spread and to respond with timely initiatives.

- A Mediation Support Unit within the Department of Political Affairs is already working with regional desks to assist UN peace envoys in the field as they try to prevent and resolve conflicts. A full-time UN “stand-by” mediation team became operational in March 2008, and will provide urgent expert advice to mediation efforts around the world.
- In order to assist countries emerging from conflict and to prevent them sliding back into instability or war, the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) <http://www.un.org/peace/peacebuilding/>, its Support Office <http://www.un.org/peace/peacebuilding/pbso.shtml> , and the Peacebuilding Fund <http://www.unpbf.org/> were established based on the recommendations of Member States at the 2005 World Summit, and reflected the Organization’s belief that peacebuilding is a solid way to consolidate peace and put in place building blocks for governance and development, advancing long-term stability.
- Two countries currently under consideration by the Peacebuilding Commission, Burundi and Sierra Leone, have identified priority areas, such as employment creation, good governance, the rule of law, democracy consolidation and security sector reform. In December 2007, Guinea-Bissau became the third country to be placed on the PBC agenda with backing from the Security Council. <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2008/pbc28.doc.htm>
- The UN Democracy Fund (UNDEF) <http://www.un.org/democracyfund/>, awards grants to projects that aim to promote and consolidate new and restored democracies. The Fund, with some \$62 million to disburse, provides assistance to governmental, non-governmental, national, regional, and international organizations, including relevant United Nations departments, offices, funds, programmes and agencies. In 2006, in the first round of project selection and fund disbursements, the Secretary-General approved 125 projects worth \$36 million, with the largest share devoted to projects in sub-Saharan Africa. Applications for the second round of funding were opened at the end of 2007 <http://www.un.org/democracyfund/XLatestUpdate.htm> . A meeting of the UNDEF Advisory Board was held in March 2008 to consider a recommended list of projects <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=26134>.

Countering terrorism globally

“Terrorism hurts all nations -- large and small, rich and poor. It takes its toll on human beings of every age and income, culture and religion. It strikes against everything the United Nations stands for. The fight against terrorism is our common mission.”

While terrorism has been on the agenda of the United Nations for decades, in September 2006 for the first time in history, all UN Member States agreed to a common strategic and operational approach to fight terrorism, adopting by consensus in the General Assembly the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy (Strategy).

<http://www.un.org/terrorism/>

- The Strategy spells out concrete measures for Member States to take individually,

as well as collectively, to address the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism, prevent and combat terrorism and strengthen their individual and collective capacity to do so, and protect human rights and uphold the rule of law while countering terrorism. The Strategy calls for Member States to work with the UN system to implement the provisions of the plan of action contained in the strategy and at the same time calls for UN system entities to assist Member States in their efforts.

- UN departments, programmes, funds and agencies have been taking actions in a number of areas in line with the strategy both in their individual capacity and through joint efforts in the framework of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF) <http://www.un.org/terrorism/background-material.html>.
- The CTITF <http://www.un.org/terrorism/cttaskforce.shtml>, which consists of 24 United Nations system entities, is working with Member States to facilitate implementation of the Strategy in areas where United Nations system entities can add value.

Revitalizing the disarmament and non-proliferation agenda

“Amid heightened global anxiety about weapons of mass destruction, this deeply alarming situation calls for the revitalization of the disarmament agenda.”

The persisting risks posed by nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, as well as from conventional arms, underscore the need for determined leadership at the highest level to revitalize the disarmament agenda.

- To ensure the highest-level decision-making and to re-energize action on both disarmament and non-proliferation issues, the Secretary-General established the Office of Disarmament Affairs (ODA) <http://disarmament2.un.org/dda.htm> as a new office in the Secretariat, headed by a High Representative.

BRINGING HUMAN RIGHTS TO ALL PEOPLE OF THE WORLD

Expanding the work of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

“The killing fields of Rwanda, Cambodia and the Balkans stand silent witness to the brutality that passed unchecked by an international system lacking both the will and the vision to act. We can and must do better.”

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Pages/WelcomePage.aspx>, a part of the United Nations Secretariat, has a unique mandate from the international community to promote and protect all human rights.

- The thrust of the UN's approach to human rights, as realized by OHCHR, is outlined in two key strategic documents: OHCHR's Plan of Action (as called for by the former Secretary-General in his 2005 report *In Larger Freedom* <http://www.un.org/largerfreedom/>) and its Strategic Management Plan for 2008-2009 <http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Press/SMP2008-2009.pdf>. In trying to find the most effective ways to meet today's pressing human rights challenges, OHCHR uses a variety of strategies around four key areas – leadership, country engagement and partnerships inside and outside the UN system, as well as its unique relationship with the United Nations human rights mechanisms (including the human rights treaty bodies and the Human Rights Council).
- OHCHR has placed great emphasis on strengthening its capacity to carry out its comprehensive mandate. This has resulted in:
 - 1) A significant expansion of its presence in the field, with a presence in 47 countries by the end of 2007;
 - 2) A strengthening of thematic expertise, including on women's human rights and gender, the right to development, economic, social and cultural rights, the rule of law and rapid response;
 - 3) More visible leadership on human rights issues;
 - 4) Enhanced partnerships with UN entities and civil society, including through the creation of a new civil society unit; and
 - 5) A strengthening of its policy, planning, monitoring and evaluation capacity, including through the creation of a dedicated section for that purpose.
- OHCHR receives significant funding from the UN regular budget, and the 2005 World Summit made a commitment to a doubling of OHCHR's share of the UN regular budget within five years. The 2008-2009 budget reflects the Member States commitment to this goal and reinforces that human rights is a key component of the UN's work. <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=24417&Cr=budget&Cr1>
- Although OHCHR's share of the regular budget has grown in recent years, the amount it receives covers only approximately one-third of its overall funding needs. Voluntary contributions bolster OHCHR's efforts to strengthen and expand its work worldwide.

Reinvigorating the Human Rights Council

- The Human Rights Council <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/>, which replaced the Commission on Human Rights, was established by the General Assembly as the key UN intergovernmental body responsible for human rights. The Council has addressed a wide range of substantive human rights issues in its regular sessions, as well as specific human rights situations in five special sessions (as at the end of 2007). One year after its establishment, and in compliance with General Assembly resolution 60/251, the Council agreed on a package of elements that established the procedures, mechanisms and structures that form the basis of its work.
- The establishment of modalities for the universal periodic review mechanism (UPR) was one of the key achievements of the Council's institution-building package. Through this mechanism, the Council will review on a periodic basis the fulfillment

of the human rights obligations of all UN Member States. The UPR is potentially the first universal tool for monitoring the application of the principles expressed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the 60th anniversary of which falls on 10 December 2008 <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/UDHR/Pages/60UDHRIntroduction.aspx> .

- The Secretary-General noted the completion of the first phase of the Council's institution-building work and welcomed the establishment of the modalities for a strong and meaningful UPR. This sends a clear message that no country – big or small – will be immune from scrutiny <http://www.un.org/apps/sg/sgstats.asp?nid=2626> .
- The Secretary-General also called upon all members to take seriously their responsibilities and to continue to seek out ways to improve the Council's work in the months and years ahead. He further called upon the Council to live up to its responsibilities as the torchbearer for human rights consistently and to consider all situations of possible human rights violations equally.

Protecting civilians and preventing genocide

- The Secretary-General has emphasized the need to work with Member States to give real meaning to the promise of the Responsibility to Protect, a concept enshrined in the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document adopted by 191 world leaders <http://www.ony.unu.edu/seminars/2007/R2P/2005%20World%20Summit%20Outcome.pdf>. Referred to as “R2P,” the concept underlines the responsibility of States for protecting their own populations when faced with ethnic cleansing, acts of genocide or crimes against humanity, and holds the international community responsible for stepping in if States fail to live up to those obligations. The Secretary-General has pledged to work with Member States and civil society to translate the concept from word to deed.
- In May 2007, the Secretary-General announced his intention to appoint a full-time Special Representative for the Prevention of Genocide with the mandate to collect information on serious violations of human rights that could lead to genocide and to bring potential genocidal situations to the attention of the Security Council. He has also initiated action for the operationalization of the concept of responsibility to protect outlined in the World Summit Outcome document of 2005.

STRENGTHENING HUMANITARIAN ACTION

Responding to the changing face of humanitarian crises

“Our immediate humanitarian work to provide day-to-day assistance must continue. It can never wait for the next round of talks to open, or the next peace treaty to be signed. It must be swift, proactive and effective.”

- Humanitarianism is a universal concept that applies to all people at all times, rooted in the core principles of humanity, impartiality and neutrality. However, the demands of modern humanitarianism require us to improve upon our efforts so that aid is provided in a more accountable, transparent, predictable and coordinated manner –

one that enables the most lives to be saved whenever and wherever there are people in need of emergency assistance.

- To better meet these objectives, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) <http://ochaonline.un.org/>, has launched several initiatives designed to strengthen global humanitarian response. These efforts fall into three principal categories: more predictable funding, as well as new and broader funding sources and funding mechanisms; better sectoral coordination to improve coherence and minimize gaps and duplication; and ensuring better qualified and trained UN humanitarian coordinators and resident coordinators.
- In addition, OCHA is firmly committed to improving its global humanitarian partnerships with both UN and non-UN actors acting on an equal basis. In 2007, OCHA convened the first-ever Global Humanitarian Platform, an initiative that brought together some 40 NGOs, Red Crescent/Red Cross societies and UN agencies as equal partners seeking to improve cooperation and communication based on mutually agreed upon principles.
- Initiatives to strengthen humanitarian financing include the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) <http://ochaonline.un.org/Default.aspx?alias=ochaonline.un.org/cerf>, Emergency Response Funds (ERFs) <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/lib.nsf/db900SID/EGUA-6Y7TH8?OpenDocument>, Pooled Funding and the Good Humanitarian Donorship initiative (GHD). In addition, work is on-going to strengthen the Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP) <http://ochaonline.un.org/cap2005/webpage.asp?Page=1243> along with the Needs Assessment Framework (NAF) to support adequacy of humanitarian financing.
- Since its launch in March 2006, the new Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) has transformed the UN's ability to respond quickly and more equitably to sudden emergencies as well as chronically under-funded crises. The General Assembly had called for contributions to the CERF to reach \$500 million by 2008. With over 90 donors, and over \$400 million in pledged and received funds, the CERF has already been put to use to save lives. More needs to be done, however, to fully achieve the funding targets.
- Another key initiative is the Cluster Approach, which is meant to prevent gaps and duplications in humanitarian aid and to ensure there is a clear lead organization in each sector, such as education or health. The cluster leader is responsible for the division of labour among various organizations in the same sector, with the ultimate aim of providing more predictable partners for governments when disaster strikes. The cluster approach seeks to improve predictability, partnership and sectoral coordination at the country level as well as build up global humanitarian response capacity.
- Extreme weather events associated with the effects of climate change are on the rise, and ever greater numbers of people are now living in harm's way. Given this context, disaster risk reduction and preparedness efforts are all the more vital. OCHA is seeking to strengthen its collaboration with regional and national actors through joint training on disaster preparedness and response, contingency planning, and other efforts. The humanitarian community is also seeking to focus greater awareness on

the potentially devastating humanitarian effects of climate change for the world's most vulnerable populations.

REFORMING MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONS PRACTICES

The Secretary-General has expressed his commitment to an Organization that delivers more effectively. Emphasizing results over rhetoric, the Secretary-General has called for more attention “to getting things done.” A broad range of measures are in different stages of implementation. Taken together, the changes will bolster the building blocks of an effective United Nations, where a global and dynamic workforce of professionals stands ready to respond and work within a transparent and accountable system.

Improving accountability and oversight

“To improve accountability, it is not enough just to talk about it. We must take a deep and detailed look at our internal systems, and examine what practical steps need to be taken to improve them.”

- Member States have underscored the importance of greater accountability and oversight in the operational activities of the United Nations.
- The Secretary-General believes that the purpose of management reform goes to the core of the Charter and mission of the United Nations, namely, to better apply the Organization's resources and staff towards producing results that will improve the lives of people around the world.
- The Secretary-General is committed to strengthening accountability, transparency and performance through consultation, teamwork and mutual support. A tangible manifestation of his commitment has been seen in his launching a consultative process with senior managers to sign annual Performance Compacts with each of them. Following this precedent, the Deputy Secretary-General is engaged in consultations with senior managers to track annual performance management.
- The Management Committee is another key tool to provide strategic direction on management policy and reform-related issues, including key decisions concerning the deployment of resources and budget proposals. It also can, ensure adequate institutional follow-up to the recommendations of the oversight bodies (viz., Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS), the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) and the Board of Auditors). This Committee is also chaired by the Deputy Secretary-General.
- The Secretary-General has made recommendations to Member States to strengthen the Secretariat's accountability through an overarching Accountability Architecture <http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N08/243/25/PDF/N0824325.pdf?OpenElement> that focuses on achievement of results and management of risks.
- The Secretary-General intends to strengthen accountability by clearly assigning responsibility to individuals for achieving specific results and for identifying and managing risks.

- The UN is upgrading its accounting processes by adopting the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) aimed at improving the quality and transparency of financial reporting. Preparations have already begun, and the UN is expected to be IPSAS-compliant in 2010.
- The overhaul of UN procurement practices is well under way <http://www.un.org/Depts/ptd/> . Vigorous efforts are being made to implement strict controls and guidelines. Professionalism is being enhanced through intensified training and better use of technology, with strengthened emphasis on ethics and transparency.
- The General Assembly will be assisted in its oversight governance functions by the Independent Audit Advisory Committee (IAAC), a new body which started functioning in January 2008. The IAAC will provide advice on audit and oversight functions of several investigative and audit bodies such as the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) <http://www.un.org/Depts/oios/> and the Board of Auditors. It will also assist on issues that are directly related to Secretariat accountability, such as suggesting measures to ensure compliance of the Secretariat's management with audit and oversight recommendations.
- OIOS has initiated several actions for strengthening its Investigation Division – these actions have been presented to the General Assembly. A Professional Practices Section (PPS) was created in the Internal Audit Division and will implement OIOS' quality assurance programme and risk assessment framework, as well as devising productivity tools for staff. OIOS is in the process of strengthening its internal quality assurance mechanisms.

Setting the highest ethical standards

“I will seek to set the highest ethical standards. The good name of the United Nations is one of its most valuable assets – but also one of its most vulnerable. The Charter calls on staff to uphold the highest levels of efficiency, competence and integrity, and I will seek to ensure to build a solid reputation for living up to that standard. I assure you that I will lead by example.”

- The 2005 World Summit Outcome [[A/RES/60/1 - PDF, 283KB](#)] urged a scrupulous application of existing standards of conduct and the development of a system-wide code of ethics for all United Nations personnel.
- The Secretary-General and the Deputy Secretary-General made their financial disclosures public shortly after assuming office, and have called upon all senior officials to do the same. The requirement for financial disclosures by all senior staff and those with responsibilities for procurement and investment, or with direct access to confidential procurement and investment information is now an established feature of the Secretariat ([ST/SGB/2006/6](#)). While public disclosure is not a requirement of the UN Financial Disclosure Programme, the Secretary-General had encouraged his senior officials (at the grade of Under-Secretary-General [USG] and Assistant Secretary-General [ASG]) to follow his lead and make public, on a voluntary basis, their financial information. The financial statements of those senior officials who have voluntarily agreed to share it

- publicly are available on the UN website.
<http://www.un.org/sg/PublicDisclosure.shtml>
- An independent Ethics Office (Terms of Reference for the Ethics Office) <http://www.un.org/reform/ethics/index.shtml> was established in January 2006. The Ethics Office provides confidential advice to staff on ethics and integrity matters, administers the financial disclosure programme and implements the policy on protection against retaliation for reporting wrongdoing or for cooperating with duly authorized audits or investigations, often referred to as protection for “whistle-blowers”. All staff are required to take ethics training. A system-wide code of ethics for all personnel of the United Nations is being developed.
 - A framework was created in November 2007 (ST/SGB/2007/11 United Nations System-wide application of ethics: separately administered organs and programmes <http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N07/621/09/PDF/N0762109.pdf?OpenElement>) for a unified set of ethical standards and policies that extend to the UN Funds and Programmes. Fundamental to this was the creation of the UN Ethics Committee which came into existence in January 2008. Its mandate is to establish a unified set of ethical standards and policies and consult on certain important and particularly complex issues raised by any Ethics Office or the Chairperson of the Ethics Committee, and which have UN system-wide implications. This will help ensure coherent application of ethical standards within the United Nations.
 - UN Funds and Programmes can create their own Ethics Offices – or be covered by the UN Secretariat’s Ethics Office. Where a fund or programme has established an ethics office, that office is mandated to function independently and report directly to the Executive Heads. If a fund or programme has not appointed or designated an Ethics Officer by January 2008, the Ethics Office of the United Nations Secretariat will discharge the duties set out in the Bulletin until an appointment or designation is made by the fund or programme. In the absence of a fund or programme having in place a protection against retaliation policy, staff members of the fund or programme may request protection from retaliation (as provided for in a Secretary-General’s Bulletin ST/SGB/2005/21 <http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N05/651/55/PDF/N0565155.pdf?OpenElement> .)
 - In the interests of oversight and transparency, a summary of any cases referred to the Chair of the Ethics Committee, by a staff member of a Fund or Programme, must be included in the Annual Report to the General Assembly of the UN Ethics Office. The Ethics Committee began its work in January 2008.

Providing an efficient, transparent and service-oriented Secretariat

“To do the job expected of it, the UN needs a strong, robust empowered Secretariat. My vision is an administration focused on results – efficient, directed, pragmatic and accountable.”

- Information and Communication Technology (ICT) will be a critical instrument for modernizing the United Nations and supporting management reform processes. One key element will be the introduction of an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system. By integrating globally all information on human, financial and physical resources of the Organization, such a system will enable more efficient and effective management, better reporting and more streamlined and automated processes. The UN's first Chief Information Technology Officer assumed his new functions in August 2007 <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2007/sga1076.doc.htm> . A comprehensive proposal by the Secretary-General on an ICT governance framework and strategy will be presented to the General Assembly in the first half of 2008.
- The Secretary-General has also created a High-level Task Force on Change Management with the task of streamlining rules in order to achieve greater simplification, rationalization, transparency and accountability.
- The General Assembly approved in December 2007 a revised plan for the physical renovation of the UN Headquarters complex. Under the Capital Master Plan (CMP) <http://www.un.org/cmp/uncmp/english/index.asp> , “going green” is an important aspect of the Plan. The UN would become significantly more energy efficient. The project is expected to commence in 2008 and be completed by 2013.

Establishing a mobile, multi-skilled and motivated staff with access to internal justice

“If we are to attract, recruit and keep the high quality staff the UN needs, we must change our human resources framework and move away from rules that are anchored in the past.”

- The staff profile of the UN has changed dramatically. With over 60 per cent of the staff now working in the field, the Secretary-General has taken a number of steps to make the Secretariat more mobile and multi-skilled.
- The Secretary-General is committed to staff mobility, including limits on the amount of time a staff member can spend in the same post, along with providing opportunities to develop and acquire additional skills in order to facilitate career advancement and meet the UN's changing priorities.
- It is imperative to attract, recruit and retain high quality staff. Plans are going forward to develop a new information technology tool for talent management. This should be in place in 2008 and will provide a more user-friendly and flexible tool for systematic and efficient management of human resources.
- On the training side, the Secretary-General is fully committed to supporting continuous learning for all staff members of the Organization. Efforts will continue throughout 2008 and beyond to ensure that staff members are provided with opportunities through the Career Resource Centre to develop and enhance skills, knowledge and competencies required for career development.
- The Secretary-General and the Deputy Secretary-General have made intensive efforts to meet with staff at all major duty stations in an effort to gauge the kinds of difficulties experienced by the UN workforce and to respond to these concerns.

- The Secretary-General has submitted to Member States proposals to streamline contractual arrangements for staff working for the United Nations Secretariat at Headquarters and in the field.
- The General Assembly approved in principle in April 2007 the creation of a “new, independent, transparent, professionalized, decentralized and adequately resourced system of internal justice.” Operational details of the new system, including funding, were approved by the General Assembly in December 2007 <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2007/gaab3795.doc.htm> . This new system of internal justice will be critical to management of staff and resolution of employment disputes in a speedy, fair and objective manner. A strengthened, integrated Ombudsman’s Office <http://www.un.org/ombudsman/> and creation of a Mediation Division will be key pillars of this new system which would also aim to decentralize the administration of justice. It is expected that the new system will be in place by January 2009.

Championing a more integrated UN family approach to achieve common goals

“In an ever more interdependent world, a coherent and strong United Nations is needed to meet an immense set of global challenges and a wide diversity of needs. It should respond to the diverse needs of countries and perform as one at the country level, and have the governance, management and funding practices in place to support those efforts.”

The Secretary-General has highlighted the need for the UN development system to “deliver as one” integrated entity. To accomplish this, system-wide coherence throughout the processes of management and policy development is essential. The UN system must also work together more effectively to support national efforts to achieve the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/> .

- Welcoming the far-reaching proposals of a blue-ribbon advisory group called the High-Level Panel on System-wide Coherence <http://www.un.org/events/panel/#>, the Secretary-General pressed the fact that putting in place these changes will demand not only strong and sustained support from Member States, but also collective leadership and ownership within the UN system. The panel report ([Delivering as One](http://www.un.org/events/panel/resources/pdfs/HLP-SWC-FinalReport.pdf)) <http://www.un.org/events/panel/resources/pdfs/HLP-SWC-FinalReport.pdf> advances a vision of a harmonized and accountable UN system and is under review by Member States. The panel recommended that the activities of multiple UN agencies be consolidated at the country level, with a single budgetary framework where possible; and that leadership on humanitarian and environmental activities be strengthened. It further suggested the creation of both a new funding system and a new institutional architecture to deal with gender issues.
- Thus, in line with the vision of the High-Level Panel on System-wide Coherence, the Secretary-General has begun working with Member States and the UN system

- (A/61/836) <http://www.un.org/ga/president/62/issues/resolutions/a-61-836.pdf> to enhance system-wide coherence in areas of development, humanitarian support and the environment, especially at the country level.
- The “One UN” pilot programme <http://www.undg.org/?P=7> launched in eight countries will attempt to test how the greater UN family can ensure efficient and more effective development operations, while aiming to speed up activities to help achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/> . Countries rich and poor will benefit if the United Nations can make the delivery of its operations in the fields of development, humanitarian assistance and the environment more streamlined and efficient.
 - Strengthening and making full use of existing coordination structures, such as the Chief Executives Board (CEB) <http://www.unsystemceb.org/> : A thorough review of the functioning of the CEB has been undertaken with the objective of strengthening the CEB as the principal coordination mechanism within the UN System under the leadership of the Secretary-General. The Review has resulted in the strengthening and clarification of the role of the CEB which will bring together UN system-wide coordination in programme and policy issues, harmonization of system-wide business practices, and a coordinated approach to operational activities at the country level. A revitalized CEB will create a more coherent, efficient and transparent approach to system-wide work.
 - Harmonization of business practices: Under the leadership of the Secretary-General, Executive Heads in the UN System have endorsed an ambitious initiative developed by its High-Level Committee on Management that will undertake the harmonization and reform of business and administrative practices throughout the UN System <http://hlcm.unsystemceb.org/hlcmdocs/03/> . Efficient business practices are expected to play an essential role in delivering better substantive outcomes and cover the major management functions of human resources, ICT, and finance and budget.
 - Harmonization of UN support to climate change: In recognition of the central importance of the challenge posed by climate change to the international community, the CEB is bringing together the diverse expertise and capacity of the UN system aimed at a coherent approach to more effectively support the efforts by Member States to address this critical issue. The Secretary-General presented the outline of the CEB approach at the UN Climate Change Conference in Bali (December 2007) http://unfccc.int/meetings/cop_13/items/4049.php
 - Moreover, during the General Assembly’s 61st session the Secretary-General and the Deputy Secretary-General proposed ideas to Member States on how to strengthen the United Nations gender architecture to boost the Organization’s ability to deliver on gender equality and empowerment of women. These efforts will continue during the 62nd session.