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České předsednictví
v Radě EU

Czech Presidency
of the Council of the EU

Présidence tchèque
du Conseil de l'UE

2009

**Informal meeting of the plenary
on the United Nations System-wide Coherence**

**Statement
on behalf of the European Union
by**

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New York, March 13, 2009

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Mr. Co-Chair,

I have the honor to speak on behalf of the European Union. First of all, let me congratulate both of you, the new Co-Chairs, Ambassador of Namibia, Kaire Mbuende, and Ambassador of Spain, Juan Antonio Yáněz-Barnuevo, on your recent appointment. The EU certainly wishes you all the best in your new endeavors and we extend our full support to you. On this occasion, we would also like to express our gratitude to the previous Co-Chairs, Ambassador of Ireland, Paul Kavanagh, and Ambassador of the United Republic of Tanzania, Augustine Mahiga. Their work has been a significant contribution to the continuation of the process.

The EU has been supporting the efforts to streamline the operational activities of the UN and to improve the overall coherence of the UN system and its impact on the field since these ideas were formulated in the World Summit Outcome Document in 2005. We welcomed the Co-chairs' report released in 2008, which had reflected the discussions during informal consultations held during the last two years. The subsequent unanimous adoption of Resolution A/62/277 and its annexes, which incorporated the Co-Chairs' conclusions, has clearly demonstrated the broad support of the UN membership to the process of System Wide Coherence. We now have a consensus platform from which to proceed.

The Report of the Co-Chairs of the 62nd Session of the General Assembly was expressly and consensually welcomed by the Assembly in Resolution 62/277. Like others, the EU supports the findings and recommendations of the Co-Chairs. Some of the report's recommendations are already being implemented under the TCPR and other UN mandates, such as in countries which are voluntarily embracing the "Delivering as One" approach. Notable progress has been made at country level within several key areas, including recognizing the importance of national leadership and ownership, greater alignment of the UN activities with national programs and priorities, and creation of a system which empowers the Resident Coordinator and the United Nations Country Team. The One UN pilots have proven useful in testing possible approaches and drawing lessons. The EU would also like to emphasize the importance of working further on the harmonization of UN business practices, as this will contribute to increased efficiency at both headquarters and country level.

Regarding the way forward, the EU is ready to fully engage in building upon the significant consensus reached in Resolution 62/277 and call for its implementation. We expect that substantive papers of the Secretary General on issues of funding and governance as well as on gender equality and the empowerment of women, as requested by Resolution A/62/277, will serve as a base for further informal consultations and will be available soon in order to make progress on all these issues.

The EU believes that the issue of strengthening the UN's work in relation to Gender Equality and Women's empowerment is now ripe for discussion and for substantive action to be taken during the present session as envisaged in the consensus resolution and in the message of the President of the General Assembly on the occasion of International Women's Day 2009. We look forward to the Secretary General's paper which will give further clarification on the various options previously discussed.

As to the new UN gender architecture, which is now being discussed, the EU looks forward to the prompt conclusion of the ongoing reform process of the UN gender system in order to better achieve the commitments to gender equality, the advancement of women, women's empowerment and human rights, through the establishment of a new gender entity led by an Under-Secretary General, combining operational and normative functions to enhance gender mainstreaming and accountability within the UN system and deliver effectively on the ground.

The EU is also committed to discussion and substantive action on the other areas of Funding and Governance and looks forward to these being guided by the papers expected in due course.

Let me conclude, Mr. Co-Chair, by expressing a strong and genuine will of the EU to continue its active engagement in constructive and concrete discussions addressing the reform of the UN system.

Thank you for your attention.