Global economic growth in 2004, at 4 per cent, was not only the highest for many years, but was also unusually widespread and well balanced. The broadening of the economic recovery was reflected in the fact that almost half the developing countries, accounting for over 80 per cent of the developing world’s population, increased per capita output by more than 3 per cent. Per capita output also increased by more than 3 per cent in all the economies in transition except one. Among the developed countries, performance was more varied. Growth was strong in North America, moderate in Japan but weak in Europe.

Achieving the Millennium Development Goal (MDG), adopted by the General Assembly in 2000, of halving by 2015 the proportion of the world’s people living in extreme poverty was a major focus of the work of several UN bodies in 2004. The high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council was devoted to the question of resource mobilization and enabling environment for poverty eradication in the context of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) for the Decade 2001–2010, and a ministerial declaration on the subject was adopted. The Council’s coordination segment considered the promotion of rural development in developing countries, with due consideration to LDCs, for poverty eradication and sustainable development. After considering the role of microcredit and microfinance in the eradication of poverty, the Assembly adopted a December resolution in which it recognized that access to microcredit and microfinance could contribute to the achievement of the goals and targets of major UN conferences and summits in the economic and social fields, including the MDGs, and decided to devote one plenary meeting at its sixty-first (2006) session to the outcome of and follow-up to the International Year of Microcredit, 2005. The Assembly also adopted a resolution on the implementation of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006).

Reaffirming that information and communication technologies were powerful tools to foster socio-economic development and contribute to the realization of the MDGs, the Assembly endorsed the Declaration of Principles and the Plan of Action adopted at the first phase of the World Summit on the Information Society in 2003. It also took note of progress in the preparations for the second phase, to be held in 2006. The Commission on Science and Technology for Development, in May, had as its main theme the question of promoting the application of science and technology to meet the MDGs.

The Commission on Sustainable Development, in overseeing the follow-up to the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development, which reviewed progress in implementing Agenda 21, the action plan on sustainable development adopted by the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, focused on the thematic cluster of water, sanitation and human settlements. It also continued preparations for the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the 1994 Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (SIDS). The International Meeting, which had been scheduled to take place in 2004, was postponed until January 2005.

In addition to SIDS, other groups of countries in special situations that were of concern to the Organization during 2004 included LDCs, landlocked developing countries, economies in transition and poor mountain countries. The need for a smooth transition for countries graduating from the list of LDCs so that the graduation would not result in a disruption of development plans, programmes and projects was addressed by the Assembly, the Council and the Committee for Development Policy.

International economic relations

Development and international economic cooperation

A number of UN bodies addressed development and international economic cooperation issues during 2004, including the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council.
On 22 December, the Assembly took note of the report of the Second (Economic and Financial) Committee on its discussion of macro-economic policy questions [A/59/481] (decision 59/533).

Economic and Social Council consideration. On 26 April, the Economic and Social Council held its seventh special high-level meeting with the Bretton Woods institutions (the World Bank Group and the International Monetary Fund) and the World Trade Organization [A/59/3/Rev.1]. It had before it an 8 April note [E/2004/56] by the Secretary-General on coherence, coordination and cooperation in the context of the implementation of the Monterrey Consensus, adopted at the 2002 International Conference on Financing for Development [YUN 2002, p. 953] (see p. 978).

At its high-level segment (28-30 June and 6 July) [A/59/3/Rev.1], the Council considered resource mobilization and enabling environment for poverty eradication in the context of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010 (see p. 855).

During its coordination segment (1, 2, 6, 7 and 23 July) [A/59/3/Rev.1], the Council considered a coordinated and integrated UN system approach to promoting rural development in developing countries, with due consideration to LDCs, for poverty eradication and sustainable development (see p. 839).

Globalization and interdependence

In response to General Assembly resolution 58/225 [YUN 2003, p. 882], the Secretary-General submitted a 31 August report on globalization and interdependence [A/59/392], which focused on ways to forge greater coherence in order to advance the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration [YUN 2000, p. 49]. The report attempted to identify the impact of globalization on various dimensions of the development goals and the areas that required greater policy coherence, and explored ways of forging policy coherence at the national, regional and global levels to address the challenges of integrating the three dimensions of development and managing the uneven impact of globalization. It was noted that the report should be read in conjunction with the reports of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Monterrey Consensus [A/59/292 & Corr.1] (see p. 1362), the international financial system and development [A/59/218] (see p. 978), the external debt crisis and development [A/59/291] (see p. 977), the state of implementation of the Monterrey Consensus [A/59/270] (see p. 979) and international trade and development and developments in the multilateral trading system [A/59/505] (see p. 959).

In the report’s conclusions and recommendations, the Secretary-General observed that there were two main aspects for forging coherence in advancing the development goals in a globalizing world economy—promoting coherence among the economic, social and environmental dimensions of the goals and achieving harmony and consistency between those goals and the policies for integration into the global economy while managing the risks involved. At the national level, the challenges needed to be addressed by building stronger institutions, enhancing coordination among various parts of government, investing in economic and social infrastructure, including education and health, generating employment, providing opportunities for training and skill acquisition, addressing environmental sustainability concerns and promoting broader participation.

At the regional level, the Secretary-General proposed broadening and deepening regional integration and fostering coherence through greater coordination of policies and through peer reviews. At the global level, there was a need to strengthen multilateral institutions and to enhance coordination and dialogue among them, promote consistency in aid, trade, external debt and development cooperation policies, launch policy coherence initiatives and provide policy space for developing countries, provide a forum for dialogue among policy makers dealing with the economic, social and environmental aspects of development, and facilitate broad-based participation in international decision-making.

The Assembly also had before it for consideration the reports of the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization, established by the International Labour Organization (ILO), entitled A Fair Globalization: Creating Opportunities for All [A/59/98-E/2004/79], which it took note of by resolution 59/57 of 2 December (see p. 1091), and of the Commission on the Private Sector and Development, established by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), entitled Unleashing Entrepreneurship: Making Business Work for the Poor [Sales No. E.04.III.B.4].

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 22 December [meeting 75], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Second Committee [A/59/485/Add.1], adopted resolution 59/240 without vote [agenda item 87 (a)].

Rule of the United Nations in promoting development in the context of globalization and interdependence

recognition that globalization and interdependence have opened new opportunities for the growth of the world economy and development, that globalization offers new perspectives for the integration of developing countries into the world economy and that it can contribute to the overall performance of the economies of developing countries by opening up market opportunities for their exports, by promoting the transfer of information, skills and technology and by increasing the capacity of resource accumulation, physical and intangible assets, acknowledging that globalization has also brought new challenges for growth and sustainable development and that developing countries have been facing special difficulties in responding to them, recognizing that some countries have successfully adapted to the changes and benefited from globalization but that many others, especially the least developed countries, have remained marginalized in the globalized world economy, and recognizing also that, as stated in the Millennium Declaration, the benefits and costs of globalization are very unevenly distributed.

Recognizing also that a universal, rule-based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system, as well as meaningful trade liberalization, can substantially stimulate development worldwide, benefiting countries at all stages of development, reconfirming its commitment to trade liberalization and to ensuring that trade plays its full part in promoting economic growth, employment and development for all, welcoming in that regard the decisions taken by the World Trade Organization to place the needs and interests of developing countries at the heart of its work programme, and committing itself to their implementation,

Recognizing further that all human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated,

Noting that an overall commitment to multiculturalism helps to provide an environment preventing and combating discrimination and promoting solidarity and tolerance in our societies,

Recognizing that an enabling economic environment should, inter alia, foster a dynamic and well-functioning business sector and include efforts to further promote good corporate and public sector governance, to combat corruption in the public and private sectors and to promote the strengthening of and respect for the rule of law,

Noting that particular attention must be given, in the context of globalization, to the objective of protecting and enhancing the rights and welfare of women and girls, as stated in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action,

Taking note of the report of the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization entitled A Fair Globalization: Creating Opportunities for All as a contribution to the international dialogue towards a fully inclusive and equitable globalization,

Noting the report of the Commission on the Private Sector and Development entitled Unshackling Enterprise: Making Business Work for the Poor,

1. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General;

2. Reaffirms the United Nations has a central role in promoting international cooperation for development and in promoting policy coherence on global development issues, including in the context of globalization and interdependence;

3. Reaffirms also that each country has primary responsibility for its own economic and social development and that the role of national policies and development strategies cannot be overemphasized;

4. Invites the international community, including all Member States, to devote special attention to improving resource flows for development, including public and private, foreign and domestic, to assist the developing countries, particularly the least developed countries, to achieve the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration;

5. Stresses that, in the common pursuit of growth, poverty eradication and sustainable development, a critical challenge is to ensure the necessary internal conditions for mobilizing domestic savings, both public and private, sustaining adequate levels of productive investment and increasing human capacity, while a crucial task is to enhance the efficacy, coherence and consistency of macroeconomic policies and an enabling domestic environment is vital for mobilizing domestic resources, increasing productivity, reducing capital flight, encouraging the private sector and attracting and making effective use of international investment and assistance, and in this regard stresses also that efforts to create such an environment should be supported by the international community;

6. Underlines the fact that, in addressing the linkages between globalization and sustainable development, particular focus should be placed on identifying and implementing mutually reinforcing policies and practices that promote sustained economic growth, social development and environmental protection and that this requires efforts at both the national and international levels;

7. Reiterates that success in meeting the objectives of development and poverty eradication depends, inter alia, on good governance, both within individual countries and at the international level, sound economic policies, solid democratic institutions that are responsive to the needs of the people and improved infrastructure, which are the basis for sustained growth, poverty eradication and employment creation, and that transparency in financial, monetary and trading systems and commitment to an open, equitable, rule-based, predictable and non-discriminatory multilateral trading and financial system are equally essential;

8. Stresses that improved coherence between national and international efforts and between the least developed countries and at the international level, sound economic policies, solid democratic institutions that are responsive to the needs of the people and improved infrastructure, which are the basis for sustained growth, poverty eradication and employment creation, and that transparency in financial, monetary and trading systems and commitment to an open, equitable, rule-based, predictable and non-discriminatory multilateral trading and financial system are equally essential;
mension in terms of development is central; empha-
sizes that development should be at the centre of the
international economic agenda and that coherence
between national development strategies, on the one
hand, and international obligations and commit-
ments, on the other, contributes to the creation of an
enabling economic environment for development; and
stresses the need to broaden and strengthen the par-
ticipation of developing countries and countries with
economies in transition in international economic
decision-making and norm-setting;

9. **Stresses also** that development strategies have
to be formulated with a view to minimizing the negative
social impact of globalization and maximizing its posi-
tive side, by ensuring that all groups of the popu-
lation, in particular the poorest, benefit from it, and
that at the international level, efforts have to converge
on the means to achieve the internationally agreed de-
velopment goals, including those contained in the Mil-

denium Declaration;

10. **Underlines** the fact that the increasing inter-
dependence of national economies in a globalizing
world and the emergence of rule-based regimes for in-
ternational economic relations have meant that the
space for national economic policy, i.e., the scope for
domestic policies, especially in the areas of trade, in-
vestment and industrial development, is now often
framed by international disciplines, commitments and
global market considerations, that it is for each Gov-
ernment to evaluate the trade-off between the benefits
of accepting international rules and commitments and
the constraints posed by the loss of policy space and
that it is particularly important for developing coun-
tries, bearing in mind development goals and objec-
tives, that all countries take into account the need for
appropiate balance between national policy space and
international disciplines and commitments;

11. **Reaffirms** that education, employment creation
and improvement of working conditions, which are
some of the indispensable elements of poverty eradi-
cation, social integration, gender equality and overall de-
velopment, should be at the centre of development
strategies and international cooperation in support of
national policies, and recognizes the need to promote
employment that takes into account labour standards
as defined in the relevant instruments of the Interna-
tional Labour Organization and other international in-
struments;

12. **Urges** all Governments to ensure women’s equal
rights with men and their full and equal access to edu-
cation, training, employment, technology and eco-
nomic and financial resources, including credit, in
particular for rural women and women in the informal
sector, and to facilitate, where appropriate, the transi-
tion of women from the informal to the formal sector;

13. **Stresses** the importance of migration as a phe-
nomenon accompanying increased globalization, in-
cluding its impact on economies, and underlines fur-
ther the need for greater coordination and cooperation
among countries as well as relevant regional and inter-
national organizations;

14. **Recognizes** the special needs of the least de-
veloped countries, the small island developing States
and the landlocked developing countries within a new
global framework for transit transport cooperation for
landlocked and transit developing countries, and reaf-
firms continued support and assistance for their endeavours, particularly in their efforts to achieve the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, and
the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-
2010, the Programme of Action for the Sustainable De-
velopment of Small Island Developing States, and the Almaty Programme of Action;

15. **Emphasizes** the importance of recognizing and
addressing the specific concerns of countries with
economies in transition so as to help them to benefit
from globalization, with a view to their full integration
into the world economy;

16. **Invites** all relevant agencies of the United Nations system, through, inter alia, the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordina-
tion, within existing resources, to continue to review
the impact of their work on the achievement of the in-
ternationally agreed development goals, including
those contained in the Millennium Declaration;

17. **Welcomes** the decision taken by the General
Council of the World Trade Organization on 1 August
2004, which rededicates and reconfirms members to
fulfilling the development dimensions of the Doha
Development Agenda, which places the needs of de-
veloping and least developed countries at the heart of
the Doha work programme;

18. **Stresses** the need to build an inclusive informa-
tion society, which is intrinsically global in nature, and
that therefore national efforts need to be supported by
effective international and regional cooperation
among Governments, the private sector, civil society
and other stakeholders, including the international fi-
nancial institutions, in order, inter alia, to assist in
bridging the digital divide, promoting access to infor-
mation and communication technologies, creating dig-
ital opportunities and harnessing the potential of
information and communication technologies for de-
velopment, and invites the World Summit on the In-
formation Society to encourage all stakeholders in this
regard;

19. **Requests** the Secretary-General to submit to the
General Assembly at its sixtieth session a report on
globalization and interdependence;

20. **Decides** to include in the provisional agenda of
its sixtieth session the item entitled “Globalization and
interdependence”.

Also on 22 December, the Assembly, by **decision 59/355**, took note of the report of the Second Committee on its consideration of the agenda item on globalization and interdepen-
dence [A/59/485].

**New global human order**

On 18 August [A/59/283], Guyana, in response to General Assembly resolution 57/12 [YUN 2002, p. 817], submitted a memorandum on the role of
the United Nations in promoting a new global human order.

By **decision 59/543** of 23 December, the As-
sembly deferred consideration of the item on the role of the United Nations in promoting a new
global human order and included it in the provisional agenda of its sixty-first (2006) session.

**Industrial development**

In response to General Assembly resolution 57/243 (YUN 2002, p. 89), the Secretary-General transmitted a July report of the Director-General of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) on industrial development cooperation [A/59/138]. The report focused on the critical role of productivity factors and industrial development for the achievement of the MDGs [YUN 2000, p. 51], contained in the Millennium Declaration adopted by Assembly resolution 55/2 [ibid., p. 49], and emphasized the fact that productivity enhancement was a main factor in promoting sustained growth, which was essential for poverty alleviation. It described UNIDO’s response to the challenges posed by the MDGs and how the services offered by UNIDO covered a wide range of activities related to the Goals. The report provided information on UNIDO’s cooperation with other parts of the UN system in working towards the MDGs and on its programmes for Africa and LDCs, which remained at the core of UNIDO’s priorities. In addition, the report summarized some of the findings of the Industrial Development Report, 2004, which focused on sub-Saharan Africa, and described the work of UNIDO’s field offices.

The report concluded, among other things, that the poorest countries, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, posed the greatest challenges in terms of required growth rates in order to achieve the MDGs. Industrial development had a critical role to play in helping to raise growth rates and was the motivating force for applying new technologies to production and the most important source and diffuser of technological innovation. Successful industrialization helped to create the employment that poor economies needed as they released labour from agriculture. Given the critical role of industrial development for achieving the MDGs, there was a stronger need for an intergovernmental body like UNIDO to provide international public goods that promoted productivity growth. UNIDO had made a comprehensive review of its services to ensure their alignment with the requirements of the MDGs, thus enhancing the impact of its activities and their contribution to the achievement of the Goals.

Annexed to the report was an information note on the Global Biotechnology Forum, held in Concepción, Chile, in March.

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION**

On 22 December [meeting 75], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Second Committee [A/59/487/Add.3], adopted resolution 59/249 without vote [agenda item 89 (c)].

**Industrial development cooperation**

The General Assembly,


Recalling also the United Nations Millennium Declaration adopted by Heads of State and Government on 8 September 2000,

Reaffirming the outcomes of the Fourth Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization, held in Doha from 9 to 14 November 2001, the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, held in Brussels from 14 to 20 May 2001, the International Conference on Financing for Development, held in Monterrey, Mexico, from 18 to 22 March 2002, and the World Summit on Sustainable Development, held in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 26 August to 4 September 2002,

Recognizing the role of the business community, including the private sector, in enhancing the dynamic process of the development of the industrial sector, and underlining the importance of the benefits of foreign direct investment in that process,

Recognizing also the importance of the transfer of technology to the developing countries and countries with economies in transition as an effective means of international cooperation in the pursuit of poverty eradication and sustainable development,

Taking note of the corporate strategy of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, which aims at, inter alia, promoting productivity growth as a means of supporting the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, and the measures being taken to operationalize this strategy,

Taking note also of the signing of the cooperation agreement between the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and the United Nations Development Programme on 23 September 2004 and that the agreement should lead to the improvement of the field presence of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and a better fulfilment of its primary objective, which is to promote and accelerate industrial development in the developing countries while retaining its identity, visibility and core competencies, and noting that it establishes, inter alia, a basis for both institutions to develop joint technical cooperation programmes in support of private-sector development in developing countries,

Taking note further of the signing of a memorandum of technical cooperation between the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and the World Trade Organization, at Cancun, Mexico, on 10 September 2005, aiming at the joint development and implementation of trade-related technical cooperation programmes,

1. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General, and welcomes the conclusions and recommendations contained therein;

2. Reaffirms that industrialization is an essential factor in the sustained economic growth, sustainable de-
development and eradication of poverty of developing countries and countries with economies in transition as well as in the creation of productive employment, income generation and the facilitation of social integration, including the integration of women into the development process;

3. Stresses the critical role of productive capacity-building and industrial development for the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration;

4. Takes note of the comprehensive review of the activities of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization conducted in line with its corporate strategy, which has enabled it to become a more focused, effective and efficient organization, especially for developing countries and countries with economies in transition, capable of delivering concrete outcomes and providing valuable contributions to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration;

5. Emphasizes the necessity of favourable national and international measures for the industrialization of developing countries, and urges all Governments to adopt and to implement development policies and strategies to unleash the productivity growth potential through private-sector development, the diffusion of environmentally sound and emerging technologies, investment promotion, enhanced access to markets and the effective use of official development assistance to enable developing countries to achieve the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, and to make this process sustainable;

6. Underlines the importance of industrial development cooperation and of a positive investment and business climate at the international, regional, sub-regional and national levels in promoting the expansion, diversification and modernization of productive capacities in developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and countries with economies in transition;

7. Takes note with appreciation of the organization of the Global Biotechnology Forum, held in Concepción, Chile, from 2 to 5 March 2004, which was organized jointly by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and the Government of Chile, with support from the International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology, and takes note of decision IDB/28/Dec.6 of the Industrial Development Board of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization;

8. Confirms the contribution of industry to social development, especially in the context of the linkages between industry and agriculture, and notes that, within the totality of these interlinkages, industry serves as a powerful source of employment generation, income creation and social integration required for industrialization and poverty;

9. Calls for the continuing use of official development assistance for industrial development in the developing countries and countries with economies in transition, calls upon donor countries and recipient countries to continue to cooperate in their efforts to achieve greater efficiency and effectiveness of the official development assistance resources devoted to industrial development cooperation and to support the efforts of developing countries and countries with economies in transition to promote industrial development cooperation among themselves, and underlines the importance of mobilizing funds for industrial development at the country level, including private funding and funds from relevant development finance institutions;

10. Also calls for, in this regard, the continuing use of all other resources, including private and public, foreign and domestic resources, for industrial development in the developing countries and countries with economies in transition;

11. Reiterates the importance of cooperation and coordination within the United Nations system in providing effective support for the sustainable industrial development of developing countries and countries with economies in transition, and calls upon the United Nations Industrial Development Organization to participate actively in coordination at the field level through the common country assessment and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework processes and sector-wide approaches;

12. Encourages the United Nations Industrial Development Organization to continue to enhance its effectiveness, relevance and development impact by, inter alia, strengthening its cooperation with other institutions of the United Nations system at all levels;

13. Calls upon the United Nations Industrial Development Organization to participate actively in coordination at the field level through the common country assessment and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework processes and sector-wide approaches;

14. Emphasizes the need to promote the development of microenterprises and small and medium-sized enterprises, including by means of training, education and skills enhancement, with a special focus on agro-industry as a provider of livelihoods for rural communities;

15. Stresses the need for the United Nations Industrial Development Organization to promote, within its mandate, the development of competitive industries in developing countries and countries with economies in transition, as well as in landlocked developing countries;

16. Reaffirms the need to support the survival and expansion of industrial manufacturing activity in developing countries, and in this regard calls upon the United Nations Industrial Development Organization to continue to improve its technical cooperation activities through, inter alia, the areas of technology diffusion and capacity-building for market access and development;

17. Welcomes the active role played by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization in the High-Level Committee on Programmes of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, and encourages it to continue promoting enhanced coordination and coherence within the United Nations system with a view to reinforcing the quality and relevance of the United Nations in the field of economic development;

19. Encourages the United Nations Industrial Development Organization to increase its contributions to achieve the objectives of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development with a view to further strengthening the industrialization process in Africa;

20. Also encourages the United Nations Industrial Development Organization to develop further its global forum capacity according to its mandate, with the aim of enhancing, in the context of the globalization process, a common understanding of global and regional industrial sector issues and their impact on poverty eradication and sustainable development, and calls for further strengthening of the demand-driven integrated programme approach at the field level.

21. Requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-first session a report on the implementation of the present resolution.

Coercive economic measures

In response to General Assembly resolution 57/5 [YUN 2002, p. 832], the Secretary-General submitted a 16 August report [A/59/266] containing replies received from 10 Governments in response to his request for information on the elimination of unilateral extraterritorial coercive economic measures as a means of political and economic compulsion.

On 23 December, the Assembly decided that the item on elimination of unilateral extraterritorial coercive economic measures as a means of political and economic compulsion would remain for consideration during its resumed fifty-ninth (2005) session (decision 59/352).

Economic rights and duties of States

In an 18 June report [A/59/99-E/2004/83], the Secretary-General suggested to the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council that they consider whether the mandated quinquennial review of the implementation of the 1974 Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, adopted by the Assembly in resolution 3281 (XXIX) [YUN 1974, p. 403], should be implicit in the overall framework of the integrated and coordinated implementation of the outcomes of, and follow-up to, major UN conferences and summits, in particular as part of the biennial high-level dialogue to monitor the implementation of the Monterrey Consensus of the 2002 International Conference on Financing for Development [YUN 2002, p. 953].

By decision 2004/312 of 23 July, the Council deferred consideration of the Secretary-General’s report to a resumed session. On 16 September, the Council took note of the Secretary-General’s report and referred it to the Assembly’s fifty-ninth session for action (decision 2004/319).

Sustainable development

Implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation

In 2004, several UN bodies, including the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Commission on Sustainable Development, considered the implementation of the outcomes of the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development [YUN 2002, p. 821], particularly the Johannesburg Declaration and the Plan of Implementation, which outlined actions and targets for stepping up implementation of Agenda 21—a programme of action for sustainable development worldwide, adopted at the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development [YUN 1992, p. 672]—and of the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, adopted by the Assembly at its nineteenth special session in 1997 [YUN 1997, p. 792].

CEB consideration. In a 23 February report [E/2004/12], the Secretary-General described the work being carried out within the framework of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) to enhance inter-agency cooperation and coordination in the follow-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development, focusing on collaborative arrangements relating to freshwater, water and sanitation, energy, oceans and coastal areas, and changing unsustainable patterns of consumption and production.

While the arrangements were being tailored to the different requirements of each thematic area, the key cross-cutting objectives included strengthening inter-agency participation and involvement, and enhancing system-wide synergy in support of the follow-up to the Summit and the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development. CEB’s High-Level Committee on Programmes (HLCP) would keep under review the overall contribution of the UN system to Summit follow-up and would seek to ensure mutual reinforcement between that effort and inter-agency processes in the follow-up to other global conferences and the Millennium Declaration [YUN 2000, p. 49].

HLCP reviewed the Summit follow-up at its seventh (Beirut, Lebanon, 26-27 February) [CEB/2004/4] and eighth (Florence, Italy, 15-17 September) [CEB/2004/7] sessions and at an intersessional meeting (Frascati, Italy, 31 May-1 June) [CEB/2004/5].

Commission on Sustainable Development consideration. As the main body responsible for coordinating and monitoring implementation of the Summit outcomes, the Commission on Sus
taneous progress towards sustainable development: a review of the implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. It was noted that, since the World Summit in 2002, progress had been made mostly in terms of process, including capacity-building in developing countries, development of action plans and refinement of the framework for global environmental governance. However, only halting progress had been made at the international level towards addressing challenges such as that of climate change, though regional, national and local initiatives were numerous.

There were very mixed outcomes in terms of social and economic progress. On the one hand, the world’s two largest countries by population had made significant strides in poverty reduction and in improving various social indicators. On the other, many other developing countries had stagnated or even experienced periods of economic crisis. Outside Asia, few were on track to meet the MDGs concerning poverty reduction, and in parts of sub-Saharan Africa, hunger remained a very serious problem. That subregion was also heavily burdened by the HIV/AIDS epidemic, which had multiple, profound implications for its socio-economic development prospects. Child mortality had fallen in the 1990s, but only accelerated progress would achieve the relevant MDGs, and maternal mortality had seen little improvement. In education, some regions had made significant progress in expanding enrolments, particularly at the secondary level, and in moving towards gender parity.

Progress had been especially slow in the international economic arena, as evidenced by the stalling of international trade negotiations (see p. 958). Also, while foreign direct investment had been considered a relatively stable source of financing to developing countries at the height of the financial crises of the late 1990s, more recently some regions had experienced sharp declines in inflows, while overseas remittances had proved more stable—at least for countries with large populations resident abroad. Bright spots were the recent increases in real official development assistance flows from member countries of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, and substantially increased funding for the fight against HIV/AIDS.

A further report of the Secretary-General [E/CN.17/2004/16] discussed partnerships for sustainable development—voluntary, multi-stakeholder initiatives that were specifically linked to the implementation of commitments outlined in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, Agenda 21 and/or the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21. It summarized information on the 266 partnerships for sustainable development registered with the secretariat of the Commission on Sustainable Development and provided more detailed information on partnerships focusing on water, sanitation and human settlements.

In a review of the thematic issues, the Commission Chairman summarized the opening statements and the oral reports by delegations on the outcomes of seven intersessional events held in preparation for the session.


**Thematic issues.** For its consideration of the thematic issues to be considered in 2004 and 2005 (water, sanitation and human settlements), as established in the multi-year programme of work adopted by the Economic and Social Council in resolution 2003/61 (YUN 2005, p. 842), the Commission on Sustainable Development had before it reports of the Secretary-General on progress in meeting the goals, targets and commitments of Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, at its twelfth session (New York, 14-30 April) [E/2004/29], discussed, in line with the multi-year programme adopted by the Economic and Social Council in 2003/61 (YUN 2005, p. 842), the thematic cluster for the 2004-2005 implementation cycle—water; sanitation; and human settlements (see below).

The Commission had before it a February report of the Secretary-General [E/CN.17/2004/2] that provided an overview of progress towards sustainable development: a review of the implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. It was noted that, since the World Summit in 2002, progress had been made mostly in terms of process, including capacity-building in developing countries, development of action plans and refinement of the framework for global environmental governance. However, only halting progress had been made at the international level towards addressing challenges such as that of climate change, though regional, national and local initiatives were numerous.

There were very mixed outcomes in terms of social and economic progress. On the one hand, the world’s two largest countries by population had made significant strides in poverty reduction and in improving various social indicators. On the other, many other developing countries had stagnated or even experienced periods of economic crisis. Outside Asia, few were on track to meet the MDGs concerning poverty reduction, and in parts of sub-Saharan Africa, hunger remained a very serious problem. That subregion was also heavily burdened by the HIV/AIDS epidemic, which had multiple, profound implications for its socio-economic development prospects. Child mortality had fallen in the 1990s, but only accelerated progress would achieve the relevant MDGs, and maternal mortality had been seen little improvement. In education, some regions had made significant progress in expanding enrolments, particularly at the secondary level, and in moving towards gender parity.

Progress had been especially slow in the international economic arena, as evidenced by the stalling of international trade negotiations (see p. 958). Also, while foreign direct investment had been considered a relatively stable source of financing to developing countries at the height of the financial crises of the late 1990s, more recently some regions had experienced sharp declines in inflows, while overseas remittances had proved more stable—at least for countries with large populations resident abroad. Bright spots were the recent increases in real official development assistance flows from member countries of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, and substantially increased funding for the fight against HIV/AIDS.
21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation covering freshwater management [E/CN.17/2004/4], sanitation [E/CN.17/2004/5] and human settlements [E/CN.17/2004/6]. It also considered discussion papers reflecting the views of major groups (youth and children; business and industry; the scientific and technological community; indigenous people; farmers' organizations; non-governmental organizations (NGOs); workers and trade unions; local authorities; women) on the status of implementation of commitments made related to the thematic areas [E/CN.17/2004/10 & Add.1-9]. The Commission also considered reports on the outcomes of regional implementation meetings [E/CN.17/2004/7 & Add.1-5], organized by the five UN regional commissions, to contribute to advancing the implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, focusing on the thematic cluster of issues: African Regional Implementation Meeting (Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 8-12 December 2003); Regional Implementation Meeting for Asia and the Pacific (Bangkok, Thailand, 27-28 October 2003); Regional Implementation Forum on Sustainable Development within the Economic Commission for Europe region (Geneva, 15-16 January 2004); three regional meetings in the Latin America and the Caribbean region (La Paz, Bolivia, 5-7 November 2003; Santiago, Chile, 17-18 November 2003; Panama City, 20-25 November 2003); and the Joint Committee on Environment and Development in the Arab World (Cairo, Egypt, 19-21 October 2003).

Implementation activities

In response to General Assembly resolution 58/218 [YUN 2003, p. 840], the Secretary-General submitted an August report on the implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development [A/59/220], which provided an update on actions taken by Governments, organizations and bodies of the UN system and major groups to ensure the effective implementation of and follow-up to the commitments and time-bound goals and targets in the area of sustainable development, including through partnerships for sustainable development.

The report showed that there was encouraging progress at all levels in pursuing sustainable development. At the intergovernmental level, the Commission on Sustainable Development, at its twelfth session, carried out an in-depth review of water, sanitation and human settlements, and enhanced the understanding of priority concerns by identifying key constraints and obstacles in implementation. Within the UN system, efforts to ensure a coordinated follow-up to the World Summit were bearing concrete results. At the regional level, there was great support for a regional implementation track to complement global action and, at the national level, the sharper focus on implementation established at the Summit was inspiring Governments to take renewed action in various areas. Over 50 countries had submitted national information on such action to the Commission’s twelfth session and the composite picture emerging from those updates pointed to a strong commitment to implementation.

The report concluded that the challenge ahead was to sustain the momentum by tackling the policy options and possible actions required to address constraints and obstacles in implementation. The international community needed to transform the mutual accountability and the spirit of global partnership between developed and developing countries into concrete results. To that end, the Secretary-General made a number of recommendations for action by the Assembly (see below).

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 22 December [meeting 75], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Second Committee [A/59/483/Add.1], adopted resolution 59/227 without vote [agenda item 85 (a)].

Implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development

The General Assembly,


Recalling also the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development ("Johannesburg Plan of Implementation"),

Reaffirming the commitment to implement Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, including the time-bound goals and targets, and the other internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration,

Recalling the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits, including the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development,
Reaffirming the continuing need to ensure a balance between economic development, social development and environmental protection as interdependent and mutually reinforcing pillars of sustainable development,

Reaffirming also that eradicating poverty, changing unsustainable patterns of production and consumption and protecting and managing the natural resource base of economic and social development are overarching objectives of and essential requirements for sustainable development,

Recognizing that good governance within each country and at the international level is essential for sustainable development,

Noting with satisfaction that the Commission on Sustainable Development at its twelfth session undertook an in-depth evaluation of progress in implementing Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, focusing on the thematic cluster of issues on water, sanitation and human settlements, and identified best practices, constraints and obstacles in the process of implementation,

Noting that the organization of work of the twelfth session of the Commission included plenary sessions, an interactive plenary dialogue and regional meetings, as well as a partnership fair, learning centres and side events,

Recalling the decision of the Commission at its eleventh session, endorsed by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 2003/61 of 25 July 2003, that the Commission, at its policy sessions, to be held in April/May of the second year of the cycle, would take policy decisions on practical measures and options to expedite implementation in the selected thematic cluster of issues, taking account of the discussions of the intergovernmental preparatory meeting, the reports of the Secretary-General and other relevant inputs,

Recalling also the decision of the Commission at its eleventh session that the discussions of the intergovernmental preparatory meeting would be based on the outcome of the review session and reports of the Secretary-General, as well as other relevant inputs, and that, on the basis of those discussions, the Chair would prepare a draft negotiating document for consideration at the policy session.

Looking forward to the upcoming cycles of the work programme of the Commission as adopted at its eleventh session and their contributions to the further implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development,

1. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on the activities undertaken in the implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development,

2. Retains that sustainable development is a key element of the overarching framework for United Nations activities, in particular for achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration and in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation;

3. Calls upon Governments, all relevant international and regional organizations, the Economic and Social Council, the United Nations funds and programmes, the regional commissions and specialized agencies, the international financial institutions, the Global Environment Facility and other intergovernmental organizations, in accordance with their respective mandates, as well as major groups, to take action to ensure the effective implementation of and follow-up to the commitments, programmes and time-bound targets adopted at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, and encourages them to report on concrete progress in that regard;

4. Calls for the implementation of the commitments, programmes and time-bound targets adopted at the Summit and, to that end, for the fulfilment of the provisions relating to the means of implementation, as contained in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation;

5. Encourages Governments to participate, at the appropriate level, with representatives from the relevant departments and agencies in water, sanitation and human settlements, as well as finance, in the intergovernmental preparatory meeting and the thirteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development;

6. Recalls the decision of the Commission at its eleventh session to invite the regional commissions, in collaboration with the secretariat of the Commission, to consider organizing regional implementation meetings in order to contribute to the work of the Commission, and in this regard urges the regional commissions to take into account the relevant thematic clusters contained in the programme of work of the Commission and to provide inputs as specified by the Commission at its eleventh session;

7. Recalls also the decision of the Commission at its eleventh session that activities during Commission meetings should provide for the balanced involvement of participants from all regions, as well as for gender balance;

8. Welcomes the contributions of the regional commissions to the work of the Commission at its twelfth session, including the regional meetings focusing on the thematic cluster of issues on water, sanitation and human settlements, and their inputs to the reports of the Secretary-General;

9. Invites donor countries to consider supporting the participation of experts from the developing countries in the areas of water, sanitation and human settlements in the thirteenth session of the Commission;

10. Takes note with interest of the establishment of the Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation by the Secretary-General, and looks forward to its contribution to the mobilization of efforts and resources towards the implementation of the commitments, goals and targets agreed upon in these areas;

11. Requests the Secretary-General, in reporting to the Commission at its thirteenth session on the state of the implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, on the basis of appropriate inputs from all levels, to submit thematic reports on each of the three issues contained in the thematic cluster of issues on water, sanitation and human settlements, taking into account their interlinkages, while addressing the cross-cutting issues identified by the Commission at its eleventh session;

12. Requests the Commission, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 47/191 of 22 December
1992 and as specified by the Commission at its eleventh session, to examine the cross-cutting issues related to the thematic cluster of issues on water, sanitation and human settlements;

13. Stresses the importance of the success of the Commission at its thirteenth session in:

(a) Taking policy decisions on practical measures and options to expedite implementation in the thematic cluster of issues on water, sanitation and human settlements;

(b) Mobilizing further action by all implementation actors to overcome obstacles and constraints in the implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation;

14. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on inter-agency cooperation, and requests him to continue his efforts to strengthen system-wide inter-agency cooperation and coordination for the implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, and in this regard to report on such inter-agency cooperation and coordination activities and their terms of reference to the Economic and Social Council in 2005;

15. Recalls its resolution 58/291 of 6 May 2004 and Economic and Social Council resolutions 2004/44 of 22 July 2004 and 2004/63 of 23 July 2004, and in this regard requests the Commission, without prejudice to the decisions adopted at its eleventh session, to contribute through the Council to the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly in 2005, in accordance with the modalities to be set out by the Assembly at its fifty-ninth session;

16. Requests the secretariat of the Commission to make arrangements to facilitate the balanced representation of major groups from developed and developing countries in the sessions of the Commission;

17. Notes the convening of the second international expert meeting on a ten-year framework of programmes for sustainable consumption and production, to be held in Costa Rica in September 2005, and in this regard, while acknowledging their ongoing support, urges Member States to consider further support for those activities;

18. Encourages Governments and organizations at all levels, as well as major groups, including the scientific community and educators, to undertake results-oriented initiatives and activities to support the work of the Commission and to promote and facilitate the implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, including through voluntary multi-stakeholder partnership initiatives;

19. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its sixteenth session the item entitled “Implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development”, and requests the Secretary-General, at that session, to submit a report on the implementation of the present resolution.

Commission on Sustainable Development

The Commission on Sustainable Development held its twelfth session in New York on 9 May 2003 and from 14 to 30 April 2004 [E/2004/29]. On 30 April, the Commission held the first meeting of its thirteenth session, at which it elected the members of its Bureau [E/2005/29]. The high-level segment of the twelfth session focused on the thematic cluster for the implementation cycle of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, 2004-2005: water; sanitation; and human settlements (see p. 828). The Commission discussed preparations for the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) (see p. 858). A partnerships fair was held during the session, during which six interactive discussion sessions took place.

In addition to the reports on the review of Agenda 21 and preparations for the International Meeting on SIDS, the Commission had before it a report of the Secretary-General on progress in implementing its decisions related to improvements in national reporting and further work on indicators of sustainable development [E/CN.17/2004/17] and a note by the Secretary-General on the proposed strategic framework for 2006-2007 [E/CN.17/2004/18]. By a 13 April note [E/CN.17/2004/20], the Secretary-General drew the Commission’s attention to his report on human rights and the environment as part of sustainable development, which was submitted to the Commission on Human Rights [E/CN.4/2004/87] (see p. 768).

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL ACTION

On 6 February, by decision 2004/212, the Economic and Social Council decided that, subject to their approval by the Council, NGOs and other major groups accredited to the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development [YUN 2002, p. 821] could participate in the first two-year implementation cycle of the Commission on Sustainable Development in accordance with the rules of procedure of the Council’s functional commissions. The Council emphasized that the decision was taken on an exceptional basis and that it applied to those NGOs that had submitted their applications for consultative status with the Council or that expressed their wish to participate in the first two-year implementation cycle. The Council decided that the established UN rules of procedure on the accreditation and participation of NGOs and other major groups in the work of the Council and its subsidiary bodies would apply to NGOs and other major groups accredited to the World Summit that wished to participate in future sessions of the Commission beyond the first two-year cycle, stressing, in that context, that early
submission of applications to the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations would enhance the possibility of their review in time for the Commission’s future sessions. The Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations was invited to consider such applications, in accordance with the rules of procedure, as expeditiously as possible, and the Secretary-General was asked to make the Council’s decision widely known in order to facilitate the involvement of NGOs from all regions and areas of the world.

On 13 February (decision 2004/216), the Council adopted the list of NGOs and other major groups accredited to the World Summit for participation in the Commission’s twelfth and thirteenth sessions, in accordance with the provisions set forth in decision 2004/212.

Also on 13 February (decision 2004/214), the Council took note of the decision adopted by the Commission on Sustainable Development in 2003 (YUN 2003, p. 842), by which it asked the Council to consider the term of the Commission’s Bureau for future sessions, taking into account the Commission’s two-year work cycle, and decided to give further consideration to the term of the Bureau for future sessions after the completion of the first two-year implementation cycle in 2005.


**Education for sustainable development**

In accordance with resolution 58/219 (YUN 2003, p. 848), the General Assembly, in the Second Committee, considered the question of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014), proclaimed by the Assembly in resolution 57/254 (YUN 2002, p. 826). The Committee, on 18 October [A/C.2/59/SR.14], heard an oral report by the Assistant Director-General for Education of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)—the lead agency for promoting the Decade—regarding preparations. It also considered the report of the Secretary-General on implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction [A/59/228], adopted in 1999 (YUN 1999, p. 859), particularly with reference to the need to focus on education and awareness (see also p. 945).

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION**

On 22 December [meeting 75], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Second Committee [A/59/483/Add.7], adopted resolution 59/237 without vote (agenda item 85 (g)).

**United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development**

The General Assembly,

Recalling chapter 36 of Agenda 21, on promoting education, public awareness and training, adopted at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 3 to 14 June 1992,

Recalling also the work programme on education, public awareness and training initiated by the Commission on Sustainable Development at its fourth session in 1996 and elaborated upon at its sixth session in 1998,

Recalling further the relevant provisions of the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (‘Johannesburg Plan of Implementation’) on education to promote sustainable development, in particular its provision 124,

Recalling its resolutions 57/254 of 20 December 2002 and 58/299 of 23 December 2003,

Underscoring in this regard the fact that the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development will begin on 1 January 2005,

Welcoming the fact that the Commission on Sustainable Development, at its eleventh session, identified education as one of the cross-cutting issues of its multi-year programme of work,

Reaffirming the internationally agreed development goal of achieving universal primary education, in particular that by 2015 children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling and that boys and girls will have equal access to all levels of education,

Taking note of the oral report presented on 18 October 2004 at the fifty-ninth session of the General Assembly by the Assistant Director-General for Education of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization regarding its preparations for the Decade,

Taking note also of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, in particular the reference to the issue ‘Learning to live with risk’, as regards the need to focus on education and awareness, linked with the Decade, to be considered at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction, to be held in Kobe, Japan, from 18 to 22 January 2005,

Emphasizing that education is an indispensable element for achieving sustainable development,

1. **Reaffirms** that education for sustainable development is critical for promoting sustainable development;

2. **Requests** the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, as the designated lead agency, to promote the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, in coordination with other relevant United Nations organizations and programmes, while taking into account the special needs of developing countries;

3. **Requests** the Secretary-General to call upon the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to finalize the draft international implementation scheme for the Decade as soon as possible,
preferably by the beginning of the Decade, in consulta-
tion with Governments, the United Nations and rele-
vant international organizations, non-governmental
organizations and other stakeholders, while clarifying
its relationship with the existing educational pro-
cesses, in particular the Dakar Framework for Action
adopted at the World Education Forum and the
United Nations Literacy Decade;

4. Also requests the Secretary-General to call upon
the Director-General of the United Nations Educa-
tional, Scientific and Cultural Organization to submit
the draft international implementation scheme to the
governing bodies of the United Nations Educational,
Scientific and Cultural Organization for their final
consideration and adoption;

5. Encourages Governments to consider the inclu-
sion, especially upon completion and adoption of the
international implementation scheme, of measures to
implement the Decade in their respective educational
systems and strategies and, where appropriate, na-
tional development plans;

6. Invites Governments to promote public aware-
ness of and wider participation in the Decade, inter-
alia, through cooperation with and initiatives engaging
civil society and other relevant stakeholders, especially
at the beginning of the Decade;

7. Requests the Secretary-General to invite the
Director-General of the United Nations Educational,
Scientific and Cultural Organization to prepare a mid-
ter view of the implementation of the Decade, for
submission to the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth
session under the sub-item entitled “United Nations
Decade of Education for Sustainable Development”.

Tourism

On 13 September, the General Assembly de-
cided to consider the report of the Secretary-
General on the implementation of resolution
56/212 [YUN 2004, p. 792] on the Global Code of
Ethics for Tourism, which was adopted by the
General Assembly of the World Tourism Organiza-
tion in 1999, at its sixtieth (2005) session, in
stead of at its fifty-ninth session (decision
58/573).

Triennial review

By a March note [E/AC.5/2004/4], the
Secretary-General transmitted to the Committee
for Programme and Coordination (CPC) the re-
port of the Office of Internal Oversight Services
(OIOS) on the triennial review of the implementa-
tion of the recommendations made by CPC in
2001 [YUN 2001, p. 718] on the in-depth evaluation
of sustainable development.

OIOS concluded that progress had been made
over the preceding three years towards promot-
ing and strengthening the sustainable develop-
ment agenda. The Division for Sustainable De-
velopment of the Department of Economic and
Social Affairs, together with the Department of
Public Information, had increased access to in-
formation by both government representatives
and the public. The quality of that information
had also improved. Through its regional and
local meetings, the Division had facilitated the
exchange of national experiences and provided
guidance for national sustainable development
strategies. It had also provided technical assistance
to countries. However, greater efforts were
needed to address a number of issues, including
continuing dissemination of the concept of sus-
tainable development, efforts to streamline na-
tional reporting, further facilitation and support of
national Governments’ monitoring of their own sustainable development strategies and
strengthening of the Division’s technical co-
operation programme. The Secretary-General
concurred with those recommendations.

At its forty-fourth session (New York, 7 June–
2 July) [A/59/16], CPC recommended approval of
the triennial review’s recommendations. It
stressed the need for the Division for Sustainable
Development to enhance efforts to ensure that a
common understanding of sustainable develop-
ment, incorporating its social, economic and en-
vironmental pillars, was achieved in accordance
with General Assembly resolution 57/253 [YUN
2002, p. 825]. CPC emphasized that the Division
should focus on promoting multisectoral ap-
proaches in the area of sustainable development
and stressed that achieving sustainable develop-
ment objectives depended on the effective collec-
tion and analysis of data on national progress
towards goals in the social, economic and envi-
ronmental areas.

Eradication of poverty

UN Decade for Eradication of Poverty

In response to General Assembly resolution
58/222 [YUN 2003, p. 849], the Secretary-General
submitted a September report and October addendum [A/59/326 & Add.1] on the implementa-
tion of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradi-
cation of Poverty (1997-2006) and on prepara-
tions for the International Year of Microcredit,
2005 (see p. 837).

In view of the upcoming International Year of
Microcredit, the report discussed the implementa-
tion of the Decade through the lens of microcredit and microfinance, highlighting the increasing recognition of the important role that they could play in poverty eradication strategies. It provided a brief overview of the contribution of microcredit and microfinance to poverty re-
duction and the achievement of the MDGs. The
report also examined the challenges to the future
growth, expansion and outreach of the micro-
finance sector, while discussing the policies and programmes needed to provide greater access by poor people to microcredit and microfinance and to promote sustainable microfinance institutions.

For its consideration of the implementation of the Decade, the Assembly also had before it the report of the Commission on the Private Sector and Development entitled Unleashing Entrepreneurship: Making Business Work for the Poor (Sales No. E.04.III.B.4).

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION**

On 22 December [meeting 75], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Second Committee [A/59/487/Add.1], adopted resolution 59/247 without vote [agenda item 89 (a)].


The General Assembly,


Recalling also the United Nations Millennium Declaration, adopted by Heads of State and Government on the occasion of the Millennium Summit, and their commitment to eradicate extreme poverty and to halve, by 2015, the proportion of the world’s people whose income is less than one dollar a day and the proportion of people who suffer from hunger,

Underlining the priority and urgency given by the Heads of State and Government to the eradication of poverty, as expressed in the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development and in the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development,

Recalling the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic and social fields,

Bearing in mind the outcomes of the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly,

Expressing its deep concern that the number of people living in extreme poverty in many countries continues to increase, with women and children constituting the majority and the most affected groups, in particular in the least developed countries and in sub-Saharan Africa,

Welcoming the initiative launched by the Presidents of Brazil, Chile and France and the Prime Minister of Spain, with the support of the Secretary-General, to convene in New York on 20 September 2004 the Summit of World Leaders for Action against Hunger and Poverty,

Noting the report of the Commission on Private Sector and Development entitled Unleashing Entrepreneurship: Making Business Work for the Poor,

Retaining the need to strengthen the leadership role of the United Nations in promoting development,

1. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General;
2. Reiterates that eradicating poverty is the greatest global challenge facing the world today and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development, in particular for developing countries;
3. Underlines the fact that each country has the primary responsibility for its own sustainable development and poverty eradication, that the role of national policies and development strategies cannot be overemphasized, and that concerted and concrete measures are required at all levels to enable developing countries to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development;
4. Acknowledges that sustained economic growth, supported by rising productivity and a favourable environment, including for private investment and entrepreneurship, is necessary to eradicate poverty and achieve the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, and realize a rise in living standards;
5. Reaffirms the importance of the contributions and assistance of developing countries to the other developing countries in the context of South-South cooperation in order to achieve development and eradicate poverty;
6. Recognizes that, for developing countries to reach the targets set in the context of national development strategies for the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, in particular the goal on the eradication of poverty, and for such poverty eradication strategies to be effective, it is imperative that developing countries be integrated into the world economy and share equitably in the benefits of globalization;
7. Reaffirms that, within the context of overall action for the eradication of poverty, special attention should be given to the multidimensional nature of poverty and the national and international conditions and policies that are conducive to its eradication, fostering, inter alia, the social and economic integration of people living in poverty and the promotion and protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, including the right to development;

**Global response for the eradication of poverty**

8. Stresses the importance of the follow-up to the outcome of the International Conference on Financing for Development, and calls for the full and effective implementation of the Monterrey Consensus;
9. Reaffirms that good governance at the international level is fundamental for achieving poverty eradication and sustainable development; that, in order to ensure a dynamic and enabling international economic environment, it is important to promote global economic governance through addressing the international financial, trade, technology and poverty reduction patterns that have an impact on the development prospects of developing countries; that, to that end, the international community should take all necessary and appropriate measures, including ensuring support for structural and macroeconomic reform, a comprehensive solution to the external debt problem and increasing market access for developing countries; that efforts to reform the international financial architecture need to be sustained, with greater transparency and the effective participation of developing countries in
Development policy and international economic cooperation

10. Also reaffirms that good governance at the national level is essential for poverty eradication and sustainable development; that sound economic policies, solid democratic institutions responsive to the needs of the people and improved infrastructure are the basis for sustained economic growth, poverty eradication and employment creation; and that freedom, peace and security, domestic stability, respect for human rights, including the right to development, and the rule of law, gender equality, market-oriented policies and an overall commitment to just and democratic societies are also essential and mutually reinforcing;


12. Recognizes the major role that trade plays as an engine of growth and development and in eradicating poverty, and welcomes the adoption by the General Council of the World Trade Organization of its decision of 1 August 2004, in which the members rededicated and recommitted themselves to fulfilling the development dimensions of the Doha Development Agenda, which places the needs and interests of developing and least developed countries at the heart of the Doha work programme;

13. Also recognizes that fighting corruption at all levels is a priority and that corruption is a serious barrier to effective resource mobilization and allocation and diverts resources from activities that are vital for poverty eradication, the fight against hunger and economic and sustainable development;

14. Underlines the fact that, together with coherent and consistent domestic policies, international cooperation is essential in supplementing and supporting the efforts of developing countries to utilize their domestic resources for development and poverty eradication and in ensuring that they will be able to achieve the development goals as envisioned in the Millennium Declaration;

15. Welcomes the recent increase in official development assistance, and reiterates that a substantial increase in official development assistance and other resources will be required if developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, are to achieve the internationally agreed development goals and objectives, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, and that to build support for official development assistance, cooperation is necessary to further improve policies and development strategies to enhance aid effectiveness, both nationally and internationally;

16. Stresses the importance of enhanced and predictable financing to ensure the sustainability of the development and poverty eradication efforts of developing countries;

17. Urges developed countries that have not done so to make concrete efforts to reach the targets of 0.7 per cent of their gross national product as official development assistance to developing countries and 0.20 per cent of their gross national product to least developed countries, as reaffirmed at the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, held in Brussels from 14 to 20 May 2001, encourages developing countries to build on progress achieved in ensuring that official development assistance is used effectively to help to achieve development goals and targets, acknowledges the efforts of all donors, commends those donors whose official development assistance contributions exceed, reach or are increasing towards the targets, and underlines the importance of undertaking to examine the means and time frames for achieving the targets and goals;

18. Recalls the decision to give further consideration to the subject of possible innovative and conditional sources of financing for development from all sources, public and private, domestic and external, taking into account international efforts, contributions and discussions, within the overall implementation framework of the follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development;

19. Recognizes that an enabling domestic environment is vital for mobilizing domestic resources, increasing productivity, reducing capital flight, encouraging the private sector and attracting and making effective use of international investment and assistance, and that efforts to create such an environment should be supported by the international community;

20. Also recognizes that creditors and debtors must share the responsibility for preventing and resolving unsustainable debt situations and that debt relief can play a key role in liberating resources that should be directed towards activities consistent with attaining poverty eradication, sustainable economic growth and sustainable development and achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, and in this regard urges countries to direct those resources freed through debt relief, in particular through debt cancellation and reduction, towards these objectives;

21. Calls upon the developed countries, by means of intensified and effective cooperation with developing countries, to promote capacity-building and facilitate access to and transfer of technologies and corresponding knowledge, in particular to developing countries, on favourable terms, including concessional and preferential terms, as mutually agreed, taking into account the need to protect intellectual property rights, as well as the special needs of developing countries;

22. Recognizes the crucial role that microfinance and microcredit could play in the eradication of poverty, the promotion of gender equality, the empowerment of vulnerable groups and the development of rural communities, invites Member States to consider undertaking policies to facilitate the expansion of microfinance and microcredit institutions in order to serve the large unmet demand among poor people for financial services, including the identification and development of mechanisms to promote sustainable access to financial services, the removal of institutional and regulatory obstacles and the provision of incentives to microfinance institutions that meet national standards for delivering such financial services to the poor;
23. Also recognizes the potential of information and communication technologies to serve as a powerful tool for development and poverty eradication and to help the international community to maximize the benefits of globalization, and welcomes in this regard the holding of the first phase of the World Summit on the Information Society from 10 to 12 December 2003 in Geneva and the offer of Tunisia to host the second phase in Tunis from 16 to 18 November 2005;

Policies for the eradication of poverty

24. Reaffirms that the eradication of poverty should be addressed in an integrated way, as set out in the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (“Johannesburg Plan of Implementation”), taking into account the importance of the need for the empowerment and sectoral strategies in such areas as education, the development of human resources, health, human settlements, rural, local and community development, productive employment, population, environment and natural resources, water and sanitation, agriculture, food security, energy and migration and the specific needs of disadvantaged and vulnerable groups in such a way as to increase opportunities and choices for people living in poverty and to enable them to build and to strengthen their assets so as to achieve development security and stability, and in that regard encourages countries to develop their national poverty reduction policies in accordance with their national priorities, including, where appropriate, through poverty reduction strategy papers;

25. Underlines, in this context, the importance of further integration of the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, in the national development strategies and plans, including the poverty reduction strategy papers where they exist, and calls upon the international community to continue to support developing countries in the implementation of these development strategies and plans;

26. Recognizes the importance of disseminating best practices for the reduction of poverty in its various dimensions, taking into account the need to adapt those best practices to suit the social, economic, cultural and historical conditions of each country;

27. Reaffirms that all Governments and the United Nations system should promote an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective in all policies and programmes aimed at the eradication of poverty, at both the national and international levels, and encourages the use of gender analysis as a tool for the integration of a gender dimension into planning the implementation of policies, strategies and programmes for the eradication of poverty;

28. Also reaffirms that poverty eradication, changing unsustainable patterns of production and consumption and protecting and managing the natural resource base of economic and social development are overarching objectives of, and essential requirements for, sustainable development;

29. Emphasizes the critical role of both formal and non-formal education, in particular basic education and training, especially for girls, in empowering those living in poverty, reaffirms in that context the Dakar Framework for Action adopted at the World Education Forum, and recognizes the importance of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization strategy for the eradication of poverty, especially extreme poverty, in supporting the Education For All programmes as a tool to achieve the Millennium Development Goal on universal primary education by 2015;

30. Recognizes the devastating effect of HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis and other infectious, contagious diseases on human development, economic growth, food security and poverty reduction efforts in all regions, in particular in sub-Saharan Africa, and urges Governments and the international community to give urgent priority to combating those diseases;

31. Also recognizes that HIV/AIDS continues to exact a devastating toll on individuals and families, in particular women and girls, and that in the hardest-hit countries it threatens decades of health, economic and social progress, reducing life expectancy, slowing economic growth, deepening poverty and contributing to chronic food shortages; that urgent action is needed to address gender inequality and economic dependency and poverty; and that addressing HIV/AIDS is therefore an important component of poverty eradication and a key requisite when working to achieve the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration;

32. Emphasizes the link between poverty eradication and improving access to safe drinking water, and stresses in that regard the objective to halve, by 2015, the proportion of people who are unable to reach or to afford safe drinking water and the proportion of people who do not have access to basic sanitation, as reaffirmed in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation;

33. Recognizes that the lack of adequate housing remains a pressing challenge in the fight to eradicate extreme poverty, particularly in the urban areas in developing countries, expresses its concern at the rapid growth in the number of slum-dwellers in the urban areas of developing countries, particularly in Africa, stresses that, unless urgent and effective measures and actions are taken at the national and international levels, the number of slum-dwellers, who constitute one-third of the world’s urban population, will continue to increase, and emphasizes the need for increased efforts with a view to significantly improving the lives of at least 100 million slum-dwellers by 2020;

34. Encourages Governments to support the Global Campaign for Secure Tenure and the Global Campaign for Urban Governance of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme as important tools for, inter alia, promoting administration of land and property rights, in accordance with national circumstances, and enhancing access to affordable credit by the urban poor;

35. Recognizes that the eradication of rural poverty and hunger is crucial for the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, and that rural development should be an integral part of national and international development policies;

Specific initiatives in the fight against poverty

36. Recognizes the important potential contribution of the World Solidarity Fund to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including
those contained in the Millennium Declaration, in particular the objective to halve, by 2015, the proportion of people living on less than one dollar a day and the proportion of the people who suffer from hunger;

37. Takes note of efforts to define the strategy of the World Solidarity Fund and to mobilize resources to enable it to start its activities, and invites Member States, international organizations, the private sector, relevant institutions, foundations and individuals to contribute to the Fund;

38. Recalls that in the Millennium Declaration, the Heads of State and Government, inter alia, identified solidarity as one of the fundamental and universal values that should underlie relations between peoples in the twenty-first century, and in this regard decides to consider at the sixtieth session of the General Assembly the issue of proclaiming 20 December of each year International Human Solidarity Day;

39. Invites Governments and relevant stakeholders to utilize entrepreneurship, taking fully into account national interests, development strategies and priorities to contribute to poverty eradication;

African, least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States

40. Stresses, as recognized in the Millennium Declaration, the importance of meeting the special needs of Africa, where poverty remains a major challenge and where most countries have not benefited fully from the opportunities of globalization, which has further exacerbated the continent’s marginalization;

41. Reaffirms its support for the New Partnership for Africa’s Development, encourages further efforts in the implementation of the commitments contained therein in the political, economic and social fields, and calls upon the Member States and the international community, and invites the United Nations system, to continue to support the implementation of the Partnership, the primary objective of which is to eradicate poverty and promote sustainable development on the basis of African ownership and leadership and enhanced partnerships with the international community, in accordance with the principles, objectives and priorities of the Partnership;

42. Takes note of the Plan of Action for Promotion of Employment and Poverty Alleviation in Africa adopted at the extraordinary summit of the African Union on employment and poverty alleviation, held in Ouagadougou from 3 to 9 September 2004, and notes the role of the International Labour Organization in assisting the African countries in implementing the Plan of Action adopted at the summit;

43. Calls upon the Governments of the least developed countries and their development partners to implement fully the commitments contained in the Brussels Declaration and the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010, adopted at the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, held in Brussels from 14 to 20 May 2001;

44. Stresses the vulnerabilities of the small island developing States, reiterates the importance of international support for the full implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, supports in this regard the holding of the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States in Mauritius from 10 to 14 January 2005, and looks forward to its outcomes;

45. Recognizes the special problems and needs of the landlocked developing countries within a new global framework for transit transport cooperation for landlocked and transit developing countries, calls, in this regard, for the full and effective implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action: Addressing the Special Needs of Landlocked Developing Countries within a New Global Framework for Transit Transport Cooperation for Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries, and stresses the need for the implementation of the Sao Paulo Consensus, adopted in Sao Paulo, Brazil, on 18 June 2004 at the eleventh session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, in particular paragraphs 66 and 84 thereof, by the relevant international organizations and donors in a multi-stakeholder approach;

The United Nations and the fight against poverty

46. Calls for the full implementation of the Plan of Action for Promotion of Employment and Poverty Alleviation in Africa adopted at the extraordinary summit of the African Union on employment and poverty alleviation, held in Ouagadougou from 3 to 9 September 2004, and notes the role of the International Labour Organization in assisting the African countries in implementing the Plan of Action adopted at the summit;

47. Reaffirms the role of United Nations funds and programmes, in particular the United Nations Development Programme and its associated funds, in assisting the national efforts of developing countries, inter alia, in the eradication of poverty, and the need for their funding in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the United Nations;

48. Requests the Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly at its sixtieth session on the implementation of the present resolution;

49. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its sixtieth session the item entitled “Implementation of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006)”.

Also on 22 December, the Assembly took note of the report of the Second Committee [A/59/487] on its discussion of the eradication of poverty and other development issues (decision 59/538).

International Year of Microcredit, 2005

In response to General Assembly resolution 58/221 [YUN 2005, p. 854], the Secretary-General submitted a September report and October addendum [A/59/326 & Add.1], in which he described the preparations for the International Year of Microcredit, 2005, which was declared by the As-
Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat and the adoption of the International Year of Microcredit, 2005, regional, subregional and national events on the observance of the Year, taking into account information received from 25 Member States, 11 organizations of the UN system and two NGOs.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 22 December [meeting 75], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Second Committee [A/59/487/Add.1], adopted resolution 59/246 without vote [agenda item 89 (a)].

Role of microcredit and microfinance in the eradication of poverty

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 52/193 and 52/194 of 18 December 1997, 53/197 of 15 December 1998 and 58/221 of 23 December 2003,

Recognizing that microcredit and microfinance programmes have succeeded in generating productive self-employment and proved to be an effective tool in assisting people to overcome poverty and reducing their vulnerability to crisis, and have led to their growing participation, in particular the participation of women, in the mainstream economic and political processes of society,

Welcoming the efforts made in the field of property rights, and noting that an enabling environment at all levels, including transparent regulatory systems and competitive markets, foster the mobilization of resources and access to finance for people living in poverty,

Bearing in mind the importance of microfinance institutions, such as credit, savings and other financial products and services, in providing access to capital for people living in poverty,

Recognizing the need to create inclusive financial sectors in order to facilitate access for people living in poverty, especially women, to microcredit and microfinance so as to enable them to undertake microenterprises to generate employment and contribute to achieving self-empowerment, and to enhance their ability to increase income, build assets and mitigate vulnerability in times of hardship,

Noting that the availability of microcredit and microfinance to people living in poverty, especially women, can support entrepreneurship and spur the development of microenterprises, providing goods, services and income to the poor, thus raising incomes and fostering equitable growth,

Recalling its resolution 58/197, by which it proclaimed 2005 the International Year of Microcredit and requested that the observance of the Year be a special occasion for giving impetus to microcredit and microfinance programmes in all countries, particularly the developing countries,

Encouraging the holding and supporting of regional, subregional and national events on the observance of the International Year of Microcredit, 2005,

Noting the ongoing efforts by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat and the United Nations Capital Development Fund in jointly coordinating the activities of the United Nations system regarding the preparation and observance of the Year, and noting also the ongoing efforts of public and private development agencies, including the Consultative Group to Assist the Poor, on microcredit and microfinance,

Noting also that the international community is observing the period 1997-2006 as the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty,

1. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006) and preparations for the International Year of Microcredit, 2005;

2. Welcomes the launching of the International Year of Microcredit, 2005;

3. Emphasizes that the observance of 2005 as the International Year of Microcredit will provide a significant opportunity to raise awareness of the importance of microcredit and microfinance in the eradication of poverty, to share good practices and to further enhance financial sectors that support sustainable poverty reduction financial services in all countries;

4. Recognizes the importance of scaling up microcredit and other microfinance instruments, using the Year as a platform to find ways of enhancing development impact and sustainability through the increased dissemination of data and sharing of best practices and lessons learned among microcredit and microfinance institutions, and welcomes the ongoing efforts of United Nations regional organizations, funds, programmes and specialized agencies responsible for operational activities related to development in promoting microcredit and microfinance institutions, inter alia, supporting the development of entrepreneurship;

5. Reiterates its invitation to Member States, relevant organizations of the United Nations system, non-governmental organizations, the private sector and civil society to collaborate, including through making voluntary contributions, in observing the Year, to raise public awareness and knowledge about microcredit and microfinance;

6. Recognizes that access to microcredit and microfinance can contribute to the achievement of the goals and targets of major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic and social fields, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, in particular the goals relating to poverty eradication, gender equality and the empowerment of women;

7. Invites Member States to consider undertaking policies to facilitate the expansion of microcredit and microfinance institutions in order to serve the large unmet demand among poor people for financial services, including the identification and development of mechanisms to promote sustainable access to financial services, the removal of institutional and regulatory obstacles and the provision of incentives to microfinance institutions that meet national standards for delivering such financial services to the poor;

8. Also invites Member States to consider developing and promoting regulatory guidance and standards to ensure effectiveness in management, financial reporting, internal auditing, domestic supervision and accountability among microfinance institutions;
9. **Decides** to devote one plenary meeting at its sixty-first session to the consideration of the outcome of and follow-up to the International Year of Microcredit, with a view to broadening and deepening the discussion about microcredit and microfinance;

10. **Requests** the Secretary-General to prepare a report on the observance of the International Year of Microcredit, 2005, and on the implementation of the present resolution, and to submit it to the General Assembly at its sixty-first session under the item entitled “Implementation of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006)”.

**Rural development**

In accordance with Economic and Social Council decision 2003/290 [YUN 2003, p. 853], the Council, at the coordination segment of its 2004 substantive session, considered the theme of a coordinated and integrated UN system approach to promote rural development in developing countries, with due consideration to LDCs, for poverty eradication and sustainable development [A/59/3/Rev.1]. It had before it a report of the Secretary-General [E/2004/58], which analysed the role of the UN system in promoting a coordinated and integrated approach to rural development and made proposals on how to improve policy coherence at the international, regional and country levels.

The report noted that the potential contribution of rural development in the realization of the internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs, was being increasingly acknowledged. However, there were certain issues that needed to be taken into account while assimi- lating the goal of integrated rural development in the broader framework of the MDGs: how to ensure complementarity between the strategies to achieve the MDGs and rural development-related activities, and how to promote efficient allocation of resources and optimal utilization of capacities of various organizations and actors. In addressing those issues, the UN system, Governments and other relevant actors were trying to develop an integrated approach for their activities, which contained three important elements—the integration of various dimensions of rural development and the development goals, based on a coherent strategy, a clear division of labour and mutually reinforcing programmes; a coherent framework for capacity-building activities and projects in rural development; and regional cooperation.

On 1 July, the Council held a panel discussion entitled “Working together to promote integrated rural development in developing countries, particularly the least developed countries”.

**ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL ACTION**


**Coordinated and integrated United Nations system approach to promoting rural development in developing countries, with due consideration to least developed countries, for poverty eradication and sustainable development**

The Economic and Social Council, recalling its decision 2003/287 of 24 July 2003, in which it decided to consider, during its coordination segment in 2004, the theme “Coordinated and integrated United Nations system approach to promoting rural development in developing countries, with due consideration to least developed countries, for poverty eradication and sustainable development”,

reaffirming the ministerial declaration of the high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council adopted on 2 July 2003,

recalling the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, and the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences, summits and relevant special sessions of the General Assembly,

recalling also the Declaration of the World Food Summit: five years later, adopted in Rome on 13 June 2002.

reaffirming the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010,

reiterating that the eradication of rural poverty and hunger is crucial for the achievement of internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, and that rural development should be pursued through an integrated approach, which encompasses the economic, social and environmental dimensions, takes into account the gender perspective and consists of mutually reinforcing policies and programmes, and which should be balanced, targeted, situation specific, locally owned, include local synergies and initiatives and be responsive to the needs of rural populations,

recognizing that rural development is the responsibility of each country and is predicated on an enabling national environment, and reaffirming that an enabling international economic environment is important for the support of effective national development efforts, including rural development efforts, that it should combine effective and coherent policies, good governance and accountable institutions at the national and international levels as well as the promotion of gender equality and the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to development, and that robust, broad-based and equitable economic growth as well as human resources development are needed to fight rural poverty,

1. **Takes note** of the report of the Secretary-General;

2. **Notes** the efforts made by United Nations organizations to assist developing countries, upon their request, in integrating rural development into their national development strategies, urges them to promote further the integration of this approach into their operational and other activities, to enhance further the efficiency of resources utilization and to continue to work, within their mandates, to this end, and, in this

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**Notes**

2. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General;
regard, emphasizes the need for relevant United Nations agencies to be provided with appropriate resources to promote integrated rural development;

3. Calls for enhanced coordination and cooperation among the agencies of the United Nations system, including among the Rome-based agencies, especially at the country level, on the basis of the common country assessment and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, in support of national development strategies as well as in enhancing their cooperation with the World Bank and the regional development banks;

4. Acknowledges the recent increase in official development assistance allocations to rural development and agriculture, urges developed countries that have not yet done so to reach the target of providing 0.7 per cent of their gross national product as official development assistance to developing countries and 0.15 to 0.20 per cent of their gross national product to least developed countries, as reaffirmed at the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, held in Brussels from 14 to 20 May 2001, encourages developing countries to build on progress achieved in ensuring that official development assistance is used effectively to help achieve development goals and targets, acknowledges the efforts of all donors, commends those donors whose official development assistance contributions exceed, reach or are increasing towards the targets, and underlines the importance of undertaking an examination of the means and time frames for achieving the targets and goals;

5. Invites the international and regional financial institutions to continue to enhance their support for national efforts for poverty eradication and rural development in developing countries, including the mobilization of public and private investment as well as improved access to credit for the development of rural infrastructure in order to enhance productivity and increase access to markets and information, calls for actions to facilitate the establishment and strengthening of rural financial institutions, including microcredit/microfinancing, savings and insurance facilities and cooperative ventures for rural development, as well as the development of microenterprises and small and medium-sized enterprises, and in this regard underlines the importance of the International Year of Microcredit, 2005, as a platform to promote these goals;

6. Recognizes that, despite serious efforts to achieve progress, important issues in the implementation of the Ministerial Declaration adopted at the Fourth Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization, held in Doha from 9 to 14 November 2001, are still outstanding, in particular regarding the commitments for, for example, comprehensive negotiations aimed at substantial improvements in market access; that in the agricultural sector, without prejudging the outcome of negotiations, reductions of, with a view to phasing out, all forms of export subsidies, substantial reduction of trade-distorting domestic support and enhanced market access are needed; that special and differential treatment for developing countries shall be an integral part of all elements of the negotiations, and that development needs are fully into account in a manner consistent with the Doha mandate, including food security and rural development; and that non-trade concerns of countries will also be taken into account, as provided for in the Agreement on Agriculture, in accordance with paragraph 13 of the Doha Ministerial Declaration, and urges the United Nations system, including the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, to provide further trade-related technical assistance and capacity-building for developing countries, in particular the least developed countries;

7. Also recognizes the vulnerability of the commodity-dependent developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, to market fluctuations, and calls upon the United Nations system to support their efforts towards diversification of exports and value-added through processing as a means of increasing export earnings, including through support to enable developing countries to put in place measures that are appropriate and necessary for meeting standards consistent with the provisions of the World Trade Organization and improving terms of trade, and to address the impact of the instability of commodity prices;

8. Stresses the need to enhance and expand access by developing countries to appropriate technologies that are pro-poor and raise productivity, underlines the need for measures to increase investment in agricultural research, including modern technologies, as well as in natural resources management and capacity-building, and encourages the United Nations system to strengthen support for the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research;

9. Reaffirms that sustainable agriculture and rural development are essential to the implementation of an integrated approach to food security and safety in an environmentally sustainable way, recognizes the important role of the rural population in sustaining natural resources, and calls for enhanced coordination and cooperation among the agencies of the United Nations system in supporting national efforts to promote environmentally sound and sustainable natural resources management;

10. Also reaffirms the need to improve access to reliable, affordable, economically viable, socially acceptable and environmentally sound energy services and resources, taking into account national specificities and circumstances, through various means, such as enhanced rural electrification and decentralized energy systems, increased use of renewables, cleaner liquid and gaseous fuels and enhanced energy efficiency, as well as by intensifying regional and international cooperation and enhancing coordination and cooperation among agencies of the United Nations system in support of national efforts, including through capacity-building, financial and technological assistance and innovative financing mechanisms, inter alia at the micro- and meso-levels, recognizing the specific factors for providing access to the poor;

11. Expresses its serious concern regarding the severe food shortages and hunger facing millions of people, especially in Africa, recognizes that food security is a global concern, and stresses the importance of improving famine prevention mechanisms and long-term food security, as well as of responding to emergency food aid needs;

12. Invites the United Nations system to support further the implementation of the United Nations
Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa and to address the causes of desertification and land degradation in order to maintain and restore land, as well as addressing poverty resulting from land degradation;
13. Recognizes that bridging the digital divide will require strong commitment by all stakeholders at the national and international levels, and encourages all efforts by agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system to assist developing countries in overcoming the digital divide and promoting the use of information and communication technologies to foster economic and social development, particularly in rural areas;
14. Recognizes the devastating impact of HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases on societies, and calls for measures by United Nations bodies, especially the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS cooperation, and development partners to further mainstream HIV/AIDS concerns into rural development planning, including poverty eradication and food security strategies and multisectoral development activities covering economic and social aspects, including the gender perspective;
15. Invites the relevant organizations of the United Nations system dealing with issues of development to strengthen their cooperation in addressing and supporting the empowerment and the specific needs of rural women in their programmes and strategies;
16. Stresses that the United Nations system should improve its coordination in support of national efforts to increase the school enrolment rate, especially of the girl child, and to provide quality education for the rural poor, inter alia, through mobilizing the financial and technical resources necessary, including the full utilization of modern methodologies and technologies as well as the establishment of distance learning education systems;
17. Recognizes the importance of employment for pro-poor growth in rural areas, and encourages the United Nations system and development partners to assist countries, upon their request, in mainstreaming employment into investment policy and poverty reduction strategies, including those focused on rural area development;
18. Invites the United Nations system to further assist developing countries in their efforts to enhance access by the rural poor to productive assets, especially land and water, in order to promote social and economic development;
19. Calls upon the United Nations system to further support capacity-building programmes for, and exchanges of experience on, rural development through enhanced coordination and information exchange mechanisms such as the United Nations System Network on Rural Development and Food Security;
20. Stresses that the United Nations system should further support regional and subregional initiatives, where appropriate, in order to promote an integrated approach to rural development, and requests the United Nations regional commissions to further enhance regional and interregional cooperation, in particular for sharing best practices.
21. Calls upon the United Nations system and regional organizations to undertake measures to further promote South-South cooperation, including triangular cooperation, in the area of rural development, and in this regard underlines the need for increased cooperation among bodies of the United Nations system to promote South-South cooperation;
22. Notes the work of the United Nations system on partnerships, welcomes the establishment of a multitude of partnerships for sustainable rural development at the field level entered into by various United Nations agencies, Member States, the private sector, non-governmental organizations and civil society in general, and encourages the United Nations system to continue to promote partnerships at the national and international levels in accordance with relevant General Assembly resolutions.

**United Nations Alliance**


**United Nations Public-Private Alliance for Rural Development**

The Economic and Social Council,
Recalling the ministerial declaration of the high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council adopted on 2 July 2003, which underlined the importance of alliances and partnerships among actors in different sectors for the promotion of integrated rural development,
Underlining the importance of the contribution of the private sector, non-governmental organizations and civil society in general to the implementation of the outcomes of United Nations conferences in the economic, social and related fields,
Recalling the central role and responsibility of Governments in national and international policy-making,
Bearing in mind General Assembly resolution 58/129 of 19 December 2003, entitled “Towards global partnerships”, in which the Assembly, inter alia, identified the principles and objectives of such partnerships and welcomed the establishment of a multitude of partnerships at the field level, entered into by various United Nations organizations, Member States and other stakeholders, such as the United Nations Public-Private Alliance for Rural Development (the United Nations Alliance),
1. Welcomes the initiative of the Government of Madagascar to serve as the pilot country for the United Nations Public-Private Alliance for Rural Development (the United Nations Alliance);
2. Invites all Member States, the funds, programmes and agencies of the United Nations system, the Bretton Woods institutions, civil society, the private sector and other relevant stakeholders to support the programmes and activities of the United Nations Alliance in its mission to promote sustainable rural development, consistent with General Assembly resolution 58/129 and other relevant resolutions and decisions of the Assembly and the Economic and Social Council;
3. Stresses that activities of the funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations system at the country level in support of the United Nations Alliance should take into account the implementation...
of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework;

4. Requests the Secretary-General to report to the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 2006 on the work of the United Nations Alliance.

Science and technology for development

Commission on Science and Technology for Development

The Commission on Science and Technology for Development held its seventh session in Geneva from 24 to 28 May [E/2004/31]. It considered as its main substantive theme “Promoting the application of science and technology to meet the development goals contained in the Millennium Declaration” (see below). It also discussed an April note by the Secretariat on implementation of and progress made on decisions taken at the Commission’s sixth (2003) session [E/CN.16/2004/3], and heard national country reports on information and communication technology (ICT) policies from a number of countries.

The Commission recommended a draft resolution and two draft decisions for adoption by the Economic and Social Council. It brought to the Council’s attention a decision by which it took note of the Secretary-General’s report on the main substantive theme [E/2004/31 (dec. 7/101)] (see below).

By decision 2004/314 of 23 July, the Economic and Social Council took note, during its consideration at its high-level segment of the theme “Resources mobilization and enabling environment for poverty eradication in the context of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010” (see p. 855), of the Commission’s contribution, which was addressed under the substantive theme at its seventh session. The Council encouraged all stakeholders to consider the Commission’s recommendations thereon.

On the same date, by decision 2004/315, the Council took note of the Commission’s report on its seventh session and approved the provisional agenda and documentation for the eighth (2005) session.

Promoting the application of science and technology to meet the development goals

The Commission had before it an April report by the Secretary-General on promoting the application of science and technology to meet the development goals contained in the Millennium Declaration [E/CN.16/2004/2] that sought to identify approaches for the effective promotion and use of science and technology to meet the MDGs [YUN 2000, p. 51].

The report examined strategies for promoting the application of science and technology to meeting the MDGs, including improving the policy environment for the application of science and technology to development; strengthening basic and applied research in developing countries and promoting international scientific networking; and promoting universal Internet access and building strategic partnerships for development and competitiveness. It found that most developing countries were unlikely to meet the MDGs without making science and technology top priorities in their development agenda. Achieving the MDGs, therefore, would require a reorientation of national science, technology and innovation policies to ensure that they served the needs of development effectively. In particular, a solid national science and technology base would have to be built to enable the generation, use and diffusion of scientific and technological knowledge. Academia/government/industry partnerships were essential in building scientific and technological capabilities and fostering market-oriented policies and developments. Also essential was access to new and emerging technologies, which required technology transfer, technical cooperation and building a scientific and technological capacity to participate in the development, mastery and adaptation of those technologies to local conditions.

The report concluded by directing a number of recommendations to Governments, the Commission and the UN system.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL ACTION

By decision 2004/313 of 23 July, the Economic and Social Council deferred consideration of the draft resolution on promoting the application of science and technology to meeting the development goals contained in the Millennium Declaration, contained in the report of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, to a resumed session.

On 5 November [meeting 53], the Council, on the recommendation of the Commission [E/2004/31, orally amended], adopted resolution 2004/68 without vote [agenda item 15 (b)].

Science and technology for development

The Economic and Social Council,

1. Promoting the application of science and technology to meet the development goals contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration

Welcoming the work of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development on its theme “Pro-
the application of science and technology to meet the development goals contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration” and taking note of the findings, which include, inter alia, the following:

1. Most developing countries are unlikely to meet the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, without a clear political commitment to making science and technology top priorities in their development agenda;

2. Many developing countries lack solid science and technology bases. Science and technology institutions and national innovation systems in many developing countries are fragmented and uncoordinated, and links between them and the private business sector are poorly developed. Review and analysis of national science, technology and innovation policies and institutional and legal frameworks, including advisory bodies and mechanisms, are urgently needed to ensure that they serve the needs of development effectively;

3. The lack of a solid science and technology base not only results from poor human and capital resources, but also stems from a lack of appreciation of the critical role of science and technology in development, as well as from an incoherent methodology for establishing such a base and the absence of a coherent policy addressing national needs and human and capital resources;

4. For developing countries to meet the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, they need access to new and emerging technologies, which requires technology transfer, technical cooperation and the building and nurturing of a scientific and technological capacity to participate in the development and adaptation of these technologies to local conditions;

5. Promoting the development and application of new and emerging technologies, most notably biotechnology and information and communication technologies as well as biomedical and environmental technologies, will both reduce the cost and increase the likelihood of attaining the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration;

6. Academia/government/industry partnerships and networking are essential in building scientific and technological capabilities and fostering policies and developments. Science and technology parks, business incubators and support organizations for innovation are effective mechanisms for promoting academia/government/industry partnerships and entrepreneurship;

7. The current North-South gap in respect of the generation and application of new and emerging technologies and their contribution to economic and social development constitutes a “technological divide” which must be bridged if developing countries are to participate effectively in a global inclusive knowledge society;

8. States need to invest in publicly funded universities and research institutions to improve infrastructure, quality of education and human resources. To enhance the impact of investment, Governments should consider linking funding of universities to performance in teaching and research;

9. Despite the efforts of various development agencies, poverty still persists in many parts of the world. There is a need to coordinate technical cooperation programmes and to monitor progress so as to ensure policy coherence and socio-economic benefits for the poor;

10. In recent years, there has been a rapid rise in the number of open and collaborative projects to create public goods. These projects are extremely important, as they affect the ability of countries to achieve the development goals contained in the Millennium Declaration.

Decides to make the following recommendations for consideration by national Governments and the Commission on Science and Technology for Development:

(a) Governments are encouraged to undertake the following actions:

(i) Demonstrate their political commitment by increasing research and development expenditure in science and technology to at least 1 per cent of gross domestic product and encourage research and development, engineering and design, inter alia, in areas involving the assimilation of existing knowledge that address the needs of national development;

(ii) Establish and/or enhance national advisory bodies and their linkages to provide systematic and institutionalized science and technology advice to various branches of government responsible for coordinating and implementing development strategies;

(iii) Implement fiscal and other incentives to encourage research and development in the private sector and joint projects between private companies and public research and development institutes;

(iv) Strengthen universities and research institutions and develop centres of excellence in the fields of science and technology and encourage them to contribute to national development;

(v) Increase investment in scientific and technical education, particularly at tertiary and vocational levels, and adopt concrete measures to increase the enrolment of girls and women in scientific and engineering disciplines and ensure their representation in science and technology, particularly in decision-making positions;

(vi) Adopt special measures to attract and retain young and talented scientists and technologists, and establish close ties with expatriate scientists and engineers and encourage their participation in national development;

(vii) Strengthen the diffusion and commercialization of technology by encouraging venture capital and other forms of financial intermediaries supporting innovation from both public and private sources and establishing facilitatory institutions such as science parks and technology incubators;

(viii) Explore the potential of openly available public development projects for the enhancement of science and technology infrastructure;

(ix) Raise public awareness on the importance of science and technology in development and, in particular, the benefits, opportunities and risks of new and emerging technologies;

(b) The Commission on Science and Technology for Development, within existing resources and within
the framework of its role in coordinating science and technology activities in the United Nations system, is requested to:

(i) Forge links between itself and national science and technology bodies in each country, in order to promote networking, share national experiences, facilitate information flows and increase the impact of the work of the Commission. In this regard, the Commission is invited to establish an international network of science and technology institutions, including national science and technology commissions and other stakeholders in development such as the international research centres of the Trieste System. The new association would meet annually in conjunction with the regular session of the Commission;

(ii) Establish, in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme and other institutions dealing with the use of science, technology and innovation in achieving the Millennium Development Goals, mechanisms for the ongoing review, evaluation and analysis of national strategies for achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, to ensure that science and technology play a central role. To this end, the Commission is invited to consider the feasibility of developing a reliable tool to monitor implementation and benchmark progress;

(iii) Explore the possibility of establishing new initiatives involving important development partners, such as the New Partnership for Africa’s Development, with a view to enhancing closer South-South and North-South collaboration in the area of science and technology;

(iv) Explore the feasibility of preparing and producing an annual world technology for development report that would include technology achievement indicators and benchmarks and a review of emerging technologies and related policies, as well as best practices and case studies on the application of science and technology towards the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration;

(v) Provide a forum within the Science and Technology for Development Network within which success stories and lessons learned could be shared in respect of national efforts to apply science and technology to serve the needs of development;

(vi) Interact closely with the United Nations Information and Communication Technologies Task Force, the International Telecommunication Union and regional commissions in order to assist developing countries in the implementation of national action plans to support the fulfilment of the goals indicated in the Declaration of Principles and the Plan of Action adopted at the first phase of the World Summit on the Information Society, held in Geneva from 10 to 12 December 2003, and contribute to the preparation of the second phase of the Summit, to be held in Tunis from 16 to 18 November 2005.

II

New substantive theme and other activities

Endorses the following decision taken by the Commission on Science and Technology for Development at its seventh session:

The Commission on Science and Technology for Development, recognizing that the implementation of the development goals contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration entails significant re-orientation in the use of science, technology and innovation policies to ensure that they serve the needs of development, especially for poverty reduction, recognizing also that national advisory bodies are essential in providing systematic and institutionalized science and technology advice to the executive and other branches of government responsible for coordinating and implementing development strategies, and taking note of the Declaration of Principles and the Plan of Action adopted at the first phase of the World Summit on the Information Society, held in Geneva from 10 to 12 December 2003, decides to select as its substantive theme for the intersessional period 2004-2005 “Science and technology promotion, advice and application for the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration”, and considers that specific emphasis should be placed on at least three key areas: the mutual interaction and dependency of science and technology education and research and development; infrastructure-building as a foundation for scientific and technological development; and promoting gainful employment, in general, and enterprise development, in particular, through the use of existing and emerging technologies, especially information and communication technologies and biotechnologies.

Information and communication technologies

During 2004, the United Nations continued to consider how the benefits of new technologies, especially ICT, could contribute to development and preparations for the second phase of the World Summit on the Information Society; the first phase was held in 2003. The UN ICT Task Force continued its substantive work as a global forum on integrating information on ICT into development programmes.

World Summit on the Information Society

By decision 58/569 of 1 July, the General Assembly, on the proposal of its President, decided to consider the report of the World Summit on the Information Society (first phase, Geneva, 10-12 December 2003) [YUN 2003, p. 857]; second phase, Tunis, Tunisia, 16-18 November 2005) in plenary meeting at its sixtieth (2005) session, notwithstanding the fact that the item entitled “Information and communication technologies for development” would be allocated to the Second Committee pursuant to Assembly resolution 58/316 (see p. 1574).

Report of ITU Secretary-General. In response to General Assembly resolution 57/258 [YUN 2002, p. 836], the Secretary-General submitted to the Assembly and the Economic and Social Council a May report by the Secretary-General of the International Telecommunication
In preparation for the second phase, an informal brainstorming meeting was organized (Hammamet, Tunisia, 2-3 March) and the Preparatory Committee held its first session (Hammamet, 24-26 June) \[WSIS-II/PC-1/DOC/6-E\]. Regional conferences were held, including the Second Bishkek-Moscow Regional Conference on the Information Society (Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, 16-18 November) and the West Asia Regional Conference (Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic, 22-23 November). Other preparatory activities included the ITU workshop on Internet governance (Geneva, 26-27 February) and the establishment by the United Nations Secretary-General of the Task Force on Financial Mechanisms for ICT for Development, which produced a report on the subject in December.

**CEB consideration.** In the context of its consideration of the question of bridging the digital divide, CEB/HLCP discussed the outcome of the first phase of the World Summit on the Information Society at both its seventh session (Beirut, 26-27 February) \[CEB/2004/4\] and its intersessional meeting (Frascati, Italy, 31 May-1 June) \[CEB/2004/5\]. It considered the preparations for the second phase of the Summit at its eighth session (Florence, Italy, 15-17 September) \[CEB/2004/7\].

At CEB’s second regular session of 2004 (New York, 29-30 October) \[CEB/2004/2\], the ITU Secretary-General provided an update on preparations for the second phase.

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION**

On 22 December [meeting 75], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Second Committee \[A/59/480\], adopted **resolution 59/220** without vote \[agenda item 44\].

**World Summit on the Information Society**

_The General Assembly,_

Recalling its resolutions 56/183 of 21 December 2001 and 57/238 of 20 December 2002,

Reaffirming the potential of information and communication technologies as powerful tools to foster socio-economic development and contribute to the realization of the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, 

1. **Expressions its gratitude** to the Government of Switzerland for having hosted the first phase of the World Summit on the Information Society in Geneva from 10 to 12 December 2003 and for the support and arrangements put at the disposal of the Summit;

2. **Reaffirms with gratitude its acknowledgement** of the generous offer of the Government of Tunisia to host the second phase of the Summit, which will take place in Tunis from 16 to 18 November 2005;

3. **Takes note** of the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Secretary-General of the International Telecommunication Union to the first phase and progress in the preparations for the second phase of the World Summit on the Information Society;

4. **Endorses** the Declaration of Principles and the Plan of Action adopted by the Summit on 12 December 2003, and welcomes, in this regard, the strong development orientation of both documents, encourages developing and developed countries in partnership to continue to identify how information technologies can further contribute to achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, and stresses the importance of the effective and timely implementation of the Plan of Action;

5. **Welcomes** the contribution of Member States, relevant United Nations bodies, including the Information and Communication Technologies Task Force, and other intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, civil society and the private sector to the success of the Geneva phase of the Summit;

6. **Urges** Member States, relevant United Nations bodies, including the Information and Communications Technologies Task Force, and other intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, civil society and the private sector to contribute actively to the implementation of the outcome of the Geneva phase and to the preparatory process of the Tunis phase of the Summit as well as to the Summit itself in order to ensure its overall success;

7. **Takes note** of the results and decisions of the first meeting of the Preparatory Committee, held in Hammamet, Tunisia, from 24 to 26 June 2004, concerning the structure and output of the second phase of the Summit;

8. **Welcomes** the establishment of the Working Group on Internet Governance and the Task Force on Financial Mechanisms, set up in accordance with the decisions of the first phase of the Summit;

9. **Invites** countries to be represented at the highest possible political level at the second phase of the Summit, to be held in Tunis in 2005;

10. **Reiterates its call** to the international community to make voluntary contributions to the special fund established by the International Telecommunication Union to support the preparations for and holding of the Summit;

11. **Invites** the Secretary-General of the International Telecommunication Union to transmit to the General Assembly, as soon as it is available, the report of the World Summit on the Information Society.
UN role

ICT Task Force. In May, the Secretary-General submitted to the Economic and Social Council the second annual report [E/2004/62 & Corr.1] on the Information and Communication Technologies Task Force, which was established in 2001 [YUN 2001, p. 763] to provide a global forum on integrating ICT into development programmes and a platform for promoting public and private partnerships to help bridge the digital divide and foster digital opportunity. The first report was submitted to the Council in 2003 [YUN 2003, p. 856].

In its second year, the Task Force, through its core activities, working groups and regional nodes, successfully served as a multi-stakeholder mechanism to facilitate and promote collaborative initiatives at the regional, subregional and national levels and to mobilize new public and private resources to support ICT-for-development programmes and projects. The Task Force facilitated the pooling of relevant experience of both developed and developing countries and the sharing of lessons learned in introducing and promoting ICT.

In addition to assessing progress made by the Task Force during its second year (December 2002–February 2004) and outlining its major activities and accomplishments, the report outlined a strategy for the Task Force’s activities until the end of 2005.

By decision 2004/296 of 23 July, the Council welcomed the valuable contribution of the Task Force to harnessing the potential of ICT for advancing development and encouraged the Task Force to continue promoting ICT for development worldwide, including through contributing to the World Summit on the Information Society process.

CEB consideration. The issue of the digital divide and its implications for the UN system was discussed by CEB/HLCP at its seventh [YUN 2004/4] and eighth [YUN 2004/7] sessions and at its intersessional meeting [YUN 2004/5].

At its second regular session of 2004 [YUN 2004/2], CEB recommended that HLCP, in close consultation with the High-Level Summit Organizing Committee, should undertake a work programme for mainstreaming and integrating ICT into the broader MDG agenda, including through the development of system-wide approaches and guidelines for use by country representatives and by the resident coordinator system; and, working closely with the CEB High-Level Committee on Management (HLCM) and its ICT Network, to focus on developing a clear vision of a UN system-wide knowledge management system, its optimum functionality and implementation options. The UN system ICT strategy had to be pursued as an essential component of the overall effort to enhance cost-effectiveness, strengthen system-wide knowledge management and enhance the capacity to support countries in using ICT for achieving the MDGs. HLCM and its ICT Network had to work closely with HLCP to continue to develop the business cases for the strategy, its resource implications and measures to address constraints in its implementation for consideration and decision by CEB.

Report of Secretary-General. In response to General Assembly resolution 59/295 [YUN 2002, p. 856], the Secretary-General, in a November report [A/59/563], described activities undertaken to develop a comprehensive ICT strategy for the UN system. The activities related to devising a comprehensive and coherent response to the broad issues of harnessing the potential of ICT for promoting development and were focused on: the coherence of the policy advice that UN system organizations provided to countries in setting comprehensive, forward-looking strategies to harness ICT for economic and social progress; and the unprecedented opportunities that ICT offered for system-wide knowledge management and knowledge creation.

Annexed to the report were the text of the United Nations Information and Communication Technologies Charter, which defined the principles and framework for coordination and collaboration within the organizations of the UN system, and the strategy that underpinned the Charter, comprising a set of 15 initiatives in ICT for development, ICT governance, information security, practical applications and capacity-building.

By decision 59/531 of 22 December, the Assembly took note of the Secretary-General’s report and requested him to submit a further report on the implementation of the ICT strategy to the Assembly’s sixtieth (2005) session.

Communication for UN development programmes

In response to General Assembly resolution 50/130 [YUN 1995, p. 1438], the Secretary-General, in August [A/59/267], transmitted the report of the Director-General of UNESCO, which described the inter-agency collaborative mechanisms for effective and integrated follow-up to that resolution. The recommendations of the seven UN agencies, funds and programmes that contributed to the review of existing coordination arrangements and of the eighth Inter-Agency Round Table on Communication for Development (Managua, Nicaragua, 26-28 November 2001) were: creation of an international consortium on HIV/AIDS communication strategies; collection and sharing of tools from key agencies/
implementers to identify and improve access to proven tools and reduce duplication; improvement of training for journalists by reinforcing learning institutions; and encouragement of the production and dissemination of local media content while keeping a calculated balance between local, national and international contributions. The report called for increased resources for more effective communication programmes, enhanced synergy among all partners and intensified efforts to address the digital divide.

By decision 59/532 of 22 December, the Assembly took note of the UNESCO Director-General’s report.

**Economic and social trends**

The *World Economic and Social Survey 2004* (Sales No. E.04.II.C.1), prepared in mid-2004 by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), stated that, after a mediocre performance for some three years, world economic growth began to improve in 2003 and continued to do so in early 2004. Gross world product grew by 2.7 per cent in 2003, compared with 1.8 per cent in 2002; it was expected to grow by 3.7 per cent in 2004.

Although economic performance and outlook improved for most countries, differences in economic strength across regions and economies persisted. The economy of the United States expanded apace in 2003 and early 2004 and remained a key engine for the world economy. However, its large fiscal and trade deficits continued to be major concerns, not only for the United States economy but also for the rest of the world because of the downside risks those deficits posed. Economic activity in Western Europe, apart from the United Kingdom, was sluggish but the gradual recovery was expected to continue. Japan was expected to grow by about 3 per cent in 2004, with the resurgence being driven mainly by exports, particularly to other Asian economies. As to the other developed economies, the substantial appreciation of their currencies vis-à-vis the United States dollar had an adverse impact on Australia, Canada and New Zealand.

Developing countries were again growing faster than the developed countries in 2004, with more of them than in any year since 2000 expected to achieve an increase in their per capita income. The extended periods of rapid growth of the two most populous developing countries—China and India—were good not only for the countries themselves and the large number of poor within them, but also for other countries. Many developing countries had benefited from China’s growing appetite for energy and raw materials and from the resulting higher prices of oil and other commodities. Gross domestic product (GDP) growth in Africa was expected to accelerate in 2004-2005 as many countries achieved an increase in agricultural and industrial output. Higher consumer spending, increasing investment, including more foreign direct investment (FDI) in several countries, and expanded, though cautious, government expenditure in a growing number of countries were expected to support domestic demand. The accelerating economic growth in East Asia was fuelled by the region’s traditional source of dynamism—international trade. Demand from the United States strengthened in the second half of 2003 and there was an upturn in global information and communication technologies (ICT) product markets. The impetus from powerful growth in China continued to increase and a better-than-anticipated recovery in Japan added new strength to the region’s growth. After a rebound in 2003, growth in South Asia was expected to solidify further in 2004, with more balance across countries and sectors. While the surge in Pakistan’s exports in 2003 had moderated as the one-off effects of increased textile quotas waned, India’s exports and imports both increased sharply, with exports driven by ICT-related products and services. International tourism to the region also improved and recovery in the agricultural sector (except for Sri Lanka) contributed to higher incomes. Western Asia’s economic prospects were still heavily conditioned by geopolitical developments, particularly the situation in Iraq, whose economic improvement had been dilatory, and the escalating conflict between Israel and Palestine. The only propitious sign for the region was the higher dollar price of petroleum, a benefit that was discounted by the depreciation of the United States dollar. GDP growth for the region was expected to decelerate to 2.8 per cent in 2004. The short-term economic outlook for Latin America and the Caribbean continued to improve, with stronger demand from North America, Japan and China and the substantial rise in commodity prices boosting the growth of exports. Depreciation of the United States dollar and more flexible exchange-rate regimes had allowed most countries to ease monetary policy; interest rates in many economies were at multi-year lows. For the first time in decades, the region had registered a current-account surplus.

The economies in transition were the most rapidly growing of the three major groups of countries in 2003 as they continued to recover from the setbacks of the 1990s. The economies of
the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) accelerated to over 7 per cent in 2003 and were expected to remain robust for 2004-2005, with the Russian Federation in the lead. Their economic vigour was bolstered by improved domestic fundamentals; higher production, exports and prices of petroleum and gas; and increased foreign investment. Improved consumer and investor confidence also continued to support growth.

The prospects for Central and Eastern Europe continued to improve, mostly due to the performance of the Polish economy, with the momentum of growth shifting to South-Eastern Europe. Growth in the Baltic States was expected to remain robust in 2004-2005, reflecting success in broad-based structural policies and gains in macroeconomic stability. Membership of the European Union (EU) was expected to be beneficial for those economies in the long run, but uncertainties associated with EU entry could pose some short-term risks.

The second volume of the World Economic and Social Survey 2004 [Sales No. E.04.II.C.3] dealt with the subject of international migration (see p. 1077).

The Trade and Development Report, 2004 [Sales No. E.04.II.D.29], published by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), stated that the outlook for a sustained economic recovery was more clouded and uncertain than at the beginning of the 1990s. Large disparities in the strength of domestic demand persisted among the major industrial countries, and increasing trade imbalances between the major economic blocks could lead to new protectionist pressures and increase instability in currency and financial markets, with adverse implications for developing countries. The sharp increase in oil prices, uncertainty about their future development and their possible impact on inflation and interest rates were an additional reason for concern. Moreover, income growth was unequally distributed both among developed countries, where the euro area continued to lag behind, and among developing countries, where fast and sustained growth continued to be concentrated in East and South Asia. At the same time, per capita income in most of sub-Saharan Africa was stagnating, and the basis for sustained growth in Latin America was still very fragile. The improvement in the global economy was the result of exceptionally good performance in a small number of countries, with great variations in the spillover effects on other economies.

A report on the world economic situation and prospects [Sales No. E.05.II.C.2], prepared jointly by DESA and UNCTAD, stated that global growth was not only the highest for many years (4 per cent), but was also unusually widespread and well balanced. Growth in the developing countries was the fastest for more than two decades, while output in the remaining economies in transition continued to increase more rapidly than in the other major country groups. The high aggregate rate of growth in 2004 reflected the fact that every region except South Asia and CIS grew more rapidly in 2004 than in 2003. In those two exceptional cases, growth slipped from previous high levels but remained above 6 per cent and 7 per cent respectively. Even the high price of oil did not have the discriminating effects that might have been assumed. In Latin America, with its large number of oil-importing countries, growth surged to over 5 per cent after six years of weak performance. In Africa, the impact of higher oil prices was offset for many oil-importing countries by higher non-oil commodity prices; non-oil prices rose less than oil prices, but non-oil commodities often accounted for a higher proportion of exports than oil did of imports. Asia, despite also being predominantly an oil-importing region, received an even greater stimulus than other regions from the rapid growth in China and the large increase in trade that it generated.

On a per capita basis, output increased by more than 3 per cent in almost half the developing countries, but those countries accounted for over 80 per cent of the developing world’s population. Per capita output also increased by more than 3 per cent in all the economies in transition except one.

Of the 107 developing countries for which data were available, per capita output fell in only 13 cases, and those countries accounted for less than 3 per cent of the population. Of those 15 countries, 9 were in Africa and accounted for almost one quarter of that region’s population. On the other hand, almost half the countries in Africa (but accounting for 40 per cent of the region’s population) increased per capita output by more than 3 per cent. Those cases demonstrated that it was possible to achieve rates of growth in Africa that, if sustained, would slowly reduce poverty in the region. In South and East Asia, only four countries, accounting for less than 3 per cent of the region’s population, failed to achieve 3 per cent growth of per capita output in 2004. In Western Asia, two of the four countries that experienced a decline in per capita output in 2003 achieved positive growth in 2004, but only half the countries in the region—the same number as in 2003—increased per capita output by more than 3 per cent. The largest turnaround was in Latin America: in 2003, one third of the 24 countries in the region for which data were available (accounting for over 60 per cent of the region’s
population) experienced a decline in per capita output; in 2004, the same number of countries, accounting for over half the region’s population, increased per capita output by more than 3 per cent. Among the developed countries performance was more varied. Growth was strong in North America, moderate in Japan but weak in Europe. With the exception of its new members and a few other countries, the EU had replaced Japan as the lagging economy.

**Human Development Report 2004**

The Human Development Report 2004 [Sales No. E.04.III.B.1], prepared by UNDP, discussed the question of cultural liberty in a diverse world (see p. 1101).

In addition to providing a critical analysis of a different theme each year, the Report assessed the state of human development across the globe, involving country data that focused on human well-being, not just economic trends. In 2004, it ranked 177 countries in its human development index by combining indicators of life expectancy, educational attainment and adjusted per capita income, among other factors. Of the 177 countries listed, 55 were in the high human development category, 86 were in the medium category and 36 were in the low category.

**UNDP consideration.** In response to General Assembly resolution 57/264 [YUN 2002, p. 841], the Executive Board of UNDP/United Nations Population Fund included in its agenda an item on the Human Development Report for the purpose of improving the consultation process with Member States regarding the Report, in order to enhance its quality and accuracy without compromising its editorial independence. The UNDP Administrator’s first report on the subject was submitted in 2003 [YUN 2003, p. 864]. In an April 2004 update, it was stated that for the Human Development Report 2004, UNDP had held consultations with the members of the Executive Board on five occasions and was committed to maintaining that level of consultation in future years.

In June [E/2004/35 (dec. 2004/25)], the Executive Board took note of the update.

## Development policy and public administration

**Committee for Development Policy**

The Committee for Development Policy (CDP), at its sixth session (New York, 29 March–2 April) [E/2004/35], considered three major themes: measures to improve resources mobilization for the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001–2010 (see p. 853); evaluation of progress towards good governance in the context of the implementation of the MDGs; and matters related to the 2003 triennial review of the list of LDCs (see p. 852).

The Committee considered that good governance could be instrumental in achieving the goals of poverty reduction only if the process of measurement and assessment was not biased in favour of external criteria relevant to the donors, investors and international monitoring bodies, as opposed to the internal perspective of the country. In designing institutions and mechanisms for good governance in developing countries, an interactive process between donors and recipient countries was thus essential. On the one hand, measures imposed by donors had often lacked success when they failed to pay due consideration to the culture and history of recipient countries. On the other, recipient countries needed assistance from donors to bring their institutions and social, political and economic processes closer to those required by good governance. CDP proposed that LDCs be invited to participate in the deliberations of institutions where global norms and standards for aspects of good governance were established.

## Public administration


The Committee recommended that the Economic and Social Council: reaffirm the role of the public service in fulfilling the specific national goals for socio-economic development, as they were key indicators of Member States’ attainment of the MDGs, devoting one of its future high-level segments to the changing role of a
public administration geared to development; propose to the General Assembly three options relating to the commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the Assembly’s resumed fifteenth session on public administration and development [YUN 1996, p. 750]—host the Global Forum on Reinventing Government in 2006, devote the Council’s 2006 high-level segment to “A service-oriented public administration for the achievement of the MDGs”, or celebrate the United Nations Public Service Day (23 June) and the awarding of the United Nations Public Service Awards in a more visible manner; consider how to leverage and integrate the work of the Committee of Experts in intergovernmental processes, particularly the deliberations of the commissions that considered development issues; recommend to international organizations and the donor community that they should increase financial, material and technical support to African States to strengthen governance and public administration; and decide that the next session of the Committee of Experts should be devoted to revitalizing public administration: strategic directions for the future, development of a methodology for a bottom-up participatory approach in identifying public administration foundations and principles, and enhancement of the celebration of the United Nations Public Service Day and of the competition for the United Nations Public Service Awards.

The Committee of Experts recommended to Member States that they should: focus the reform of their public administration systems on achieving conditions that would ensure and facilitate the attainment of the MDGs; adopt a holistic national strategy to strengthen the management of human capital in the public sector; have national public administrations act as the major facilitating factor in transition to the knowledge society and perceive themselves as e-governments; pursue the issue of partnerships through South-South cooperation; with UN assistance, if necessary, develop approaches, methodologies and tools for and knowledge on citizen-based policy formulation and performance monitoring; pay attention to the ratios of tax revenues to GDP and dissemination available data on the public sector. Specific recommendations to African Governments were that they should: implement the African Union’s Governance and Public Administration Programme under the aegis of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development [YUN 2001, p. 900]; institute mechanisms for implementing and disseminating the Charter for the Public Service in Africa [ibid., p. 877]; adopt methods and systems that fostered opportunities for popular participation in the governance and development process; strengthen the law-making, oversight and budget review capacities of the legislature; depoliticize the public service and transform it into a professional and non-partisan agent; and strengthen the judiciary to ensure predictability and peaceful resolution of disputes arising out of trade, industrial and international relations.

With regard to the United Nations, the Committee of Experts recommended that: the UN programme on public administration, finance and development should continue to focus on the reform/revitalization of the practice of public administration; the Secretariat should carry out policy research and technical cooperation on the role of human resources in revitalizing public administration and build on the successful outcomes of the Global Forum on Reinventing Government (see p. 851) by assisting in developing regional and national strategies to reinvent government; the UN Online Network in Public Administration and Finance (UNPAN) should be continuously enhanced; the Secretariat should continue studying the knowledge society and develop innovative tools, such as the code of accountability, engaged governance norms and a data base of best practices and indicators; the UN system should continue providing substantive technical and advisory support aimed at strengthening governance and public administration institutions in African States; and the Secretariat should assist Governments in their efforts to produce better data related to the measurement of public sector efficiency. The Committee of Experts advised the Secretariat to narrow the focus of the subprogramme’s involvement and concentrate more on key priorities. In that respect, it regretted that resources for that purpose were again reduced. The Committee underscored the need for better dissemination of the Secretariat’s outputs and promotion of its activities in the area of public administration and indicated that the promotion of successful practices of selected applicants for the United Nations Public Service Awards would increase the visibility of both the Economic and Social Council and the Secretariat. The Committee emphasized the importance of synergy between normative and technical cooperation work and that the Secretariat should continue implementing technical cooperation as an essential feeding mechanism into the deliberations of the policymaking organs of the United Nations.

**Economic and Social Council action.** By decision 2004/302 of 23 July, the Economic and Social Council took note of the report of the Committee of Experts on its third session and decided that its fourth (2005) session should be devoted
to: revitalizing public administration, including by improving transparency, competence and accountability; strategic directions for the future; development of a methodology for a bottom-up participatory approach in identifying public administration foundations and principles; and enhancement of the celebration of United Nations Public Service Day and of the competition for United Nations Public Service Awards. The Council also decided to discuss the Council’s recommendations further during its resumed substantive session.

By decision 2004/325 of 11 November, the Council deferred consideration of the recommendations contained in the report of the Committee of Experts on its third session to its organizational session in January 2005.

**Report of Secretary-General.** In response to General Assembly resolution 58/231 [YUN 2003, p. 866], the Secretary-General submitted a 9 September report on public administration and development [A/59/316]. He outlined proposals for commemorating, during the Assembly’s sixty-first (2006) session, the tenth anniversary of the Assembly’s resumed fiftieth session of public administration and development [YUN 1996, p. 750], suggesting that the commemoration could be an opportune time to evaluate progress made in revitalizing public administration and to share successful experiences that had contributed to achieving the MDGs. The report recalled the recommendations made by the Committee of Experts on Public Administration (see p. 849) and drew the Assembly’s attention to recommendations on preparatory and supporting actions that could be taken in connection with the observance of the anniversary, including hosting the Global Forum on Reinventing Government in New York in 2006; devoting the high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council in 2006 to the changing role of administration; and celebrating United Nations Public Service Day and the presentation of the United Nations Public Service Awards in a more visible manner.

The report also described activities under way to promote information exchange, research and the dissemination of successful practices and advisory services in public administration, and to support e-government initiatives in the African, Asian, Central American and Caribbean regions as a tool for development.

The report noted that the Global Forum on Reinventing Government, which was supported technically and substantively by the UN programme on public administration, finance and development, had been held five times since its launch in 1999 by the United States and was to hold its sixth session in the Republic of Korea in 2005 on the theme “Towards participatory and transparent governance”. The seventh Global Forum could be hosted at United Nations Headquarters in 2006.

**General Assembly Action**

On 2 December [meeting 65], the General Assembly adopted resolution 59/55 [draft: A/59/L.27/Rev.1 & Add.1, orally revised], without vote [agenda item 12].

**Public Administration and Development**

The General Assembly,

Recalling all pertinent resolutions, in particular its resolution 58/231 of 23 December 2003 on public administration and development,

Stressing the need for capacity-building and e-Government initiatives as tools to promote development,

Recognizing that efficient, accountable, effective and transparent public administration at both the national and the international levels constitutes a key factor in development,

Recognizing also the importance of strengthening public administration institutions, improving public sector human resources capacity and fostering knowledge creation and innovation and the utilization of information technology for development in public administration and in the implementation of internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration,

Welcoming the adoption of the United Nations Convention against Corruption,

1. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General;
2. Stresses the importance of United Nations Public Service Day and the United Nations Public Service Awards in the process of revitalizing public administration by building a culture of innovation, partnership and responsiveness;
3. Also stresses the valuable contribution that the Global Forum on Reinventing Government has made to the exchange of lessons learned in public administration reform, and reiterates its appreciation to the Government of the Republic of Korea for hosting the Sixth Global Forum on Reinventing Government in 2005;
4. Encourages the Secretary-General to make arrangements for the implementation of the proposals made for the commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the resumed fiftieth session of the General Assembly, on public administration and development;
5. Takes note of the important analytical and operational contribution that the World Public Sector Report provides to policy makers responsible for public administration in Member States;
6. Requests the Secretary-General to continue to facilitate, through the United Nations Online Network in Public Administration and Finance, the dissemination of valuable practices in public administration;
7. Also requests the Secretary-General to focus the work on public administration along the lines of Eco-
8. Further requests the Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly at its sixtieth session on progress made in Member States by revitalizing public administration during the last ten years, since the resumed fiftieth session of the Assembly, on public administration and development, and to ensure that the findings are brought to the attention of Member States on the occasion of the special event in 2005.

In-depth evaluation

By a 16 March note [E/AC.5/2004/3], the Secretary-General transmitted to CPC the OIOS report on the in-depth evaluation of the UN programme on public administration, finance and development. The report recommended: rationalizing the scope and focus of DESA’s Division for Public Administration and Development Management; ensuring support to international cooperation in tax matters and to public finance management work; enhancing the repertoire of best practices; developing an information strategy; enhancing UNPAN; enhancing linkages and synergies between functions and across themes; and strengthening collaboration among UN entities. The Secretary-General concurred with the report’s recommendations.

At its forty-fourth session (New York, 7 June–2 July) [A/59/16], CPC reworded the recommendation on support to international cooperation in tax matters, and recalled the General Assembly’s request in resolution 58/270 [YUN 2005, p. 1999] that the Secretary-General undertake a review of the regular programme of technical cooperation and make proposals to the Assembly at its fifty-ninth session. It recommended the approval of the other recommendations contained in the evaluation.

Groups of countries in special situations

On 17 September, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, included in the agenda of its fifty-ninth session the item entitled “Groups of countries in special situations”, covering LDCs and landlocked and transit developing countries.

By decision 59/837 of 22 December, the Assembly took note of the report of the Second Committee on groups of countries in special situations [A/59/486].

Least developed countries

The special problems of the officially designated LDCs were considered in several UN forums in 2004, especially through the implementation of the Brussels Declaration and the Programme of Action for LDCs for the Decade 2001–2010, adopted at the Third UN Conference on LDCs in 2001 [YUN 2001, p. 770] and endorsed by the General Assembly in resolution 55/279 in July of that year [ibid., p. 771]. Of major concern in 2004 was the question of a smooth transition strategy for countries graduating from the list of LDCs.

LDC list

The number of countries officially designated as LDCs remained at 50. Although Cape Verde and Maldives were recommended for graduation from the list, that process would take place over a three-year period, as decided by the General Assembly in resolution 59/209 (see p. 854).


Smooth transition strategy

CDP consideration. At its sixth session (New York, 29 March–2 April) [E/2004/35], CDP, which was responsible for adding countries to or graduating them from the LDC list, confirmed at the conclusion of its fifth (2003) session [YUN 2003, p. 868] that Cape Verde and Maldives qualified for graduation from the list and recommended that they be graduated from the LDC category. However, CDP stressed the need for a smooth transition strategy to be put in place by both the countries themselves and the international community. Among the measures to ensure a smooth transition, the Committee proposed that the United Nations convene an ad hoc country advisory group, in which the graduated country, in cooperation with its development partners, would identify measures to ensure that its development was maintained. The guiding principle of that initiative was that specific transition support measures, monitoring arrangements and the pe-
The period of transition would be decided on a case-by-case basis so that the development progress of graduated countries was not interrupted or reversed.

**ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL ACTION (June)**

On 3 June [meeting 15], the Economic and Social Council adopted resolution 2004/3 [draft: E/2004/L.10] without vote [agenda item 2].

**Report of the Committee for Development Policy**

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 46/206 of 20 December 1991,

Expressing its conviction that no country graduating from the least developed country category should have its positive development disrupted or reversed but should be able to continue and sustain its progress and development,

Emphasizing the need for putting in place a process for smooth transition of countries graduating out of the group of least developed countries,

1. Takes note of chapter IV of the report of the Committee for Development Policy on its fifth session and the conclusions contained therein, inter alia, that Cape Verde and Maldives qualified for graduation from the list of least developed countries;
2. Requests the Secretary-General, in consultation with Member States, to submit to the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 2004 a report including recommendations on how to formulate a smooth transition strategy for countries graduating from least developed country status;
3. Also requests the Secretary-General to prepare the report in an inclusive and transparent manner with the involvement of Member States, in particular the least developed countries, as well as bilateral and multilateral donors and relevant international organizations;
4. Decides to take a decision on a smooth transition strategy for countries graduating from least developed country status and on the graduation of Cape Verde and Maldives from the list of least developed countries at its substantive session of 2004.

**Report of Secretary-General.** In response to Economic and Social Council resolution 2004/3 (above), the Secretary-General submitted to the Council’s substantive session a report on formulating a smooth transition strategy for countries graduating from LDC status [E/2004/94]. The report took into account CDP’s recommendations (see p. 852), information provided to the Committee by a number of international organizations and information supplied by Governments. It described the benefits associated with LDC status, such as preferential market access, special treatment regarding World Trade Organization (WTO)-related obligations, development financing and technical cooperation, and suggested possible elements for a smooth transition strategy that involved a graduating country retaining some existing benefits so that its development prospects would not be adversely affected.

The report concluded that the success of a smooth transition strategy would depend on cooperation between graduated LDCs and the international community. However, as with all development strategies, the graduated LDCs themselves had to play the central role in formulating and implementing their transition strategy and to ensure that the strategy was attuned to national conditions and circumstances. At the same time, the continued support of development partners was critical to ensuring success. Given that WTO provisions granting differential treatment to LDCs constituted a multilateral instrument outside the purview of the Council and the General Assembly, WTO member States would need to take the initiative to ensure that graduated countries continued to benefit from LDC trade preferences for a transition period after graduation. The international community was encouraged to strengthen efforts to foster private sector development in, and to increase credit guarantees for, graduated countries.

**ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL ACTION (July)**

In July, the Economic and Social Council adopted decision 2004/299 [draft: E/2004/L.45] without vote [agenda item 13 (a)].

**Report of the Committee for Development Policy**

At its 50th plenary meeting, on 23 July 2004, the Economic and Social Council, recalling its resolution 2004/3 of 3 June 2004 on the report of the Committee for Development Policy:

(a) Took note of the progress achieved so far in the consideration of the report of the Secretary-General on formulating a smooth transition strategy for countries graduating from least developed country status and of the report of the Committee for Development Policy on its sixth session;
(b) Decided to revert to this matter at its resumed substantive session of 2004, building further on the elements for draft resolutions under agenda item 13 (a) contained in the annex to the present decision.

**Annex**

**Elements for draft resolutions under agenda item 13 (a)**

The Economic and Social Council will adopt simultaneously two different resolutions:

- One on the report of the Secretary-General on formulating a smooth transition strategy for countries graduating from least developed country status
- One on the report of the Committee for Development Policy on its sixth session, including its recommendation to graduate Maldives and Cape Verde

**Elements for a draft resolution on a smooth transition strategy**

1. Reconfirmation of general principles related to a smooth transition
2. Definition of the time sequence of a transition process, building on General Assembly resolution
46/206 of 20 December 1991 and subsequent resolutions of the Economic and Social Council:

- A first phase (I), of a three-year duration, beginning with the first identification of a country by the Committee for Development Policy and ending with the validation of the findings at the second review and the recommendation by the Committee to graduate the country
- A second phase (II), following the endorsement by the General Assembly of the recommendation by the Committee for Development Policy, lasting for a period of three years, during which the graduating country keeps its least developed country status and the advantages associated with it and activates, in a dialogue with its main partners at the country level, the preparations for the third phase, when it will have lost its least developed country status
- A third phase (III), following the expiration of phase II, of an undetermined duration, during which the graduated country, in line with the strategy elaborated with its partners in phase II, phases out advantages associated with its earlier least developed country status

3. Definition of the mechanisms and content of the transition process, building on the recommendations in the report of the Secretary-General:

- Invite the graduating country to envisage action during phase I and initiate a process at the country level and, especially during phase II, build on the existing mechanism for coordination with donors
- Invite the partners of the graduating country (bilateral and multilateral) to engage in the elaboration in phase II and implementation in phase III of a country-specific transition strategy

4. Definition of a monitoring mechanism:

- Follow-up of the implementation of the smooth transition strategy at the country level during phase III under the overall responsibility of the Government
- Specific monitoring of the country, beginning at the end of phase II, during a series of triennial reviews by the Committee for Development Policy
- Invitation to the national Government to keep the Committee informed of evolution at the country level

5. Specific requests to the Secretary-General and United Nations agencies:

- The issue of the vulnerability profile in phase I
- Assistance through the resident coordinator system during phase II (convening a country-based mechanism; assisting the Government in the identification of critical areas, etc.)

6. Recommendation to the General Assembly to endorse the resolution

Elements for a draft resolution on the report of the Committee for Development Policy

Take note of the report, including its recommendation to graduate Maldives and Cape Verde.
year period, the country will remain on the list of least developed countries and will maintain the advantages associated with membership on that list;

4. Invites the graduating country, in cooperation with its bilateral and multilateral development and trading partners and with the support of the United Nations system, to prepare, during the three-year period, a transition strategy to adjust to the phasing out, over a period appropriate to the development situation of the country, of the advantages associated with its membership on the list of least developed countries, and to identify actions to be taken by the graduating country and its bilateral and multilateral development and trading partners to that end;

5. Recommends that the graduating country establish, in cooperation with its bilateral and multilateral development and trading partners, a consultative mechanism to facilitate the preparation of the transition strategy and the identification of the associated actions;

6. Requests the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme, in his capacity as Chair of the United Nations Development Group, to assist countries graduating from the list of least developed countries by providing, if requested, the support of the United Nations Resident Coordinator and the United Nations Country Team to the consultative mechanism;

7. Urges all development partners to support the implementation of the transition strategy and to avoid any abrupt reductions in either official development assistance or technical assistance provided to the graduated country;

8. Invites development and trading partners to consider extending to the graduated country trade preferences previously made available as a result of least developed country status, or reducing them in a phased manner in order to avoid their abrupt reduction;

9. Invites all members of the World Trade Organization to consider extending to a graduated country, as appropriate, the existing special and differential treatment and exemptions available to least developed countries for a period appropriate to the development situation;

10. Recommends that the continued implementation of technical assistance programmes under the Integrated Framework for Trade-related Technical Assistance to Least Developed Countries be considered for the graduated country over a period appropriate to the development situation of the country;

11. Invites the Government of the graduated country to closely monitor, with the support of the consultative mechanism, the implementation of the transition strategy and to keep the Secretary-General informed on a regular basis;

12. Requests the Committee for Development Policy to continue to monitor the development progress of the graduated country as a complement to its triennial review of the list of least developed countries, with the assistance and support of other relevant entities, and to report thereon to the Economic and Social Council.

Graduation of Cape Verde and Maldives

On 5 November [meeting 53], the Economic and Social Council adopted resolution 2004/67 [draft: E/2004/L.57] without vote [agenda item 13 (a)].

Report of the Committee for Development Policy on its sixth session

The Economic and Social Council, Recalling its decision 2003/299 of 23 July 2003 on the report of the Committee for Development Policy, Taking into account its resolution 2004/66 of 5 November 2004 on a smooth transition strategy for countries graduating from the list of least developed countries,

1. Endorses the recommendation of the Committee for Development Policy that Cape Verde and Maldives be graduated from the least developed country category, as contained in the report of the Committee on its sixth session;

2. Recommends that the General Assembly take note of the recommendation of the Committee for Development Policy that Cape Verde and Maldives be graduated from the least developed country category.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 20 December [meeting 74], the General Assembly adopted resolution 59/210 [draft: A/59/L.48 & Add.1] without vote [agenda item 12].

Report of the Committee for Development Policy on its sixth session

The General Assembly, Recalling Economic and Social Council resolution 2004/67 of 5 November 2004 on the report of the Committee for Development Policy, Taking into account its resolution 59/209 of 20 December 2004 on a smooth transition strategy for countries graduating from the list of least developed countries, Takes note of the recommendation of the Committee for Development Policy that Cape Verde and Maldives be graduated from the group of least developed countries.

Programme of Action (2001-2010) UNCTAD XI action. The eleventh session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD XI) (São Paulo, Brazil, 13-18 June [TD/412] (see p. 954) adopted the São Paulo Consensus in which it called for special measures to assist LDCs. In view of the increasing marginalization of LDCs in the global economy, the Consensus called for UNCTAD to play a leading role in the substantive and technical implementation of the Brussels Programme of Action, stating that it should continue to examine the causes of decline in the share of LDCs in world trade and the linkages between trade, growth and poverty reduction with a view to identifying long-term solutions to those problems.

During UNCTAD XI, on 13 June, the Ministers of the LDCs met and adopted the Declaration of the LDCs Ministerial Meeting at UNCTAD XI [TD/408], which was included in the UNCTAD XI report.

Economic and Social Council ministerial declaration. In accordance with decision 2003/287
the high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council in 2004 (New York, 28-30 June and 6 July) [A/59/3/Rev.1] considered the theme “Resources mobilization and enabling environment for poverty eradication in the context of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010”. It had before it an April report of the Secretary-General on the subject [E/2004/54], which stated that improving the domestic and global environment was crucial to enabling the development of LDCs and that global, regional and national partnerships, including with civil society and the private sector, should be explored to that end.

During the segment, five high-level round tables were held on: local private sector development; the role of microfinance/microcredit; attracting foreign direct investment (FDI) in LDCs; the role of trade preferences for LDCs in promoting investment; unleashing entrepreneurship; the role of partnerships in mobilizing resources for LDCs; and investment in urban water, sanitation and sustainable human settlements development in LDCs.

Also during the segment, the ILO Director-General made a presentation on the report of the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization entitled A Fair Globalization: Creating Opportunities for All [A/59/98-E/2004/79] (see p. 1091) as it related to the successful implementation of the Programme of Action.

On 6 July, the Council adopted a ministerial declaration in which the ministers and heads of delegations participating in the high-level segment affirmed their commitment to the implementation of the goals and objectives set out in the Brussels Programme of Action. They recognized the need for creating an overall enabling environment for national and international actions to eradicate poverty, promote sustainable development of LDCs and for the implementation of the Programme of Action, and addressed the specific issues of good governance; the significance of food security, fighting the HIV/AIDS pandemic, malaria and tuberculosis, improving access to health care, education and other social services, particularly for women, the poor and other vulnerable groups, and protecting the environment; and the need for international support for LDCs and for the implementation of the actions contained in the Programme of Action. National and/or international action was encouraged in the areas of improving the enabling environment for the private sector; enhancing the agricultural sector; promoting an inclusive financial sector; removing obstacles preventing the transfer of assets of migrant workers from LDCs to their countries of origin; reaching the official development assistance (ODA) target of contributing 0.2 per cent of gross national product to LDCs; solving the debt problems of LDCs; trade preferences in favour of LDCs; FDI; and the special need of LDCs emerging from conflict situations.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL ACTION

On 5 November [meeting 55], the Economic and Social Council adopted resolution 2004/65 [draft: E/2004/L.55] without vote [agenda item 6 (b)].

Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010

The Economic and Social Council, Recalling the Brussels Declaration and the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010, Recalling also its decision 2001/320 of 24 October 2001, in which it decided to establish, under the regular agenda item entitled “Intended and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the major United Nations conferences and summits”, a regular sub-item entitled “Review and coordination of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010”, Recalling further its resolution 2003/17 of 22 July 2003 and its decision 2003/287 of 24 July 2003, as well as the ministerial declaration of the high-level segment of its substantive session of 2004 on the theme “Resources mobilization and enabling environment for poverty eradication in the context of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010”, Acknowledging the presentation made by the Director-General of the International Labour Organization during the 2004 high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council on the report of the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization entitled A Fair Globalization: Creating Opportunities for All as it relates to the successful implementation of the Programme of Action,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General,

1. Expresses its concern over the still weak implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010;

2. Urges the least developed countries and their bilateral and multilateral development partners to undertake increased efforts and to adopt speedy measures, with a view to creating an overall enabling environment for the implementation of the Programme of Action and to meeting its goals and targets in a timely manner;

3. Reiterates the critical importance of the participation of government representatives from the least developed countries in the annual assessment of the Programme of Action by the Economic and Social Council, and in this regard requests the Secretary-General to take concrete measures for the full implementation of the provision of paragraph 8 of General Assembly resolution 58/228 of 23 December 2003;

4. Calls upon the Secretary-General, while stressing the central role of the Economic and Social Council in
the coordination of actions in the United Nations system for the implementation of the Programme of Action, to take appropriate measures to strengthen the efficiency and effectiveness of the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States so that it can fulfill its functions in accordance with General Assembly resolution 56/227 of 24 December 2001;

5. Reiterates that the review of the Programme of Action and the evaluation of the performance of the least developed countries and their development partners in implementing their various commitments should be based on the goals and targets set out in the Programme of Action;

6. Requests the Secretary-General to submit an annual progress report on the implementation of the Programme of Action in a more analytical and results-oriented manner by placing greater emphasis on concrete results and indicating the progress achieved in its implementation, which could include the use of a matrix of achievements;

7. Also requests the Secretary-General to ensure that the report takes into consideration the broader development agenda and existing reporting mechanisms in order to avoid duplication.

Trade and Development Board action. The UNCTAD Trade and Development Board (TDB), at its fifty-first session (Geneva, 4-15 October), adopted agreed conclusions [A/59/15 (agreed conclusions 479(LI))] on the review of progress in the implementation of the Brussels Programme of Action. Having considered The Least Developed Countries Report 2004: Linking International Trade with Poverty Reduction [Sales No. E.04.II.D.27], the Board noted with concern the lack of progress in LDCs towards achieving the international development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, as they were contained in the Brussels Programme of Action. It stressed the urgent need for development strategies that responded to the development needs of LDCs, including debt relief, enhanced ODA and investment flows, improved market access and a more conducive international trading regime, in addition to a conducive domestic macroeconomic framework in order to make international trade work for poverty reduction in LDCs. TDB emphasized the necessity for capacity-building in LDCs and recommended that, in order to enable the UNCTAD Special Programme on the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States to discharge effectively the tasks assigned to it, due consideration should be given to the outcomes of UNCTAD XI in the allocation of resources for the Programme for the 2006-2007 biennium.

Report of Secretary-General. In response to Economic and Social Council resolution 2003/17 [YUN 2003, p. 868] and General Assembly resolution 58/228 [ibid., p. 870], the Secretary-General submitted a June report on the implementation of the Programme of Action for the LDCs for the Decade 2001-2010 [A/59/486/Add.1], which described the overall situation in the LDCs and provided an overview of the implementation of the Programme of Action, including by the Office of the High Representative for the LDCs, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

The Secretary-General said all LDCs that had not done so should articulate their strategy and programme for poverty reduction and sustainable growth and should expeditiously set up national forums to guide and monitor the implementation of the Brussels Programme of Action. LDCs should give special attention to infrastructure development and policies for the development of manufacturing and focus on selected sectors for expansion of their productive capacity and beneficial integration into the global economy. Developed countries should expedite the process of opening up markets for LDC products, and all development partners, particularly the donor countries, should endeavour to focus on the category of LDCs in their ODA policy and development support.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 22 December [meeting 75], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Second Committee [A/59/486/Add.1], adopted resolution 59/244 without vote [agenda item 88 (a)].

Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 55/279 of 12 July 2001, in which it endorsed the Brussels Declaration and the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010, and its resolutions 57/276 of 20 December 2002 and 58/228 of 23 December 2003 on the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries,

Reaffirming its resolution 55/2 of 8 September 2000, by which it adopted the United Nations Millennium Declaration, in particular paragraph 15 thereof, in which the Heads of State and Government undertook to address the special needs of the least developed countries,

Recognizing the importance of the review of the progress achieved towards meeting the goals and targets contained in the Programme of Action, as well as other internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, as they address the special needs of the least developed countries,

Taking note of the ministerial declaration of the high-level segment of the substantive session of 2004 of the Economic and Social Council on the theme “Resources mobilization and enabling environment for poverty eradication in the context of the implementa-
tion of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010."

Taking note also of Economic and Social Council resolutions 2004/66 of 5 November 2004 on the smooth transition strategy for countries graduating from the list of least developed countries and 2004/65 of 5 November 2004 on the report of the Committee for Development Policy on its sixth session,

Taking note further of the Least Developed Countries Report, 2004,

Recognizing that the eradication of poverty in the least developed countries will require, inter alia, steps to empower the poor, unleash their entrepreneurial skills and allow them to access, develop and use their assets,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General,

1. Reiterates its deep concern over the weak implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010;
2. Requests the United Nations Development Group’s team leaders, consistent with their respective mandates, in the coordinated implementation of activities of the Programme of Action;
3. Reiterates its request to the Secretary-General to ensure at the secretariat level the full mobilization and coordination of all parts of the United Nations system to facilitate coordinated implementation as well as coherence in the follow-up to and monitoring of the Programme of Action at the national, regional, sub-regional and global levels, and in this context requests the Secretary-General to engage the United Nations Development Group’s team leaders, consistent with their respective mandates, in the coordinated implementation of activities of the Programme of Action;
4. Invites the 2005 high-level event, in accordance with the modalities to be set by the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session, to address the special needs of the least developed countries, while reviewing the progress made in the achievement of internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration;
5. Decides to hold the comprehensive review of the Programme of Action in 2006 within the General Assembly during its sixty-first session, in accordance with paragraph 1/4 of the Programme of Action, bearing in mind the provisions of General Assembly resolution 57/270 B of 23 June 2003, with modalities to be decided upon;
6. Decides also to consider at its sixtieth session the modalities for conducting such a comprehensive review;
7. Reiterates the critical importance of the participation of government representatives from the least developed countries in the annual review of the Programme of Action by the Economic and Social Council, and in this regard requests the Secretary-General to establish a specific trust fund for the travel and subsistence of two representatives from each least developed country to attend the annual review of the Programme of Action; the trust fund should be funded by voluntary contributions;
8. Calls upon Member States, and invites intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and the private sector, to make voluntary contributions to the trust fund;
9. Welcomes the decision of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development at its eleventh session to conduct analyses through the Least Developed Countries Report, 2004 on the causes of the decline in the share of least developed countries in world trade and the linkages between trade, growth and poverty reduction, with a view to identifying long-term solutions to the problem, as expressed in paragraph 34 of the São Paulo Consensus, and invites the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development to conduct an analysis of the role that enterprise development can play in alleviating poverty in least developed countries and to recommend measures the Governments of least developed countries can take to promote the development of their private sector;
10. Emphasizes the importance of the effective implementation of Economic and Social Council resolution 2004/66 in order to support countries graduating from the list of least developed countries;
11. Requests the Secretary-General to submit an annual progress report on the implementation of the Programme of Action in an analytical and results-oriented way by placing emphasis on concrete results and indicating the progress achieved in its implementation.

Island developing States

During 2004, UN bodies continued to review progress in the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (Barbados Programme of Action), adopted at the 1994 Global Conference on the subject [YUN 1994, p. 785]. Also, preparations proceeded for the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States. The International Meeting, originally scheduled to be held in Mauritius from 30 August to 3 September 2004, was deferred to 10 to 14 January 2005, at the request of the Government of Mauritius.

Commission on Sustainable Development action. The Commission on Sustainable Development, acting as the preparatory meeting for the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of SIDS, met in New York from 14 to 16 April [A/CONF.207/7].

In response to General Assembly resolutions 57/262 [YUN 2002, p. 848] and 58/213 A [YUN 2003, p. 873], the Secretary-General submitted an 11 March report on review of progress in the implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action [E/CN.17/2004/8], which offered an overall assessment of progress achieved through the efforts of SIDS, with the support of regional and international organizations, including UN agencies and the donor community. It concluded that progress in implementing the Programme of Action had
have been mixed and that SIDS still faced major challenges to their sustainable development, some of long standing and others of more recent origin. Key emerging challenges included those related to the implementation of effective strategies for poverty eradication and the pursuit of people-centred development, coping with the effects and the cost of international security threats on travel and tourism, the development of cultural industries and addressing urgently the growing problem of HIV/AIDS. Sustainable development financing mechanisms were needed, including through regional development banks, to cover the provision of energy and capacity development investments; direct assistance programmes for poverty alleviation; collective insurance in the face of climate change and increased vulnerability to natural disasters; technology transfer; programmes to assist the development and protection of traditional and indigenous knowledge; and the active exploration of ways to make more productive use of the natural and indigenous endowments of SIDS.

Also before the Commission was a March note by the Secretariat on accreditation of NGOs and other major groups to the International Meeting [E/CN.17/2004/9], to which a list of recommended NGOs and other major groups was appended. The Commission approved the requests for accreditation of the listed groups on 14 April. Additions to that list were submitted to the General Assembly by the Secretariat in a 4 October note [A/59/409 & Corr.1].

By a 26 March letter [E/CN.17/2004/12], Qatar transmitted to the Secretary-General the Alliance of Small Island States Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action, adopted by the Interregional Preparatory Meeting of SIDS for the International Meeting (Nassau, Bahamas, 26-30 January).

The Commission adopted two decisions by which it authorized the New Zealand Ambassador to continue his consultations with a view to reaching agreement on remaining pending issues for the preparations for the International Meeting [dec. 2004/1] and agreed to hold two-day informal consultations in Mauritius prior to the International Meeting [dec. 2004/2].

Communication. By a letter of 16 January [A/58/686], Seychelles transmitted the final report of the second Small Island Developing States of the Atlantic, Indian Ocean, Mediterranean and South China Seas Regional Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action, held in Mahé, Seychelles, from 8 to 10 January.

**General Assembly Action**

On 10 June [meeting 90], the General Assembly adopted resolution 58/213 B [draft: A/58/L.63] without vote [agenda items 8 & 94 (d)].

Further implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 58/213 A of 23 December 2003, in which it decided to convene the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States from 30 August to 3 September 2004;

Recalling also the offer of the Government of Mauritius to host the International Meeting,

Taking note of the request by the Government of Mauritius to reschedule the International Meeting due to logistical considerations,

1. Decides to convene the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States from 10 to 14 January 2005;

2. Also decides to hold, if deemed necessary and taking into account paragraph 7 of its resolution 58/213 A, two days of informal consultations in Mauritius, on 8 and 9 January 2005, to facilitate the effective preparation of the International Meeting;

3. Takes note of the appointment of a Facilitator for the process of informal consultations, who will report progress thereon to the Bureau of the International Meeting, when constituted.

On 22 December [meeting 75], the Assembly, on the recommendation of the Second Committee [A/59/485/Add.2], adopted resolution 59/229 without vote [agenda item 85 (b)].

Further implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States

The General Assembly,

Recalling the Declaration of Barbados and the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, adopted by the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, and recalling also its resolution 49/122 of 19 December 1994 on the Global Conference,

Recalling also its resolutions 58/213 A of 23 December 2003 and 58/213 B of 10 June 2004,

Recalling with appreciation the offer by the Government of Mauritius to host the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States,

Welcoming the preparatory activities undertaken at the national, regional and international levels for the International Meeting,

1. Recalls its decision, in resolution 58/213 B, to convene the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States from 10 to 14 January 2005;
2. Decides to hold two days of informal consultations in Mauritius, on 8 and 9 January 2005, to facilitate the effective preparation of the International Meeting;
3. Urges that representation and participation at the International Meeting be at the highest possible level;
4. Takes note of the report of the Commission on Sustainable Development, acting as the preparatory meeting for the International Meeting;
5. Expresses its appreciation for the contributions made to the voluntary trust fund established for the purpose of assisting small island developing States to participate fully and effectively in the International Meeting and its preparatory process, as approved by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 2003/55 and decision 2003/283, and urges all Member States and organizations to contribute generously to the fund;
6. Decides that non-governmental organizations whose work is relevant to the subject of the International Meeting, which are not currently accredited to the Economic and Social Council and which submitted applications to participate as observers in the International Meeting by 31 October 2004, may participate as observers in the International Meeting, subject to the approval of the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session, and in this regard recalls that the participation of major groups, including non-governmental organizations, in the International Meeting shall be in accordance with rule 65 of the provisional rules of procedure of the International Meeting;
7. Stresses that strengthening of the Small Island Developing States Unit of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat has yet to take place, and in this regard reiterates its request to the Secretary-General, made in General Assembly resolution 57/262 of 20 December 2002 and resolution 58/235 A, to strengthen the Unit without delay and, within existing resources, to enable the Unit, including the Small Island Developing States Network, to undertake its broad range of mandated functions with a view to facilitating the full and effective implementation of the Declaration of Barbados and the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and the outcomes of the International Meeting;
8. Invites the International Meeting to consider fully the modalities for strengthening the Small Island Developing States Unit, including the Small Island Developing States Network, to enable it to assist effectively in the implementation of the outcomes of the International Meeting;
9. Requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session the report of the International Meeting, and decides to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-first session, under the item entitled “Sustainable development”, a sub-item entitled “Further implementation of the outcome of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and follow-up to the outcomes of the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action”.

In other action, the Assembly, by decision 59/534 of 22 December, approved the participation of NGOs listed in the 4 October note by the Secretariat (see p. 859) as observers to the International Meeting. On 23 December, the Assembly decided that the agenda item on further implementation of the Programme of Action would remain for consideration during its resumed fifty-ninth (2005) session (decision 59/552).

Landlocked developing countries

Report of Secretary-General. In response to General Assembly resolution 58/201 [YUN 2003, p. 877], the Secretary-General submitted a 5 August report [A/59/208] on the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action: Addressing the Special Needs of Landlocked Developing Countries within a New Global Framework for Transit Transport Cooperation for Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries. The Programme of Action was adopted by the International Ministerial Conference of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Donor Countries and International Financial and Development Institutions on Transit Transport Cooperation (Almaty, Kazakhstan) in 2003 [YUN 2003, p. 875].

The report noted that UN system organizations had made concerted efforts to operationalize coordination and monitoring mechanisms for the implementation of the Programme of Action. One of the main results was the preparation of the roadmap towards the implementation of the Programme of Action, which would provide guidance to organizations within the UN system and other international, regional and sub-regional organizations in undertaking necessary actions in a focused and well-coordinated manner. The report stated that, since landlocked developing countries depended on their transit neighbours for access to and from the sea, the establishment of efficient transit systems required closer and more effective collaboration between those countries and their transit neighbours. Transit policy reforms aimed at enhancing the efficiency of transit operations and reducing transport costs, including the commercialization and liberalization of transport services and efforts to improve institutional, procedural, regulatory and managerial systems, should be further encouraged, as should competition between different modes of transport and between different transit corridors. A strong case could be made in respect of landlocked developing countries for giving high priority to financial and technical assistance for the improvement of the transport infrastructure and to the management and maintenance of existing facilities. Given the relative poverty and related development handicaps characteristic of landlocked developing coun-

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Recalling also the United Nations Millennium Declaration, in which Heads of State and Government recognized the particular needs and problems of landlocked developing countries and urged both bilateral and multilateral donors to increase financial and technical assistance to this group of countries to meet their particular development needs and to help them to overcome the impediments of geography by improving their transit transport systems, and resolved to create an environment, at the national and global levels alike, that is conducive to development and to the elimination of poverty.

Recognizing that the lack of territorial access to the sea, aggravated by remoteness from world markets, and prohibitive transit costs and risks impose serious constraints on export earnings, private capital inflow and domestic resource mobilization of landlocked developing countries and therefore adversely affect their overall growth and socio-economic development,

Recognizing also that landlocked developing countries, with their small and vulnerable economies, are among the poorest of developing countries, and noting that, of the thirty-one landlocked developing countries, sixteen are also classified by the United Nations as least developed countries,

Recalling the Almaty Declaration and the Almaty Programme of Action: Addressing the Special Needs of Landlocked Developing Countries within a New Global Framework for Transit Transport Cooperation,

Recalling also the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD), an initiative for accelerating regional economic cooperation and development as most landlocked and transit developing countries are located in Africa,

Taking note of the ministerial communiqué adopted at the Fifth Annual Ministerial Meeting of Landlocked Developing Countries, held on 27 September 2004 at United Nations Headquarters,

1. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action;
2. Reaffirms the right of access of landlocked countries to and from the sea and freedom of transit through the territory of transit countries by all means of transport, in accordance with applicable rules of international law;
3. Reaffirms also that transit countries, in the exercise of their full sovereignty over their territory, have the right to take all measures necessary to ensure that the rights and facilities provided for landlocked countries in no way infringe upon their legitimate interests;
4. Invites Member States, organizations of the United Nations system as well as other relevant international, regional and subregional organizations and multilateral financial and development institutions to implement the specific actions in the five priorities agreed upon in the Almaty Programme of Action;
5. Invites donor countries, the United Nations Development Programme and multilateral financial and development institutions to provide landlocked and transit developing countries with appropriate financial and technical assistance in the form of grants or concessional loans for the construction, maintenance and improvement of their transport, storage and other transit-related facilities, including alternative routes.
and improved communications, to promote sub-regional, regional and inter-regional projects and programmes, and, in this regard, to consider, inter alia, improving the availability and optimal use of different transport modes and intermodal efficiency along transport corridors;

6. Recognizes that most transit countries are themselves developing countries often of broadly similar economic structure and beset by similar scarcity of resources, including the lack of adequate transit transport infrastructure;

7. Emphasizes that assistance for the improvement of transit transport facilities and services should be integrated into the overall economic development strategies of the landlocked and transit developing countries and that donor countries should consequently take into account the requirements for the long-term restructuring of the economies of the landlocked developing countries;

8. Stress the need for the implementation of the São Paulo Consensus adopted at the eleventh session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, held in São Paulo, Brazil, from 13 to 18 June 2004, in particular paragraphs 66 and 84 thereof, by the relevant international organizations and donors in a multi-stakeholder approach, and emphasizes, in this regard, that the examination of issues relating to the trade of small, vulnerable economies, and the framing of responses to these trade-related issues to facilitate their fuller integration into the multilateral trading system should be actively pursued consistent with the Doha work programme, taking into consideration the particular needs of landlocked developing countries within a new global framework for transit transport cooperation for landlocked and transit developing countries;

9. Invites the relevant organizations of the United Nations system and other international organizations, including the regional commissions, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the World Bank, the World Customs Organization, the World Trade Organization and the International Maritime Organization, to integrate the Almaty Programme of Action into their relevant programmes of work, and encourages them to continue their support to the landlocked and transit developing countries, inter alia, through well-coordinated and coherent technical assistance programmes in transport; and

10. Encourages the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, in particular the Division for Services Infrastructure for Development and Trade Efficiency and the Special Programme on the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States to continue its technical assistance activities and analytical work related to transit transport cooperation between landlocked and transit developing countries;

11. Requests the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States of the Secretariat, in accordance with the mandate given by the General Assembly in its resolution 56/227 of 24 December 2001 and in the Almaty Programme of Action and the Almaty Declaration, to continue its cooperation and coordination with organizations within the United Nations system, particularly those engaged in operational activities on the ground in landlocked and transit developing countries to ensure effective implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action in line with General Assembly resolution 57/270 B of 23 June 2003, and also requests the Office to continue to carry out advocacy work to mobilize international awareness and focus attention on the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action;

12. Requests, in this regard, the Secretary-General to take the necessary measures, within existing resources, to provide the Office with adequate resources so as to allow it to effectively carry out its added mandate as stipulated in the Almaty Programme of Action;

13. Invites donor countries and the international financial and development institutions to make voluntary contributions to the trust fund established by the Secretary-General to support the activities related to the follow-up to the implementation of the outcome of the Almaty International Ministerial Conference;

14. Invites the 2005 high-level event to address the special needs of the landlocked developing countries, within a new global framework for transit transport cooperation for landlocked and transit developing countries, in accordance with the modalities to be set by the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session, while assessing the progress achieved in the implementation of the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration;

15. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-first session the item entitled “Specific actions related to the particular needs and problems of landlocked developing countries: outcome of the International Ministerial Conference of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Donor Countries and International Financial and Development Institutions on Transit Transport Cooperation”;

16. Requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-first session a report on the progress made in the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action.

Economies in transition

In response to General Assembly resolution 57/247 [YUN 2002, p. 832], the Secretary-General submitted a 26 August report [A/59/301] on progress made in integrating the economies in transition into the world economy. It examined the challenges that they faced and the advances made over the preceding two years, and analysed the current process of integration by tracing the progress of the economies in transition through the channels of trade in goods and services, and capital and labour flows, with particular attention to the role that the enlargement of the EU had played in some of those countries. It also provided a brief overview of recent macroeconomic developments.

The report concluded that the economies in transition had further integrated themselves into the global economy, which had, in turn, contributed to an acceleration of their transformation from planned to market economies. Progress had
been achieved across all the dimensions of transition: liberalization of markets, institution-building, and upgrade of industrial capacity through trade and FDI, factor movements and the communication of economically useful knowledge and technology. However, progress was uneven across countries: in the Central European and Baltic States, integration of the eight countries into the EU had been a major success and a manifestation of their advancement. However, many countries in South-Eastern Europe and the smaller, low-income countries of CIS continued to experience difficulties and still needed international assistance to support growth and balance their resources in respect of achieving functioning structures.

Since integration was a political process, as well as an economic one, further progress required coordinated efforts among Governments, institutions, societies in those countries and international organizations, in order to ensure that the economies in transition increased their capacities to utilize their human, technological and natural resources.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 22 December [meeting 75], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Second Committee [A/59/485/Add.5], adopted resolution 59/243 without vote [agenda item 87 (e)].

Integration of the economies in transition into the world economy

The General Assembly,
Reaffirming also the need for the full integration of the countries with economies in transition into the world economy,
Welcoming the progress made in those countries towards market-oriented reforms and achieving macroeconomic and financial stability and economic growth, inter alia, through sound macroeconomic policies, good governance and the rule of law, and noting the need to sustain those positive trends,
Noting that in some economies in transition this progress has been slower, resulting in lower aggregate development levels and lower per capita incomes,
Stressing the importance of continued international assistance to countries with economies in transition to support their efforts towards market-oriented reforms, institution-building, infrastructure development and achieving macroeconomic and financial stability and economic growth, and to ensure that they are fully integrated into the world economy,
Recognizing, in particular, the need to enhance the capacity of those countries to utilize effectively the benefits of globalization, including those in the field of information and communication technologies, and to respond more adequately to its challenges,
Recognizing also the continuing need for favourable conditions for market access of exports from countries with economies in transition, in accordance with multilateral trade agreements,
Recognizing further the important role that foreign direct investment should play in those countries, and stressing the need to create an enabling environment, both domestically and internationally, to attract more foreign direct investment to those countries,
Recognizing the role that the private sector can play in the socio-economic development of those countries and their integration into the world economy, and stressing the importance of fostering a favourable environment for private investment and entrepreneurship,
Noting the aspiration of the countries with economies in transition towards the further development of regional and interregional cooperation,
Taking note with appreciation of the report of the Secretary-General,

1. Welcomes the measures taken by the organizations of the United Nations system to implement General Assembly resolutions on the integration of the economies in transition into the world economy;

2. Calls upon the organizations of the United Nations system, including the regional commissions, and invites the Bretton Woods institutions, in collaboration with relevant non-United Nations multilateral and regional institutions, to continue to conduct analytical activities and provide policy advice and targeted and substantial technical assistance to the Governments of the countries with economies in transition aimed at strengthening the social, legal and political framework for completing market-oriented reforms, supporting national development priorities with a view to sustaining the positive trends and reversing any declines in the economic and social development of those countries;

3. Emphasizes in this regard the importance of the further integration of the countries with economies in transition into the world economy, taking into account, inter alia, the relevant provisions of the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development, the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development ("Johannesburg Plan of Implementation");

4. Stresses the need to focus international assistance to countries with economies in transition on those facing particular difficulties in socio-economic development, implementing market-oriented reforms and meeting internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, and welcomes efforts made by countries with economies in transition to improve governance and institutional capabilities in order to use aid more effectively;

5. Welcomes the efforts made by countries with economies in transition in implementing policies that promote sustained economic growth and sustainable development, including, inter alia, by promoting competition, regulatory reform, respect for property rights and expeditious contract enforcement, and calls upon the United Nations system to highlight the successful models as good practices;
6. Requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-first session a report on the implementation of the present resolution.

**Poor mountain countries**

On 22 December [meeting 75], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Second Committee [A/59/483/Add.8], adopted resolution 59/238 without vote [agenda item 85 (b)].

**Rendering assistance to poor mountain countries to overcome obstacles in socio-economic and ecological areas**

*The General Assembly,*

Recalling its resolution 53/24 of 10 November 1998, by which it proclaimed 2002 the International Year of Mountains,

Recalling also its resolutions 55/189 of 20 December 2000, 57/245 of 20 December 2002 and 58/216 of 23 December 2003,

Recalling further the United Nations Millennium Declaration adopted on 8 September 2000,

Recalling chapter 13 of Agenda 21 and all relevant paragraphs of the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development ("Johannesburg Plan of Implementation"), in particular paragraph 42 thereof, as the overall policy frameworks for sustainable development in mountain regions,

Decides to consider at its sixtieth session, under the item entitled “Sustainable development”, a sub-item entitled “Rendering assistance to poor mountain countries to overcome obstacles in socio-economic and ecological areas”, bearing in mind its resolution 58/216.