United Nations system ACC/2000/20

Administrative Committee on Coordination

1 December 2000

English and French

Summary of the conclusions of the Administrative Committee on Coordination at its second regular session of 2000

Headquarters, New York, 27 and 28 October 2000

Summary of ACC conclusions requiring specific follow-up

ACC private meeting

The Secretary of ACC was asked to pursue arrangements, through the Executive Information Network and other means, to promote a more systematic exchange of information among Executive Heads on major developments of mutual concern, including in the main organs of the United Nations and other intergovernmental forums.

Demands placed on national and international systems by the new global environment

Health and other social implications of globalization

Pursuant to a decision of ACC at its spring 2000 session, the Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO), Dr. Gro Harlem Brundtland, at the invitation of the Secretary-General, convened a meeting of Executive Heads on 26 October 2000 in New York to assist in preparing for ACC consideration of health and other social implications of globalization.

In endorsing the general thrust of the report of Dr. Brundtland, ACC noted the intention of the Director-General of WHO to write to ACC members providing suggestions for taking forward the ideas emanating from the meeting on 26 October and the offers of cooperation that were made in that context. It was further agreed that the High-Level Committee on Programmes, once established, should give priority to building up a network among agencies on globalization issues, in order to promote integrated approaches that can influence the direction of programmes of the organizations of the system.

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Financing for development

Members of ACC expressed strong support for the high-level international intergovernmental event on financing for development and gave assurances of the full participation of their organizations in the preparatory process and the event itself.

Least developed countries

The Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) briefed ACC on the challenges ahead in the context of the forthcoming Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries in Brussels. ACC adopted a statement on the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries.

The Director-General of WTO briefed ACC on the progress achieved in implementing the Integrated Framework for Trade-Related Technical Assistance to Least Developed Countries. ACC welcomed the progress achieved thus far in implementing the Integrated Framework and underscored the need to mobilize resources in support of least developed countries, particularly in the context of the forthcoming Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries and the proposed trust fund for the Integrated Framework.

ACC agreed to pursue, at its next session, its consideration of the challenges that globalization poses for the United Nations system, in the light of a paper to be presented by the Director-General of the International Labour Organization (ILO) on an integrated approach to policy formulation, identifying interrelationships among the economic and social aspects of globalization. Drawing on this ongoing reflection, and building on the discussion at the retreat that followed the second regular session, ACC will focus on the capacity of the system to promote an effective follow-up to the Millennium Summit and on the individual and joint actions required to further the objectives and commitments embodied in the Millennium Declaration.

Review of the Administrative Committee on Coordination

ACC endorsed the proposed functions and procedures for the two new high-level committees (High-Level Committee on Management and the High-Level Committee on Programmes) set out in the draft terms of reference submitted to it. It was stressed that the review of the subsidiary machinery to be undertaken by the two high-level committees should be zero-based, that is, it should take as its starting point what needs to be done rather than what was being done at present. Permanent bodies should be kept to a minimum and their retention should be based on rigorous criteria.

ACC decided to establish the two high-level committees and requested them to report to ACC at its spring 2001 session, including on the results of their reviews of the subsidiary bodies.

The Committee decided to establish a single jointly financed ACC secretariat.

ACC endorsed the proposal to establish a network of focal points who would interact on behalf of the Executive Heads on all issues relating to the organization and agenda of ACC sessions and noted that the Secretary-General would

communicate with the Executive Heads on the designation of focal points for this purpose.

Briefings by members of the Administrative Committee on Coordination

The Secretary-General of the International Telecommunication Union briefed ACC on the draft action plan and on the preparations for the World Summit on the Information Society, noting that the lead time would provide the opportunity for extensive regional consultations and the involvement of many actors in the process. ACC expressed its satisfaction with the draft plan of action and stressed the importance of an early decision by ITU on the venue of the Summit.

The Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) presented the final report of the Inter-Agency Task Force on the United Nations Response to Long-term Food Security, Agricultural Development and Related Aspects in the Horn of Africa. ACC appreciated the analysis of the underlying causes of food insecurity contained in the report and endorsed its recommendations. The Committee emphasized the need to ensure that the report should lead to concrete actions. It was underlined that, in view of the substantial decline in official development assistance (ODA) to the region, no impact on food insecurity could be expected without substantial public investment. The Secretary-General indicated to ACC that he would further explore the possibility of the World Bank taking the lead within a follow-up mechanism for the mobilization of resources to implement the strategy and programmes identified in the report. Major bilateral agencies active in the region should also be brought into the process, and food security would need to be included in the poverty reduction strategies for the countries of the Horn of Africa.

The Executive Director of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme briefed ACC on the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the High-Level Political Signing Conference of the Convention, which will be held in Palermo, Italy, from 12 to 15 December 2000. ACC welcomed the United Nations Convention and the High-Level Signing Conference and underscored their importance in the international community's struggle to stem transnational organized crime. It urged all ACC members to participate in the Conference and extend their full support to the follow-up and implementation of the Convention.

The Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) briefed ACC on the follow-up to and implementation of the Dakar Framework, adopted by the World Education Forum, held in Dakar in April 2000. ACC expressed appreciation for the briefing of the Director-General of UNESCO and invited its members to cooperate fully with UNESCO in the follow-up to the World Education Forum.

The Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) briefed ACC on the special session of the General Assembly on children and, in her capacity as Chair of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) "Co-Sponsoring Committee", on the special session of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS to be held from 25 to 27 June 2001. ACC thanked the Executive Director

of UNICEF for her briefings and requested its members to contribute to ensuring the success of these two events.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights updated ACC on the preparatory process for the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance. ACC welcomed the update and invited all its members to continue to participate actively in the preparatory process and to contribute fully to ensuring that the Conference outcome was both significant and effective.

Under this item, ACC also took note of the information provided by the Secretary-General of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) on the worldwide celebration of World Maritime Day at the end of September 2000, based on the theme "IMO: Building Maritime Partnership".

Administrative matters

Staff security and safety

ACC members agreed that security and safety of staff was an issue that concerned all organizations of the system, whether they had field representation or not and expressed full support for the proposals and actions outlined in the report of the Secretary-General, including, in particular, measures for reinforcing the Office of the United Nations Security Coordinator and strengthening field staff training and counselling. In the same context, members of ACC agreed with the urgent need for stress counselling and concurred that no staff should be assigned to the field without security training. ACC adopted a statement on staff security and safety.

Meeting with the Chairman of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) and staff representatives

Executive Heads thanked the Chairman of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) for his statement. They noted that the Commission's review of the pay and benefits system was timely and critical for organizations, which were finding it increasingly difficult to remain competitive in the international job market particularly in highly specialized technical fields. They further reiterated their strong support for the proposed review of ICSC, noting that it should proceed with the active participation of the Commission and all other stakeholders, and should be perceived and approached as a positive initiative to reinforce the Commission and maximize its capacity to support the strengthening of the common system and the International Civil Service Commission.

Members of the Committee thanked the staff representatives for their statements and noted that, in the context of the review of ACC, methods were being explored to ensure a more substantial dialogue with staff representatives.

Follow-up to ACC decisions

International Strategy for Disaster Reduction

ACC noted the progress achieved in implementing the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and took note with appreciation of the work accomplished by

the Inter-Agency Task Force. It requested the Task Force to continue to place particular emphasis on monitoring, prediction, early warning and preparedness in relation to natural disasters and on the prominent role of science and technology in its work.

HIV/AIDS

ACC took note of the two guidance notes prepared at its request for the Resident Coordinator system, one entitled "Towards a multi-sector response to HIV/AIDS" and the other on "HIV/AIDS in the United Nations work place". ACC members expressed their thanks to those who contributed to the preparation of these papers and requested that they be transmitted to the field.

Other matters

ACC confirmed that its spring 2001 session will be held in Nairobi on 2 and 3 April 2001 at the invitation of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

Tributes to the President of the International Fund for Agricultural Development, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund

ACC paid tribute to Fawzi Al-Sultan, President of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), Mrs. Sadako Ogata, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and Dr. Nafis Sadik, Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) whose terms in office will end before the next ACC session. ACC commended their outstanding leadership as heads of their respective organizations and cited their extraordinary achievements in multilateral cooperation at a time of historic change and challenges. ACC expressed profound appreciation for their invaluable contributions to the work of the United Nations system and that of the Committee.

1. The Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) held its second regular session of 2000 at United Nations Headquarters on 27 and 28 October 2000, under the chairmanship of the Secretary-General of the United Nations. In opening the session, the Secretary-General welcomed Horst Köhler, the Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), who was attending ACC for the first time. The agenda for the session was as follows:

1. Adoption of the agenda.
2. The demands placed on national and international systems by the new global environment:
   (a) Health and other social implications of globalization;
   (b) Financing for development;
   (c) Least developed countries.
3. Review of ACC.
4. Briefings by ACC members.
5. Administrative matters:
   (a) Staff security and safety;
   (b) Meetings with the Chairman of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) and staff representatives.
6. Follow-up to ACC decisions:
   (a) International Strategy for Disaster Reduction;
   (b) HIV/AIDS.
7. Other matters.

I. ACC private meeting

2. A private meeting of ACC members was held on the morning of 27 October 2000, at which the Executive Heads were briefed and had an extensive exchange of views on recent political developments, including the situation in the Middle East.

3. The Secretary of ACC was asked to pursue arrangements, through the Executive Information Network and other means, to promote a more systematic exchange of information among executive heads on major developments of mutual concern, including in the main organs of the United Nations and other intergovernmental forums.

II. ACC retreat

4. At the invitation of the Secretary-General, ACC members held a retreat from the evening of Friday, 27 October, to Saturday, 28 October. The main focus at the retreat was a joint reflection on concrete ways for the United Nations system to advance the objectives set in the Millennium Declaration adopted by the heads of State and Government at the conclusion of the Millennium Summit (resolution 55/2). A note on the outcome of the discussions at the retreat will be presented separately.

5. The present report covers the outcome of the discussions at the regular session of the Committee.

III. The demands placed on national and international systems by the new global environment

6. The Secretary-General recalled that, for the past two years, ACC had been analysing the process of globalization and its implications for the work of the United Nations system.

7. The decision of ACC to give priority to this issue in its agenda, the balance sheet it had been drawing of the impact of globalization and its analysis of the linkages and synergies that needed to be created to redress the negative and exploit the positive had found strong confirmation at the Millennium Summit. The Summit had also reinforced the belief of the members of ACC that the system had both a responsibility and the potential to contribute significantly to the new and stronger framework of governance that was required to make globalization a positive force for all.

8. The Secretary-General noted that globalization was drawing the system together to an extent that was, in many ways, unprecedented. The discussion in ACC was serving to deepen significantly both the need and the rationale for system-wide cooperation. As a result of the discussion, there was a deeper understanding within the system of the reasons why, in the face of globalization, United Nations organizations needed each other to succeed, and what they could do

specifically to reinforce each other in the pursuit of both their respective mandates and their common overriding objectives, chief among them the struggle against poverty.

A. Health and other social implications of globalization

9. Pursuant to a decision of ACC at its spring 2000 session, the Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO), Dr. Gro Harlem Brundtland, at the invitation of the Secretary-General, convened a meeting of Executive Heads on 26 October 2000 in New York to assist in preparing for ACC's consideration of health and other social implications of globalization.

10. In introducing a note on the outcome of the consultation of Executive Heads, Dr. Brundtland recalled that the meeting had defined, as its central task, the challenge, reflected in the Millennium Declaration, of how to make globalization a positive force for all and how to influence its process and impact vis-à-vis bringing benefits to poor people. Health provided very telling examples of the many positive and negative impacts of globalization. In health, as in other sectors, ACC should focus its priorities in areas where the market alone cannot deliver positive results, identifying the types of public interventions that are required.

11. In taking forward the concept of the global public good, both nationally and internationally, United Nations organizations needed to focus their work in ways that made it possible to undertake integrated initiatives in key areas such as HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis and childhood diseases.

12. The meeting also drew attention to potential conflicts between trade rules and global social and environmental goals. In setting up international rules on trade and finance, the evidence-base needed to be strengthened to broaden perspectives. Thus for example, the experiences with Trade-Related Intellectual Property (TRIPS) needed to be examined in order to better understand advantages and disadvantages, in particular the impact on sectors such as the pharmaceutical industry in developing countries. In this regard, the Director-General of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) offered his agency's support for a study on the nexus between TRIPS and prices, incomes and manufacturing industries in developing countries, in the context of regulating global negatives and defining key public goods.

13. Greater awareness of global negatives and of the way globalization had fostered them was needed. Tobacco, illicit drugs and transnational crimes were examples of global negatives that require regulation.

14. On the broader aspects of globalization, Dr. Brundtland noted that organizations of the system were addressing different dimensions through their mandates and perspectives. Globalization touched on the activities of all agencies, from meteorology and maritime safety to education and the environment. There was a need to understand the interlinkages better and to develop more integrated thinking among members of ACC as well as encourage such thinking among Member States. There was indeed evidence of a growing sense of global responsibility within the international community, as illustrated by the setting of comprehensive international development targets. That in turn, provided scope for taking forward private philanthropy.

15. It was important at the same time not to confuse the impact of globalization with other factors: national government responsibility for public policy and social outcomes remained as critical as ever. Technological capacity was a crucial part of globalization and organizations of the system should intensify their efforts to share information and experiences on the potential of information technology, biotechnology and the human genome project. They also needed to keep alert to "downsides", for example different standards being applied in domestic and overseas markets.

16. ACC thanked the Director-General of WHO for convening the meeting of Executive Heads and endorsed the general thrust of her report. In the discussion that ensued in ACC, it was noted that the programmes of action of United Nations conferences and summits set out broad responses to the challenges of globalization. The key was to further integrated approaches that would serve to bring the benefits of globalization to the poor. Executive Heads agreed that there was a need to deepen the common understanding of the synergies that had to be fostered among financial, economic, social, cultural, technological and human rights dimensions so as to strengthen the knowledge base for such integrated approaches.

Account needed to be taken of demographic trends, international migration and the needs of young people, as well as gender concerns. A major focus of the common effort should be to enhance access to education and preserve cultural identity. Integrated approaches were equally important in addressing the negative aspects of globalization, from drug trafficking and transnational organized crime to environmental pollution, HIV/AIDS and other communicable diseases. The underlying need to work towards a rule-based international system that was perceived as fundamentally fair was generally emphasized. ACC also shared the emphasis placed by the meeting on the importance of identifying key areas where public policy could make a difference in addressing market distortions and in bringing about beneficial solutions. In this context, it was noted that one of the most significant shifts in the approach of the United Nations system to development was a conscious and concerted effort to work more closely with civil society and the private sector.

17. The view was expressed that, in the light of the Millennium Summit, each organization of the system should draw up an action plan outlining how it will contribute to achieving the development goals and targets set out in the Millennium Declaration. Advancing the objectives of the Declaration should be a main focus of the work of ACC in the period ahead.

18. Recognizing the need for more integrated thinking to address the various dimensions of globalization at the level of the United Nations system, ACC welcomed the proposal of the Director-General of ILO to prepare a paper on an integrated approach to policy formulation, identifying interrelationships among economic and social dimensions of globalization.

19. In endorsing the general thrust of Dr. Brundtland's report, ACC noted the intention of the Director-General of WHO to write to ACC members providing suggestions for taking forward the ideas emanating from the meeting on 26 October and the offers of cooperation that were made in that context. It was further agreed that the High-Level Committee on Programmes, once established, should give priority to building up a network among agencies on globalization issues in order to promote integrated approaches that can influence the direction of programmes of the organizations of the system.

B. Financing for development

20. ACC had before it an issue note, "Financing for Development", dealing with the follow-up within the system to the General Assembly's decision to convene a "high-level intergovernmental event" in 2001 to consider "national, international and systemic issues relating to financing for development in a holistic manner in the context of globalization and interdependence" (see resolution 54/196). ACC was briefed on the preparatory process under way for this event. A set of innovative arrangements had been put in place in this context, in particular, with the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization (WTO), including the secondment of staff from the World Bank and IMF, as well as the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), to the coordinating secretariat responsible for the preparations for this event in the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

21. In the ensuing discussions, ACC members noted the importance attached to this event by Member States and welcomed the involvement and participation in the preparatory process of all "relevant stakeholders", including, in particular, the Bretton Woods institutions.

22. ACC members saw the event as an important opportunity to, inter alia, further the implementation of the goals and commitments of the Millennium Summit. They also emphasized the importance for the event to address, within its agenda, interfaces between trade and financial issues and, in that context, to achieve concrete advances in debt relief and in reversing the trend of declining official development assistance (ODA). ACC further noted that, under the heading on "mobilizing domestic financial resources for development", the agenda covered governance issues and the overall question of the enabling domestic environment. In the same context, the relevance of ongoing work within the system to combat money-laundering was raised.

23. The view was expressed that the engagement of Finance Ministers in the preparatory process and the event itself would be crucial to its success. The Executive Heads of the Bretton Woods institutions indicated their readiness to extend their full support in promoting such engagement. ACC members also welcomed the involvement and participation in the process of the United Nations regional commissions, in

collaboration with development banks and other development actors at the regional level. The importance of the contribution of civil society and non-governmental organizations to the process was generally emphasized.

24. The hope was expressed that upcoming events in 2001, in particular, the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries and the high-level event on financing for development, will build on each other and will have outcomes that are mutually reinforcing.

25. Members of ACC expressed strong support for the high-level event on financing for development and gave assurances of the full participation of their organizations in the preparatory process and the event itself.

C. Least developed countries

26. At its spring 2000 session, ACC decided to revisit issues relating to the least developed countries, both in the context of the forthcoming Third United Nations Conference on Least Developed Countries, and in relation to progress in the implementation of the Integrated Framework for Trade-related Technical Assistance to Least Developed Countries.

27. The Secretary-General of UNCTAD briefed ACC on the challenges ahead in the context of the forthcoming Conference on the Least Developed Countries in Brussels. He drew attention to the stark conditions in the 48 least developed countries, noting that most of the 614 million people in these countries subsisted on less than a dollar a day and that only four of those countries were on course to graduate from the group by 2015, and only another eight over the next 50 years. Since 33 of the 48 least developed countries were in Africa, that was a situation which particularly afflicted that continent: it was incumbent on the international community to make every possible effort to improve the conditions of life for the people in the African and other least developed countries. The Brussels Conference was a challenging test case for the United Nations system, particularly in the context of the follow-up to the Millennium Summit and its Declaration, to demonstrate that it could, collectively, make a real difference. He called upon members of ACC to commit themselves and their organizations to work for the achievement of a successful Conference, which would deliver not speeches but an "early harvest" of actions towards the goals agreed by all in the major United Nations conferences of the 1990s and at the Millennium Summit.

28. Following an exchange of views, ACC adopted a statement on the Third United Nations Conference on the least developed countries as follows:

> ACC considers the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, to be held in Brussels from 14 to 20 May 2001, as a major milestone in the United Nations system-wide efforts, in the context of a globalizing world, towards accelerating development and poverty eradication, promoting peace and security, protecting the vulnerable and preserving the common environment.
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> ACC notes that the Conference will assess the results of the Programme of Action for the least developed countries for the 1990s at the country-level and review the implementation of international support measures, particularly in the areas of official development assistance (ODA), debt, investment and trade. It will also consider the formulation and adoption of a new programme of action for least developed countries for the current decade, containing appropriate national and international policies and measures for sustainable development of the least developed countries and their progressive integration into the world economy.
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> In this regard, ACC welcomes the commitment of the heads of State and Government, in the Millennium Declaration, to address the special needs of least developed countries, as well as their pledge of full support to ensuring the success of the Conference.
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> ACC takes note of the four-track preparatory process of the Conference, namely, an intergovernmental track focusing on the formulation of a new programme of action; a country-level track to prepare national-level programmes of action for individual least developed countries; an "early deliverables" track leading to specific actions and initiatives for immediate implementation; and a civil society track bringing together the various stakeholders, including lawmakers and other civil society actors and the business community in the least

developed countries and their development partner countries in support of the Conference.

ACC declares the full commitment of the organizations individually, and the United Nations system collectively, to strongly support the Conference secretariat, led by the Secretary-General of UNCTAD, in the preparations for the Conference along all the above tracks of the preparatory process. On behalf of the entire system, it expresses the readiness of the organizations to advance the objectives of the Conference with a view to accelerating growth and development and the eradication of poverty in the least developed countries. It also recognizes that a decent standard of living, adequate nutrition, health care, decent work and protection against calamities are not just development goals — they are also human rights.

ACC pledges to mobilize all parts of the United Nations system to work in partnership with all stakeholders, including policy makers in the least developed countries and their development partners, to make globalization work for the least developed countries by supporting their efforts to build the requisite productive, human and institutional capacities, as well as by helping to create a conducive international environment for their beneficial integration into the world economy, and to ensure sustainable development of the least developed countries and of their citizens by promoting good governance, respect for human rights, including protection of the most vulnerable and protection of the common environment.

29. At the spring 2000 session of ACC, Executive Heads recognized the critical importance of the Integrated Framework for Trade-Related Technical Assistance to Least Developed Countries, agreed to accelerate its implementation and requested WTO to report back to ACC at its next session. The Director-General of WTO briefed ACC on the progress achieved in implementing the Integrated Framework. He reported that the six core agencies (IMF, World Bank, UNDP, UNCTAD, the International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO (ITC) and WTO) had met in July 2000 and agreed on new arrangements to strengthen the Integrated Framework, inter alia, by: the mainstreaming of trade priorities into the national development and poverty reduction strategies of the least developed countries; improved inter-agency governance and coordination arrangements; a division of labour among the core agencies; and the proposed establishment of a trust fund to seek donor support and voluntary contributions for the Integrated Framework.

30. ACC welcomed the progress achieved thus far in implementing the Integrated Framework and underscored the need to mobilize resources in support of the least developed countries, particularly in the context of the forthcoming Conference and the proposed trust fund for the Integrated Framework.

31. ACC agreed to pursue, at its next session, its reflection on the challenges that globalization poses for the United Nations system, in the light of a paper to be presented by the Director-General of ILO on an integrated approach to policy formulation, identifying interrelationships among the economic and social aspects of globalization (see also para. 18 above). Drawing on this ongoing reflection, and building on the discussion at the retreat that followed the session, ACC will focus on the capacity of the system to promote an effective follow-up to the Millennium Summit and on the individual and joint actions required to further the objectives and commitments embodied in the Millennium Declaration.

IV. Review of ACC

32. In introducing this item, the Secretary-General drew attention to the notes before ACC on the proposed functions of the two High-Level Committees and on the single, jointly financed ACC secretariat, and thanked ACC members for their cooperation in the reform process. He also thanked the chairpersons of the two meetings at which the proposed terms of reference for the two Committees had been prepared. He noted that, if it concurred with the recommendations of these two meetings, ACC would, through the establishment of the two new High-Level Committees, have the pillars in place that would enable it to concentrate on strategic issues — a main objective that had moved the review forward. The Secretary-General noted further that a third key element towards this objective was the consolidation of the ACC secretariat, and emphasized two main considerations in this regard. One was to ensure that, without prejudice to current procedures and the provision of dedicated services to the different inter-agency committees, ACC could count on coherent and well-coordinated support from both New York and

Geneva. The second was to consolidate secretariat capacities to promote a more effective exchange and dissemination of comprehensive information on the work of the system and to maximize support for the "task managers" and "lead agency" approaches that should guide the functioning of the reformed ACC machinery.

33. Noting that the two inter-agency meetings had left the task of redefining subsidiary structure to the two High-Level Committees, the Secretary-General pointed out that the note before ACC on the consolidated secretariat could not, for that reason, include details of organizational structure and budget for the consolidated ACC secretariat. The note suggested therefore keeping inter-agency financed budgets at current levels for the coming biennium and reviewing and adjusting them as the new streamlined subsidiary structure was agreed upon. This, however, was predicated on the assumption that the current level of secondments would continue in the immediate period ahead in relation to the ACC secretariat in New York. In this connection, he thanked UNIDO, UNFPA and UNDP for the support so far extended to the Office for Inter-Agency Affairs and hoped that such support would continue in the coming biennium. He also expressed the hope that under the new cost-sharing arrangement that will be worked out, the World Bank, IMF and WTO would find it possible to contribute towards the cost of the new consolidated ACC secretariat.

34. The Executive Director of UNFPA, in her capacity as Chairperson of the ad hoc meeting on the proposed High-Level Committee on Programmes, noted that there was a strong sense of common purpose and agreement at the meeting on the importance of such a Committee. All participants had underscored the need for the proposed Committee to add value and, in that context, stressed that the subsidiary machinery should be carefully examined, streamlined and kept under continuous review to ensure that it remained effective, action-oriented, flexible and capable of ensuring timely responses. For these reasons, the meeting recommended that the kind of subsidiary bodies/mechanisms required should be reviewed at the first meeting of the High-Level Committee in Programmes. It was understood that while some of the existing subsidiary bodies may need to continue, in many other cases inter-agency work could be undertaken by ad hoc, time-bound task forces or through networks of technical experts rather than by standing mechanisms reporting to ACC. The Chairperson further stressed the need to find ways to improve linkages between inter-agency work and the deliberations of intergovernmental bodies, and for greater "internalization" of the issues dealt within the ACC context throughout the organizations of the system and their staff. She cited as illustrative areas of focus for the new Committee, inter alia, the consideration of selected issues relating to globalization; poverty; HIV/AIDS; integrated implementation of the goals of conferences and the Millennium Declaration; and collaboration with civil society.

35. The United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Management, in his capacity as Chairperson of the High-Level Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions, noted that there had been general agreement at the special meeting of the Committee that an effective High-Level Committee on Management, in addressing key administrative management issues, should focus in particular on developing system-wide responses to cross-cutting issues such as information and communication technologies and on common concerns such as procurement. It should promote measurable improvements and, through dialogue and networking and taking advantage of synergies, bring greater coherence as well as savings to the system. It should interact with relevant United Nations committees and provide a forum for exchanges with the Federation of International Civil Servants' Associations (FICSA) and the Coordinating Committee for International Staff Unions and Associations of the United Nations System (CCISUA). He noted that in this area, as in the programme area, participants had agreed that the use of task forces rather than standing committees should be maximized. Task forces should be composed of officials from specialized areas, have specific terms of reference, be time bound and be geared to achieving measurable results.

36. ACC endorsed the proposed functions and procedures for the two new High-Level Committees, as set out in the draft terms of reference submitted to it. During the discussion a number of additional issues were highlighted. ACC members stressed that participation in the Committees should be at the appropriate level if they are to fulfil their mandates effectively. Appropriate ways of involving civil society and non-governmental organizations in their work

should also be explored. It was emphasized that both Committees should take into account and make use of work done in other relevant bodies, such as the United Nations Development Group, so as to avoid duplication and improve synergies. It was stressed that the review of the subsidiary machinery to be undertaken by the two High-Level Committees, should be zero-based, that is, it should take as its starting point what needs to be done, rather than what was being done at present. Permanent bodies should be kept to a minimum and their retention should be based on rigorous criteria. It was observed that although the staff associations should continue to have access, if necessary, to ACC, ways and means needed to be explored to ensure a more meaningful dialogue with them through the High-Level Committee on Management. In order to ensure coordination among the High-Level Committees, it was suggested that the Chairperson of the High-Level Committee on Programmes attend the meetings of the High-Level Committee on Management and vice versa.

37. ACC decided to establish the two High-Level Committees and requested them to report to ACC at its spring 2001 session, including on the results of their reviews of the subsidiary bodies.

38. The Committee also decided to establish a single jointly financed ACC secretariat as outlined in the note before it.

39. With regard to the Organizational Committee, the Secretary-General noted that there would continue to be a need, not necessarily for a Committee, but for a network of "focal points", or "sherpas", who could be consulted and could interact, on behalf of the Executive Heads, on all issues relating to the organization and agendas of the ACC sessions. They would normally be the officials who accompany the Executive Heads at ACC sessions, and who could then be consulted on the preparation of the summary of ACC conclusions, ACC reports to the Economic and Social Council and other similar documents.

40. ACC endorsed this proposal and noted that the Secretary-General would communicate with Executive Heads on the designation of focal points for the exercise of the functions outlined above.

41. Executive Heads also concurred with the review team's proposal that ACC should be renamed, highlighting its function and composition as a board of chief executives of the United Nations system.

V. Briefings by ACC members

A. Briefing by the Secretary-General of the International Telecommunication Union on the preparations for the World Summit on the Information Society

42. The Secretary-General of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) informed ACC of the positive reaction from both the public and private sectors to the decision of the ITU Governing Body to convene the World Summit on the Information Society in 2003. The Summit will address, among other issues, ways of bridging the digital divide and of building on major international initiatives to mobilize information and communication technologies for development, including the follow-up to the 2000 high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council. He briefed ACC on the draft action plan and on the preparations for the Summit, noting that the lead time would provide opportunity for extensive regional consultations and the involvement of many actors in the process. He proposed that the Summit be convened by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, and indicated that the anticipated outcome of the Summit would be a declaration of universal political will and a concrete action programme for achieving the goals of the information society.

43. The Secretary-General of ITU expressed appreciation to the members of ACC for the support that several of them had already conveyed to him and their readiness to participate in the organization of the Summit. Most concerned organizations had already confirmed their participation in the High-Level Organizing Committee. The Committee should consider itself as a committee of "owners". Its work would mostly be carried out by means of electronic correspondence rather than through meetings. Questions relating to funding and other resource issues will be the subject of early consultations by ITU with those involved in the preparations of the Summit. ACC will be kept informed.

44. During the discussions, it was noted that in view of the fact that a number of other initiatives were under way in information and communication technologies-related areas, it would be important to share information on sectors being addressed and the donors being approached. In this connection, it was noted that

ITU proposed setting up a databank on information and communication technologies on a special web site and that this would help facilitate sharing of information and coordination among all parties involved, in particular organizations of the United Nations system.

45. ACC expressed its satisfaction with the draft plan of action and stressed the importance of an early decision by ITU on the venue of the Summit.

B. Briefing by the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations on the report of the Inter-Agency Task Force on the United Nations Response to Long-term Food Security, Agricultural Development and Related Aspects in the Horn of Africa

46. The Director-General of FAO presented the final report of the Inter-Agency Task Force on the United Nations Response to Long-term Food Security, Agricultural Development and Related Aspects in the Horn of Africa to ACC. He underlined that the Horn of Africa is one of the most food insecure regions in the world, with around 45 per cent of the population undernourished. The report of the Task Force examined the causes of food insecurity in the Horn of Africa, outlined elements for a strategy and a framework for action and proposed that Governments formulate country and regional food security programmes, building on existing initiatives.

47. The Secretary-General and ACC members thanked the Director-General for his leadership in this task. The Committee welcomed the inclusive approach used during the preparation of the report, which involved Governments of the region and non-governmental organizations, as well as organizations of the United Nations system. The report built upon the varied mandates and capacities of the different agencies concerned and recognized that many of the solutions to the problem of food security in the region, while relating predominantly to agriculture and rural development, would also depend on supportive action in other sectors. ACC appreciated the analysis of the underlying causes of food insecurity contained in the report and endorsed its recommendations.

48. The Committee emphasized the need to ensure that the report should lead to concrete actions. It was underlined that, in view of the substantial decline in Official Development Assistance to the region, no impact on food insecurity could be expected without substantial public investment. The Secretary-General indicated to ACC that he would explore further the possibility of the World Bank taking the lead within a follow-up mechanism for the mobilization of resources to implement the strategy and programmes identified in the report. Major bilateral agencies active in the region should also be brought into the process, and food security would need to be included in the poverty reduction strategies for the countries of the Horn of Africa.

49. The role of the Governments of the region, and of their regional organization, was recognized as crucial to the success of the United Nations response. This would involve strong country ownership, as well as governmental commitment to the elimination of famine and food insecurity, including through the allocation of domestic resources and the formulation of relevant policies and programmes. The United Nations country teams as well as the organizations of the United Nations system not represented at country level and non-governmental organizations would play important roles in supporting the Governments and regional organization and, as a first step, it was envisaged that they would meet to agree on modalities for moving the process forward.

C. Briefing by the Executive Director of the United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention on the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the High-Level Political Signing Conference of the Convention

50. The Executive Director of the United Nations Drug Control Programme briefed ACC on the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the High-Level Political Signing Conference of the Convention in Palermo, Italy, from 12 to 15 December 2000. The Convention contained articles criminalizing participation in an organized crime group, money laundering, corruption and the obstruction of justice. It addresses such issues as

mutual legal assistance, extradition, protection of witnesses and victims and law enforcement cooperation as well as prevention. The Convention also envisaged the setting up of a special fund for the financing of technical assistance to further its implementation and to which Member States may contribute the proceeds confiscated from criminal activities. The Convention would also set up an intergovernmental mechanism for its implementation.

51. The High-Level Political Signing Conference of the Convention brings together world leaders, high-level officials of Governments, renowned personalities and experts to celebrate the launching of the first-ever international instrument against transnational organized crime. The Convention and the signing ceremony will serve to advance the objective of the Millennium Declaration, "to intensify efforts to fight transnational crime in all its dimensions". The subjects of the three additional protocols to the Convention also reflected areas specifically mentioned in the Declaration, namely, trafficking and smuggling in human beings and illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons. In addition to the plenary, symposia and seminars have been organized to discuss matters related to the Convention and its protocols, with emphasis on follow-up activities to ensure their effective implementation. The Executive Director invited all members of ACC to attend the Conference and to participate in its various activities.

52. ACC welcomed the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the High-Level Political Signing Conference of the Convention and underscored their importance in the international community's struggle to stem transnational organized crime. It urged all ACC members to participate in the Conference and to extend their full support to the follow-up and implementation of the Convention.

D. Briefing by the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization on the outcome and follow-up to the World Education Forum

53. The Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) briefed ACC on the follow-up to, and implementation of, the Dakar Framework, adopted by the World Education Forum, held in Dakar in April 2000. He gave a comprehensive account of the follow-up mechanisms and arrangements at the global, regional and, in particular, national levels, and other essential aspects of the plan of action for follow-up, especially the schedule of the working group on education for all (22-24 November 2000, Paris) and the high-level flexible group (April 2001). He further briefed ACC on UNESCO's financing strategies to mobilize the needed resources, and on the extensive consultations under way with partners and potential donors at the multilateral and bilateral levels (United Nations system, Group of Eight, and the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development), and indicated that he would share the relevant document with ACC members in the near future. While emphasizing the role of national Governments of developing countries in the implementation of the Dakar outcome document, the Director-General stressed the vital role of the United Nations system and other partners in supporting the efforts of Governments. To ensure an effective and coherent support by the United Nations system, the Director-General informed the Committee of his intention to seek ways and means of working closely with the United Nations Development Group at the global level and integrating Dakar in the programming and funding tools at the field level (common country assessments, the United Nations Development Assistance Framework and public-reduction strategy papers). He hoped to continue to brief ACC on the implementation of the Dakar Framework.

54. ACC expressed appreciation for the briefing of the Director-General of UNESCO and invited its members to cooperate fully with UNESCO in the follow-up to the World Education Forum.

E. Briefing by the Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund on the preparatory work for the 2001 General Assembly special session on the follow-up to the World Summit for Children and for the special session of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS

55. The Executive Director of UNICEF briefed ACC on the General Assembly special session on children to

be held from 19 to 21 September 2001. The objectives of this special session and the preparations for it were briefly described, including Preparatory Committee meetings in January and June 2001 and regional meetings and other events. The Executive Director indicated that Member States were being encouraged to include younger persons in their delegations. ACC members were urged to participate in the special session and in the preparatory process leading up to the event.

56. The Executive Director of UNICEF, in her capacity as Chair of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) "Co-Sponsoring Committee" also briefed ACC on the General Assembly special session on HIV/AIDS to be held from 25 to 27 June 2001. She noted the importance attached to this session by Member States and outlined the objectives of the session. The preparatory process for this session would be similar to that used in preparing for the Millennium Assembly and Declaration and that would involve the establishment of a formal preparatory body. UNAIDS was serving as the secretariat for the event and urging the active support and input of ACC members.

57. ACC thanked the Executive Director of UNICEF for her briefings and requested its members to contribute to ensuring the success of the special sessions of the General Assembly on follow-up to the World Summit for Children and on HIV/AIDS.

F. Briefing by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance to be held in South Africa, from 31 August to 7 September 2001

58. The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights recalled ACC's conclusion, at its spring 2000 session, inviting concerned organizations of the system to participate actively in the preparatory process for the Conference. In the context of the preparatory work for the Conference, the High Commissioner drew the attention of ACC members to five areas that required cooperation with and contributions from organizations of the system. These included: (a) a study on ways of improving coordination between the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and all United Nations bodies and the specialized agencies involved in the fight against racism; (b) devising strategies for overcoming obstacles to further progress against racial discrimination; (c) the involvement and active participation of United Nations bodies and the specialized agencies in the process of elaborating the draft Declaration and draft plan of action for the World Conference against Racism; (d) public relations and information activities for the Conference; and (e) regional preparatory processes for the Conference, including the formulation of recommendations based on experiences at the national and regional levels. The High Commissioner noted that the upcoming World Conference against Racism provided a significant opportunity to address the serious lapses that exist in the international community's efforts to overcome racial discrimination and ethnic hatred. It also represented both a challenge and an opportunity for cooperation throughout the United Nations system.

59. ACC welcomed the update provided by the High Commissioner for Human Rights on the preparations for the World Conference against Racism and invited all its members to continue to participate actively in the preparatory process and to contribute fully to ensuring that the Conference outcome was both significant and effective.

60. Under this item, ACC also took note of the information provided by the Secretary-General of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) on the worldwide celebration of World Maritime Day at the end of September 2000, based on the theme "IMO: Building Maritime Partnership". The celebration had served to highlight the key role played by IMO in regulating global shipping standards, improving safety at sea and preventing and combating marine pollution from ships. As to social impact, IMO played an important role in assisting developing countries improve their capacity to build strong maritime administration, manage more efficient ports, strengthen shipping-related activities and provide employment and career opportunities for thousands of nationals of developing countries.

VI. Administrative matters

A. Staff security and safety

61. In introducing this item, the Deputy Secretary-General recalled that since the last meeting of ACC in Rome there had been three major deliberate attacks on the staff and premises of the United Nations system, resulting in the brutal murders of six staff members. One of these attacks had, in addition to loss of life, involved the taking of hostages. During the same period, in a major incident, 500 United Nations peacekeepers had been taken hostage.

62. Staff security thus remained a major concern for the United Nations system and had been the subject of two internal reviews as well as an external review. These reviews had identified significant shortcomings at both the Headquarters and field levels, mainly due to shortages of resources and security staff. Following these reviews, a comprehensive report had been submitted to the General Assembly (A/55/494), which highlighted these shortcomings and put forward proposals to strengthen the security management system and to ensure reliable and adequate funding to implement the measures required for enhancing staff security. The relevant proposals included strengthening of the Office of the United Nations Security Coordinator, providing funding under the regular budget for 100 field service officers and provision for training, communications and equipment. The Secretary-General was also recommending the provision of enhanced stress counselling and the development of minimum operating security standards and threat assessments. The cost of implementing these recommendations would be in the order of $30 million a year and, if approved by the General Assembly, would become effective under the budget for the biennium 2002-2003. In the meantime, Member States were being requested to approve a number of transitional measures for 2001, including additional appropriations in the amount of $2.7 million under the regular budget.

63. The Deputy Secretary-General added that sustained attention and concerted action by United Nations agencies, funds and programmes were essential requirements to ensure that many of the proposals under consideration will have the desired impact. She stressed that the deficiencies identified in the security management system will not be adequately remedied without a renewed, robust commitment by ACC members to ensure that all staff of the United Nations system, and especially representatives in the field, understand their responsibilities.

64. The ensuing discussion on staff security, in the light of the above presentation, took place in the presence of representatives of staff unions and the Chairman of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC). Other elements of the exchange between the representatives and the Chairman are outlined in paragraphs 68 to 71 below.

65. Noting that four of the recently murdered staff members were serving with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the High Commissioner for Refugees welcomed the report of the Secretary-General which, she noted, addressed all the main issues effectively. She was concerned, however, that the transitional measures for financial support before the biennium 2002-2003 were not sufficient to cover needs over the next year. There was a need therefore to secure additional funding for 2001. She also referred to a number of other practical issues that needed to be addressed. These included: training, process of selection of designated officials in field duty stations, improving access and quality of field information available to designated officials and protection for essential partners (NGOs) in the field. She also proposed the establishment of an advisory or support committee to the Office of the United Nations Security Coordinator.

66. ACC members agreed that security and safety of staff was an issue that concerned all organizations of the system, whether they had field representation or not, and expressed full support for the proposals and actions outlined in the Secretary-General's report, including in particular measures for reinforcing the Office of the United Nations Security Coordinator and strengthening field staff training and counselling. In this connection, it was noted that the reinforcement of the Office of the Security Coordinator was essential but should not be a substitute for strengthening decision-making capacities in the field. The locus of responsibility for security decisions could not be centralized and should remain in the field. The crucial objective of reinforcing, through the Office of the Security Coordinator, the common framework within which such decisions were taken should be pursued in parallel with the strengthening of training and other measures at the field level, in a mutually reinforcing

way. In the same context, members of ACC agreed with the urgent need for stress counselling and concurred that no staff should be assigned to the field without security training.

67. ACC members also expressed concern that actions by Member States, in spite of declarations in different intergovernmental forums, did not reflect the necessary sense of urgency with regard to this issue. The response of both donor countries and those in which humanitarian workers operated lagged behind and did not correspond to the seriousness of the situation. Recalling that effective security required substantial resources, the United Nations Security Coordinator noted that the priority that Member States accord to staff security should be equal to the dangers inherent in the unique missions and duties that they call upon staff of the United Nations system to perform.

68. ACC decided to adopt the following statement:

> The Administrative Committee on Coordination,
>
> Deeply concerned about recent events which have resulted in the brutal deaths of six United Nations staff members over the past six months;
>
> Also deeply concerned about the recent cases of detention of personnel;
>
> Reiterates that the highest priority must be given to the security and safety of staff members;
>
> Stresses the concerns and commitments made in its previous statements on safety and security of staff issued in 1998 and 1999;
>
> Strongly supports the measures being proposed by the Secretary-General to Member States in his report on the security of staff (A/55/494) with a view to achieving a more stable and secure system of funding security expenditures and ensuring that adequate levels of staff are available at both the Headquarters and field levels to manage security, and urges Member States to provide the necessary financial resources within the United Nations budget and those of all United Nations organizations;
>
> Reiterates the decision taken at its second regular session of 1999 that staff participation in security training programmes should be made mandatory and the Executive Heads pledge to implement this training across the board and to take appropriate measures to ensure that staff members, and especially field representatives of all organizations, attend;
>
> Endorses the need to ensure that Minimum Operating Security Standards are in place at all duty stations;.
>
> Reaffirms the commitment of Executive Heads to include the issue of staff security in their discussions with Member States, including bringing to justice the perpetrators of attacks on United Nations personnel;
>
> Decides to keep the matter under continuing review.

B. Meeting with the Chairman of the International Civil Service Commission and staff representatives

69. The Committee met during the session with staff representatives and the Chairman of ICSC to pursue its dialogue with them on staff security, as outlined above, and to discuss administrative matters of common concern.

70. The Chairman of the ICSC noted that on the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Commission, its twenty-sixth annual report included far-reaching recommendations aimed at strengthening the common system through the application of common personnel standards, methods and arrangements. Among the recommendations, the most important were the proposals related to the development of an integrated framework for human resources management, which identified the elements of a modern and integrated plan for the management of human resources. The Commission also intended to review the pay and benefits system starting at the end of 2000. It was envisaged that this review would take at least two years to complete. ACC would continue to be briefed on its progress. The Chairman also briefed the Committee on other issues, including standards of conduct for the international civil service, the establishment of grade equivalencies between the United States federal civil service and the United Nations system, post adjustment matters and conditions of service of the General Service and related categories and other locally recruited categories.

71. Executive Heads thanked the Chairman of ICSC for his statement. They noted that the Commission's review of the pay and benefits system was timely and critical for United Nations system organizations that were finding it increasingly difficult to remain competitive in the international job market, particularly in highly specialized technical fields. They further reiterated their strong support for the proposed review of ICSC, noting that it should proceed with the active participation of the Commission and all other stakeholders and should be perceived and approached as a positive initiative to reinforce the Commission and maximize its capacity to support the strengthening of the common system and the international civil service.

72. In their joint statement to the Committee, the presidents of FICSA and CCISUA focussed on issues related to safety and security of staff, HIV/AIDS, the reform of human resources management, the justice system and its administration as well as new trends in staff management relations. They welcomed the report of the Secretary-General on the safety and security of United Nations personnel (A/55/494), but expressed the belief that the resources requested were modest given the scope and complexity of the actions to be taken to improve the situation. They highlighted a number of issues such as the need for proper mission preparedness and planning and for the ratification of the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel (resolution 49/49) and the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court; the provision of alternatives to humanitarian assistance in areas where the situation on the ground eluded any control; arrangements to deal with non-state actors; the need to include locally recruited staff in all safety measures; and the importance of stress and grief counsellors to work with the families of the deceased.

73. With regard to HIV/AIDS, they proposed, inter alia, that a group of staff from all organizations of the United Nations system should be trained as focal points to help and assist those afflicted with the disease.

74. In the area of reform, the representatives highlighted the need to harmonize and make compatible the various reform initiatives being undertaken, expressed their concern at the recent trend in many organizations, as part of reform, to do away with permanent appointments and to replace them with shorter-term employment arrangements, and stressed the need to involve staff in reform processes. In the latter context, they referred to an arrangement recently negotiated within ILO and invited ACC members to review and adopt it. They also expressed the hope that ACC would safeguard, and possibly increase, participation and input of staff representatives and that the new High-Level Committee on Management would serve as an open forum for interaction between staff and administration.

75. Members of the Committee thanked the staff representatives for their statements and noted that, in the context of the review of ACC, methods were being explored to ensure a more substantial dialogue with staff representatives. Interest was also expressed for the staff proposal to establish a network of HIV/AIDS counsellors. The Director-General of ILO noted that the recently signed agreement with staff excluded issues covered by the common system from staff/management negotiation. Also, where issues required additional resources, they would need to be presented to the Governing Board for approval.

VII. Follow-up to ACC decisions

A. International Strategy for Disaster Reduction

76. ACC, at its spring 2000 session, took note of the progress achieved in the implementation of General Assembly resolution 54/219 of 22 December 1999 on the successor arrangements to the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction. It invited the Inter-Agency Task Force established pursuant to the resolution to give special emphasis to building and strengthening the capacities of disaster-prone countries through scientific research and training of experts. Since then, the Inter-Agency Task Force has held two meetings and has established a number of working groups to address a wide range of issues.

77. In this connection, it was observed that the Task Force might give consideration to the proposed establishment of a working group on science and technology. The point was also made that the development aspects of the International Strategy should be considered by the Second Committee, whereas the relief, emergency and humanitarian aspects should be addressed by the Third Committee of the United Nations General Assembly. It was further observed that the secretariat for the International Strategy should maintain a distinct and

multidisciplinary character under the joint ownership of ACC, and that genuine consultations needed to be held on issues of common interest to the concerned agencies, for example, the appointment of a director of the secretariat, knowledgeable and visionary about natural disaster reduction, and on the formulation of work plans of the Task Force.

78. ACC noted the progress achieved in implementing the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and took note with appreciation of the work accomplished by the Inter-Agency Task Force. It requested the Task Force to continue to place particular emphasis on monitoring, prediction, early warning and preparedness in relation to natural disasters and on the prominent role of science and technology in its work.

B. HIV/AIDS

79. ACC took note of the two guidance notes prepared at its request for the Resident Coordinator system, one entitled "Towards a multi-sector response to HIV/AIDS" and the other on "HIV/AIDS in the United Nations work place". ACC members expressed their thanks to those who contributed to the preparation of these papers and requested that they be transmitted to the field.

VIII. Other matters

80. ACC confirmed that its spring 2001 session will be held in Nairobi on 2 and 3 April 2001 at the invitation of the United Nations Environment Programme.

Tributes to the President of the International Fund for Agricultural Development, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund

81. ACC paid tribute to Mr. Fawzi Al-Sultan, President of IFAD, Mrs. Sadako Ogata, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and Dr. Nafis Sadik, Executive Director of UNFPA, whose terms in office would end before the next session of ACC. ACC commended their outstanding leadership as heads of their respective organizations and cited their extraordinary achievements in multilateral cooperation at a time of historic change and challenges. ACC expressed profound appreciation for their invaluable contributions to the work of the United Nations system and that of the Committee.