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to the United Nations
885 Second Avenue, 19th Floor
New York, N.Y. 10017**

27 November 2006

Dear Colleagues,

In our capacity as co-chairs of the Informal Working Group on Mandate Review, we have the honour to circulate the finalised status report of that group, as approved on 21 November 2006, together with the relevant annexes.

Yours faithfully,

Imtiaz Hussain

Sarah McGrath

All Permanent and Observer Missions
to the United Nations
New York

Status Report of the Informal Working Group

Background

The informal working group was created on June 22nd and has held 10 meetings to date. The informal working group had on its agenda those mandates 5 years or older and not renewed.

Mandate Registry

The informal working group used the information on the mandate registry to assist its work. It was clarified the registry has no official status and should be viewed simply as a tool for member states.

The informal working group took note of a clarification from the Secretariat concerning RL 123. The Secretariat advised that this had been placed on the registry along with a number of other mandates relating to observer status. However, as these do not ask for action by the Secretariat or a UN entity, they do not constitute mandates for the purposes of this exercise. RL 123 should thus be removed from the registry as had been done with the other observer mandates which were initially included in error.

Categorisation

In accordance with a request from Member States for the status of implementation of mandates the Secretariat provided indicative lists of the following categories completed, implemented in progress, non applicable, no indication and not implemented as well as founding and founding related.

The informal working group reviewed the lists and agreed to designate 74 mandates as completed. (Annex 1)The working group also agreed to accept a list of founding and founding related mandates.

It was understood that non-applicable mandates are those that call for action by entities other than the Secretariat or implementing entities of the UN system.

It was understood that that designation of mandates into categories either by the Secretariat or Member States does not impact on activities ongoing under these mandates.

Discussion of Individual Mandates

Member States and groups of Member States brought forward 15 individual mandates for consideration by the informal working group. (Annex II)

Information was requested on 12 mandates with a view to looking at their strengthening.

Upon receipt of the information from the Secretariat the informal working group held a discussion of the material received and delegations were in general satisfied with the information provided. In addition the working group agreed that RL253 should be added to the list of mandates designated by member states as completed. There was no request to continue discussion of these mandates at this stage.

Information was requested of the following 2 mandates in order to get more detail on the status of their implementation; RL 393 and 399.

Upon receipt of the information from the Secretariat, the informal working group discussed the material provided and was generally satisfied with the information received. There was no request to continue discussion of these mandates at this stage.

Information was requested on mandate RL377 - Regular Programme for Technical Cooperation and was received from the Secretariat. The informal working group discussed the material provided at two sessions.

There was wide agreement on the suggestions set out by the Secretariat, in the information note provided on 8 September 2006, on ways to improve the overall management and accountability, monitoring, and reporting for the RPTC. A number of other issues and requests for additional follow-up information were raised by delegations concerning i.a. objectives and criteria, duplication and the use of advisors as well as a suggestion that an Office of Internal Oversight Service review of the RPTC be conducted.

Delegations emphasised the importance which they attached to the RPTC and their support for its work and its mandate.

The informal working group agreed that it had taken the discussion of this mandate as far as it could at this stage and thus recommends that the informal Plenary take up this issue with a view to assigning it to an appropriate body for further discussion.

Conclusion

The informal working group, having concluded its work on mandates older than five years and not renewed, brings to the attention of the Plenary this report. The informal working group noted that on RL377 more expert work is needed and recommends that the informal Plenary take up this issue with a view to assigning it to an appropriate body for further discussion. To facilitate this discussion the informal Working Group appends to this report, for information, the material received from the Secretariat during its consideration of this issue. (Annex III)

21 November 2006

Annex I List of mandates designated as completed by the informal Working Group

Annex II List of mandates on which information was requested of the Secretariat

Annex III Information provided by the Secretariat on RL 377

Annex I

List of mandates designated as completed by the Informal Working Group on Mandate Review

(74 mandates)

15	ID 12306	148	ID 16575
23	ID 23037	150	ID 9829
31	ID 9438	151	ID 9831
37	ID 9445	152	ID 9834
48	ID 22921	153	ID 9839
49	ID 22924	154	ID 9853
53	ID 18236	155	ID 9856
55	ID 16105	156	ID 9858
57	ID 14530	157	ID 16812
58	ID 14235	158	ID 7854
59	ID 21319	159	ID 7860
61	ID 21425	161	ID 7862
65	ID 22954	169	ID 22963
71	ID 22960	178	ID 13033
75	ID 19404	179	ID 9232
77	ID 21188	187	ID 22971
79	ID 16323	190	ID 16162
80	ID 22864	193	ID 10087
82	ID 20995	194	ID 7267
86	ID 14682	195	ID 7268
88	ID 14974	196	ID 19409
89	ID 18836	201	ID 23204
92	ID 18231	202	ID 12974
96	ID 17750	205	ID 14076
97	ID 11555	208	ID 8538
103	ID 6284	211	ID 18779
109	ID 20465	213	ID 9946
110	ID 20466	220	ID 12395
111	ID 20467	222	ID 12405
112	ID 20468	223	ID 12407
121	ID 7991	226	ID 15943
124	ID 16513	234	ID 18006
125	ID 14268	253	ID 15477
129	ID 16345	334	ID 23036
131	ID 21440	344	ID 9429
138	ID 16266		
141	ID 6379		
142	ID 6262		
145	ID 16697		

Annex II

Mandates on which specific information was requested of the Secretariat

(15 mandates)

Mandate Record Locator and ID numbers and Mandate Text

RL 239 ID 9442

Calls upon the relevant organizations and agencies of the United Nations system and other multilateral organizations to assist in the strengthening of national and regional capacity for disaster preparedness, planning, mitigation and reconstruction, including early warning systems

RL 247 ID 17980

Requests the Secretary-General to report annually to the General Assembly on the management of the fund

RL 249 ID 8384

Invites the Director of the Institute and the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters to continue to report annually to the General Assembly on the activities conducted by the Institute

RL 251 ID 15466

Requests the United Nations International Drug Control Programme to continue to provide legal assistance to Member States that request it in adjusting their national laws, policies and infrastructure to implement the international drug control conventions, as well as assistance in training personnel responsible for applying the new laws

RL 252 ID 15472

Calls upon the United Nations International Drug Control Programme to continue providing assistance to Member States that request it in establishing or strengthening national drug detection laboratories

RL 253 ID 15477

Encourages the United Nations International Drug Control Programme to continue and to seek support from other relevant agencies for its laboratory research to develop

environmentally safe methods for the eradication of illegal crops from which narcotic drugs are obtained, in support of national drug control strategies when requested by interested Governments and, in this context, to promote international quality standards for such methods, and requests it to report on progress made in this matter to the Commission on Narcotic Drugs at its thirty-eighth session

RL 263 ID 9821

Also requests the Secretary-General to continue updating the World Survey on the Role of Women in Development, bearing in mind its importance, placing particular emphasis on the adverse impact of the difficult economic situation affecting the majority of developing countries, particularly on the condition of women, giving special attention to worsening conditions for the incorporation of women into the labour force, as well as the impact of reduced expenditures for social services on opportunities available to women for education, health and child care

RL 270 ID 23194

Reiterates the importance of South-South cooperation for the successful implementation of the Programme of Action and invites all Governments, relevant organizations of the United Nations system, as well as the private sector and non-governmental organizations, to continue to support those activities in South-South cooperation being undertaken by the developing countries.

RL 272 ID 12372

Calls upon the organs and organizations of the United Nations system and the specialized agencies to undertake the actions required to give full and effective support to the implementation of the Programme of Action.

RL 274 ID 12386

Requests the Secretary-General to prepare periodic reports for the substantive sessions of the Economic and Social Council on the flow of financial resources for assisting in the implementation of the Programme of Action and to promote the exchange of information on the requirements for international assistance among the members of the donor community

RL 275 ID 12400

Invites the governing body of the United Nations Population Fund to oversee, on a regular basis, the response of the Fund to the needs of countries regarding activities to strengthen national population and development programmes, including the specific requests from developing countries for assistance in the preparation of national reports,

within its area of competence, and to report to the Economic and Social Council on this matter

RL 277 ID 15940

Reaffirms the importance of resource mobilization, including financial cooperation, the transfer of technology and capacity-building for communication in development programmes and projects, and calls upon the international community and organizations of the United Nations system to assist developing countries in introducing technologies and innovative methods for enhancing communication for development

RL 377 ID 5945

Authorizes the Secretary-General: 1. In consultation with the Economic and Social Council, to make provision, with the co-operation of the specialized agencies where appropriate, for the continuance of the urgent and important advisory functions in the field of social welfare carried on by UNRRA, and, for this purpose, 2. to include in the budget of the United Nations for the 1947 the funds necessary for the assumption of the following functions, all of which are necessary for the accomplishment of an effective programme: (a), (b), (c) and (d) [see text of the resolution].

RL 393 ID 10893

Also acknowledges with appreciation the initiative, expertise and dedication of the non-governmental community, and invites the Centre [Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat, now known as the Division for Social Policy and Development] to explore the feasibility of establishing a non-governmental advisory committee, funded by voluntary contributions, to assist the Secretariat in promoting the United Nations Principles for Older Persons and in implementing the Plan of Action and the target strategies

RL 399 ID 22933

Declares the further continuation of colonialism in all its forms and manifestations a crime which constitutes a violation of the Charter of the United Nations, the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples and the principles of international law; *Reaffirms* the inherent right of colonial peoples to struggle by all necessary means at their disposal against colonial Powers which suppress their aspiration for freedom and independence; *Adopts* the following programme of action to assist in the full implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples: ...

Annex III

Record Locator # 377 Mandate ID 5945¹

1. Basic Mandate information

- Resolution: 58 (I), adopted 14 December 1946
- Resolution title: Transfer to the United Nations of the advisory social welfare functions of UNRRA (United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration)
- Mandating text: (A) Authorizes the Secretary-General: 1. In consultation with the Economic and Social Council, to make provision, with the co-operation of the specialized agencies where appropriate, for the continuance of the urgent and important advisory functions in the field of social welfare carried on by UNRRA, and, for this purpose, 2. to include in the budget of the United Nations for the 1947 the funds necessary for the assumption of the following functions, all of which are necessary for the accomplishment of an effective programme: (a), (b), (c) and (d) [see text of the resolution].
- Implementing entity: DESA, the five Regional Commissions (ECA, ECE, ECLAC, ESCAP, ESCWA), UNCTAD, UNODC, UN-Habitat, OCHA, and OHCHR.

2. Status and description of implementation

The activities under this mandate are ongoing. Please see description below.

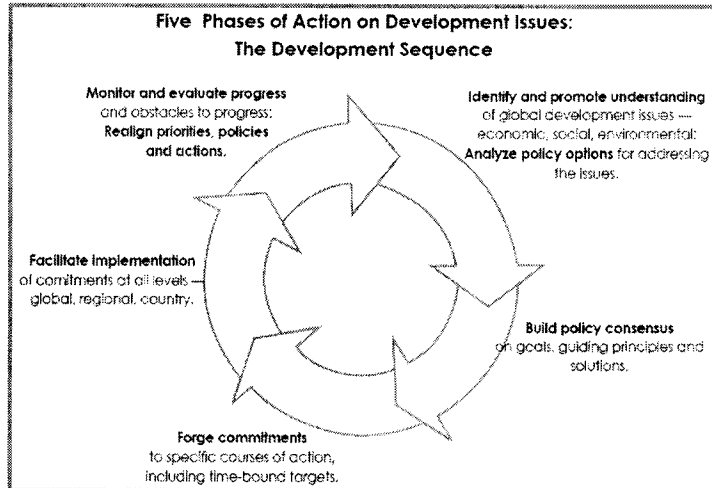
1. Through the transfer of knowledge and expertise, the Regular Programme of Technical Cooperation (RPTC) serves to support developing countries, least-developed countries, countries with economies in transition, and countries emerging from conflict in their capacity-building efforts geared towards achieving internationally-agreed development goals and the outcomes of UN conferences and summits (see Proposed Programme Budget for the Biennium 2006-07, A/60/6 Sect 22).
2. Member States have used RPTC to meet their needs for specialized advice and training in areas such as statistics, population, social development, advancement of women, sustainable development and the environment, public administration, trade and development, human settlements, humanitarian assistance, human rights, and drugs and crime.
3. RPTC plays a role in the five interlinked phases of UN work on development issues (see diagram below): (i) promoting understanding; (ii) building policy consensus, (iii) forging

¹ This note provides an overview of the Regular Programme of Technical Cooperation, covering its scope, operating modalities, relationship to other UN technical cooperation programmes, comparative advantage, funding and future direction. This note includes substantive input and views provided by RPTC implementing entities.

commitments/helping to reach agreement, (iv) facilitating implementation of commitments, and (v) evaluating progress and obstacles, which can lead to new or renewed priorities and programmes.

4. RPTC enables the UN to offer its Member States access to the broad and diverse professional expertise, technical competence, and knowledge that is available in the RPTC implementing entities: DESA, the five Regional Commissions, UNCTAD, UNODC, UN-Habitat, OCHA, and OHCHR. The Regional Commissions execute over 50 percent of the RPTC resources.

5. The activities undertaken range from (a) short-term advisory services (via regional and inter-regional advisers, short-term experts, and regular budget staff) to (b) training via capacity building workshops/seminars and individual fellowships to (c) field projects.



6. RPTC advisers operate as an interface between the countries and implementing entities, facilitating country-level access to the knowledge and expertise of the Organization. The advisers also act as a conduit of ongoing information exchange in the sectoral areas noted above, and promote activities that often have international, regional or sub-regional components which allow countries to learn from one another and benefit from each other's experiences.
7. Interventions funded by RPTC are small scale, demand driven, and focused, targeting specific elements of Member States' requirements to meet international commitments arising from the outcome of UN conferences and summits. The programme provides the operative flexibility for implementing entities to respond to urgent, unanticipated needs of developing countries, in a rapid-response capacity that is not provided for in any other section of the regular budget biennial workplan. Activities under RPTC often have a multiplier effect, on many occasions working to mobilize extra-budgetary funding to respond to development needs on a larger scale.
8. RPTC was established as a separate section of the UN's regular budget in order to ensure a dedicated focus and capacity of the Organization to meet the development needs of its Member States. The funds are shared among the 11 implementing entities and complement the funding available from their regular budgets.
9. During the biennium 2002-2003 and with a total of USD42.7 million, RPTC funded 1,347 advisory missions, 249 workshops/seminars attended by 4,168 participants, 49 fellowships and 14 field projects. An even larger set of activities was implemented with extra-budgetary resources mobilized through the RPTC. The results achieved directly under RPTC thus represented only a part of the programme's overall impact on development results. This trend has continued in the subsequent biennia (see Programme Performance Report 2004/2005 A/61/64). For the 2006-2007 biennium, the RPTC has an estimated allocation of USD44.8 million.

3. Current activities/output

Please see description and analysis in point 5, Main achievements and challenges, below.

4. Past activities/output

Please see description and analysis in point 5, Main achievements and challenges, below.

5. Main achievements and challenges

10. In its resolution 59/250, the General Assembly encouraged Specialized Agencies, the Regional Commissions and UN entities with no country representation or limited country-level presence to contribute their accumulated analytical and normative experience in order to enable the use of all capacities available within the UN system. RPTC is thus a vehicle for UN Secretariat entities to bring these experiences to bear at the field level as part of system-wide knowledge management, coherence and overall maximization of positive impact on development results.
11. Typically, in areas that fall outside of the regular activities or expertise of UN Funds, Programmes and Specialized Agencies, RPTC provides important operational linkages between the normative and analytical expertise existing in the UN entities on the one hand, and the critical needs of Member States on the other. RPTC also provides catalytic interventions that may eventually develop into comprehensive programmatic frameworks between normative and operational entities of the UN system. Similarly, RPTC offers the UN system a way to fill the gaps created by bilateral donors' earmarking funds according to their own policy and programmatic priorities.
12. In response to GA resolution 58/270, the Secretariat completed in 2004 comprehensive review of RPTC. The resulting report of the Secretary-General (A/59/397) discussed the operations of RPTC and the Development Account and generated a number of specific proposals regarding the possible improvement of the programme.
13. The report A/59/397 examined the need for better programming, greater accountability and better and more detailed reporting on the RPTC's activities, outcomes, and use of funds. In particular, the report said that centralized reporting to the GA on the activities and results achieved by RPTC as a whole "presents the most substantive challenge" and that the RPTC has not been subject to any audit or evaluation activities. This gap has partly been addressed by including Section 23 on RPTC in the most recent biennial Programme Performance Report for 2006-07 that summarizes information on accomplishments. However, measures for additional oversight should be taken, including those suggested in paragraph 21 below.
14. The report recommended that the statement of programme objective be reviewed, since it is "stated in such a general way that it fails to provide any real sense of the unique role that the programme is intended to fill" and doing so "should help to build better understanding and support for it." It also stated that the programme could benefit from a "single approval of the overall programme level" which must be accompanied by information to the General Assembly on how the funds are actually used.

15. While the experience with advisors varies from one implementing entity to the other, the report indicated that some entities are “using almost their entire regular programme of technical cooperation allocation for salaries alone,” and this raises the question of why training constitutes such a small part of the disbursements and how, if they are not traveling to the field, advisors are helping developing country clients in the field. Some of the entities, however, do have balanced disbursement patterns between salaries, travel and training. Annex V of the report tackles extensively the number of concerns expressed on the use of advisors.
16. The report A/59/397 as a whole was debated in the Fifth Committee and considered by the ACABQ, and its assessments were generally met with endorsement by delegations. No formal decision, however, has yet been taken by the intergovernmental process.
17. Meanwhile, within its authority, the Secretariat and the implementing entities have been implementing several of the report’s proposals that are within their purview, including by reporting on the RPTC in the Programme Performance Report (PPR) for 2004-2005 and through the use of websites.
18. Section 23 of the Programme Performance Report for 2004-2005 (A/61/64) highlights, among other things, the main achievements of the RPTC. This section presents, for the first time, summarized information on the activities and accomplishments of RPTC, helping to meet some of the requirements for improved reporting to the General Assembly. Using benchmarks developed by programme managers, the analysis in the PPR illustrates the development impacts achieved across the specific areas of responsibility of the implementing entities. The Secretary-General’s budget proposal on RPTC for the period 2006-2007 employs the results-based budgeting format and defines the programme’s priorities. In this context, each participating entity formulated its objective and expected accomplishments and, under each relevant subprogramme, indicated the focus of activities to be undertaken.
19. Transparency of the RPTC’s activities will be enhanced through online and web-based information sharing tools, such as guidelines and websites, in a way that is similar to the policies and procedures instituted under the Development Account, and this will serve particularly to facilitate progress reporting and monitoring.
20. Greater effectiveness, efficiency and development impact of RPTC could likely be achieved as soon as the beginning of the next budget period, 2008-2009, should the General Assembly decide to endorse specific measures aimed at improving the programme, including by updating its mandate in light of current technical cooperation practices and the development needs of Member States and in line with the mandates of the implementing entities, as well as by acting on other recommendations made on improving coherence and coordination.
21. All implementing entities are determined to improve the management and accountability, monitoring, and reporting of the RPTC. This could be achieved effectively through 1) clarifying and updating the objective and criteria of the RPTC; 2) improving the results-based management, monitoring and reporting mechanisms, as well as formally designating the Executive Heads of each implementing entity as programme managers who would be directly accountable; 3) designating a focal point to coordinate and channel the RPTC consolidated reporting to the General Assembly; and 4) maintaining the RPTC and the Development Account as separate budget sections.

22. The SG's report A/59/397 recommended the programme's objective and criteria be updated and clarified, since they were agreed 25 years ago. This was addressed in the context of the approval of the Programme Budget 2006-07. The objective and criteria will continue to be enhanced, refined and strengthened.
23. Improving results-based management, as well as the monitoring and reporting mechanisms of the RPTC, should start with consistently applying the logical framework used within the Secretariat in the other budget sections. The programme managers, the Executive Heads of the implementing entities, would be directly accountable for the results achieved.
24. The lack of an overall programme coordinator has resulted in "very limited monitoring of the substantive activities" (A/59/397) of RPTC and has affected accountability at the global level. Many of the implementing entities say they are eager to "tell the story" of their work but they do not currently have the proper channels to report at the global level on their activities and the use of funds and therefore, this results in perceived lack of proper assessment and oversight by the Member States. This gap could be addressed by designating a coordinator for coherent and coordinated reporting to the General Assembly on activities, performance and outcomes of the RPTC; jointly developing uniform guidelines among the implementing entities on reporting; facilitating thematic evaluations across entities when needed, among other functions.
25. Given the different nature, purposes, and focus of the RPTC and the Development Account, maintaining RPTC funding and operations separate from the Account will preserve the gains in delivery of services through RPTC decentralized management and implementation, and ensure the required flexibility to respond to unanticipated and urgent demands from the Member States.
26. If these measures are agreed, an audit could be conducted after a few years of implementing them to ensure that they are effective in strengthening the RPTC,.

6. Related resolutions (resolutions that reaffirm, update, complement, add, alter, renew, or terminate this mandate)

Establishment of RPTC

GA resolution 200 (III) (1948)

(More precise reference of RPTC: (a) Organization of teams for advising governments on economic development programs - (b) Training of experts from under-developed countries - (c) Training of technicians from under-developed countries - (d) Organization of seminars on specific economical problems and of an exchange platform concerning technical problems of economic development)

Expansion of RPTC

ECOSOC resolution 492 (XVI) (1953)

(A public administration component was added)

GA resolution 926 (X) of (1955)

(Human rights component was established by the GA)

GA resolution 2803 (XXVI) of (1971)

(Regional advisory services component was added)

Programming and budgetary procedures for RPTC

GA resolution 2514 (XXIV) of (1969)

(The authority to approve individual projects was delegated from ECOSOC to the SG. It was further delegated to heads of implementing offices to increase flexibility in responding to current requests of services.)

Reporting

ECOSOC resolution 2029 (XX) (1965)

(Establishment of UNDP Governing Council which should have provided general policy guidance and direction for UNDP as well as for the RPTC. They should have submitted annual reports and recommendations to ECOSOC.)

UNDP decision 80/42 (1980)

(The UNDP Governing Council agreed that DTCD (Department of Technical Cooperation for Development) would act as focal point for preparing consolidated reports on RPTC)

GA resolution 52/12 (1997)

(Creation of DESA by GA with the function to, inter alia, of "overseeing the overall coordination of Technical Cooperation activities in order to ensure continuity and policy consistency in the transition ... to the integrated approach of DESA for the provision of policy advisory services to Governments.")

Review of RPTC

GA resolution 58/270 (2004)

(Call for a comprehensive review of the RPTC)

7. Significant and recent related documents

- Secretary-General's report A/58/382, which addressed various issues relating to the roles and responsibilities for technical cooperation, including funding, and analyzed the impact of the division of labour among the various UN entities involved
- The ACABQ report A/58/7 on the proposed programme budget for 2004-2005, which made similar suggestions on the RPTC as were made in A/58/382.
- Secretary-General's Report A/59/397, which undertook a comprehensive review of the programme and presented proposals to the GA to enhance coordination while maintaining the programme's value added of decentralization and flexibility
- The Secretary-General's report on mandate review, A/60/733, paragraph 79.
- Programme Performance Report 2004/2005 (A/61/64), Section 23

Record Locator # 377
Mandate ID 5945²

Annex to note of 8 September 2006

1. Transparency, accountability and effectiveness

(a) What further enhancements does the Secretariat see to the objectives and criteria of the RPTC (see para 22)?

In line with recommendations that were made in paragraph 98 of the Secretary-General's report A/59/397, the Secretariat substantially revised the objectives and criteria of the RPTC for the 2006-07 programme budget (A/60/6 Sect. 22 para 22.10) which was approved by the Member States in A/RES/60/247. Recent enhancements also included specific objectives at the level of the individual implementing entities. Further enhancements will be made for the coming biennium (2008-09) including through developing overall guidelines to ensure coherence in the planning and use of RPTC funds and by extending the logical framework to all 52 sub programmes involved.

A working group from DESA and the regional commissions has been established for making these enhancements, in consultation with all the implementing entities, and for ensuring that they be implemented consistently and uniformly throughout all of the RPTC entities. Implementing these measures would be greatly supported by the designation of a coordinator for the RPTC, along the lines suggested in the previous note on the RPTC provided to the working group (paragraphs 21 and 24).

(b) How can the RPTC avoid duplication with other UN entities that perform similar functions with high levels of expertise? What unique contributions and comparative advantages can the RPTC provide to developing countries?

Given that RPTC is closely-linked and complementary to the non-RPTC funded programmes of work of implementing entities and of other UN entities, avoiding duplication can be ensured by proper role sharing and coordination. In this regard, the Secretariat works to ensure coherence and non-duplication of RPTC funded activities with other UN development work through four major mechanisms and modalities.

First is through the Executive Committee on Economic and Social Affairs (EC-ESA),

² In response to the request of 19 October 2006 to the Secretariat by the co-chairs of the informal Working Group on mandate review, this note provides answers to the additional questions regarding mandate Record Locator number 377 on the Regular Programme of Technical Cooperation (RPTC). This note is intended to be an annex to the original note to the Working Group on the RPTC, circulated by the co-chairs on 8 September 2006. As with the previous note, the present note includes substantive input and views provided by all of the RPTC implementing entities.

which includes the participation of the core implementing entities of the RPTC.³ EC-ESA meets twice or three times a year at the Principals' level, every three months at the Deputy-Principals' level, or as often as necessary if priorities on the table so require. The focus of EC-ESA is to coordinate programming among the participating entities and increase programmatic coherence to avoid duplication. Programmatic coordination within EC-ESA happens particularly through the work of its ten thematic clusters.⁴ This contributes, for example, to a better division of labor and complementarities between DESA and the Regional Commissions in all substantive areas under their responsibility. The follow-up and support to the implementation of commitments undertaken in the global conferences is a case in point where the regional commissions bring regional perspectives to the global level and vice versa. There is still much potential in better using the thematic clusters established under EC-ESA in terms of integrating operational aspects and avoiding duplication. To facilitate a more effective sharing of information between implementing entities on activities of the RPTC, including by clusters, a website is being finalized that focuses specifically on the RPTC, which will also provide Member States with access to details on the programme activities and their implementation.

Second is through the emerging interface between EC-ESA and the UN Development Group (UNDG)⁵. Such coordination between EC-ESA and UNDG serves to deepen awareness by all participants of the programmes, projects, and operational practices that are occurring at the country level that contribute to coherence, better division of labour, and better use of resources. One example of such an interface is the UNDG Task Team on Non-Resident Agencies (NRAs), a UNDG working group that included all members of EC-ESA and that carried out an inventory of tools, mechanisms, challenges and opportunities to enhance the participation of Non-Resident Agencies in UN country level development activities. The Task Team further developed an Implementation Plan to bring the expertise and capacities of the NRAs to the country level while ensuring coherence and efficiency of UN activities in country development work. The Plan has been most recently endorsed by the UNDG and its pilot phase of the Implementation Plan will be launched in 2007.

Third is through improved information exchange on capacity building work being undertaken at the country-level by UN departments, funds, programmes, and specialized

³ The participating entities of EC-ESA are: UN-DESA, the five Regional Commissions, OHCHR, UNCTAD, UN-Habitat, and UNODC, as well as UNDP, UNEP, UNU, UNITAR, INSTRAW, UNRISD, OHRLLS (Office of the High Representative for the LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS), and OSAA (Office of the Special Adviser on Africa).

⁴ The thematic clusters are the basis of the analytical framework used by EC-ESA to guide its work. The clusters relate to macroeconomics and finance, trade, sustainable development and human settlements, social development and social integration, advancement of women, countries in special situations, governance and institution-building, science and technology, human rights, statistics, and population.

⁵ The UNDG membership comprises 28 entities, plus five observers. The members are UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, WFP, UNHCHR, UNIFEM, UNOPS, UNAIDS, UN-Habitat, UNODC, WHO, IFAD, UNCTAD, UNESCO, FAO, UNIDO, ILO, UNEP, UNHCR, UNWTO (World Tourism Organization), WMO (World Meteorological Organization), ITU (International Telecommunications Union), the Regional Commissions, DESA, DPI, OHRLLS, OSAA, and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children in Armed Conflict. The five observers are the World Bank, UNFIP, OCHA, the Secretary-General's Spokesman and the Director of the Office of the Deputy Secretary-General.

agencies. This has been done particularly through existing inter-agency coordination mechanisms, such as the regional coordination meetings convened by the regional commissions pursuant to ECOSOC resolution 1998/46, Annex III, the Common Country Assessment (CCA)/the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), as well as through principles promoted through the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review (TCPR) bodies and the Paris Declaration, to create a high level of awareness that supports better management decisions.

Fourth is through ongoing efforts to increase understanding by UN entities of the capacity-building efforts of Bretton Woods Institutions, OECD, a host of regional organizations, particularly regional development banks and the NGO community, which has significant potential to help place UN technical cooperation efforts in a broader context of global development work.

Regarding the Programme's unique features and comparative advantages, the RPTC originated in 1946 as a separate section of the UN's regular budget in order to ensure a dedicated focus and capacity of the Organization to meet the development needs of its Member States. The RPTC offers Member States access to diverse expertise, technical competence, and knowledge available in the global and regional arms of the UN development system. RPTC activities are also specifically oriented to assist developing countries to assess and to meet their obligations under a range of international commitments and agreements—including to the MDGs and other development goals—made through intergovernmental processes directly supported by the work of the UN Secretariat. Through training and technical assistance, these activities focus particularly on ways to meet the practical challenges of putting commitments and policies into effect. Some examples include interventions to assist Member States to meet their commitments under CEDAW; to assist in preparatory processes for trade discussions (WTO Ministerial Conferences and Doha round negotiations)⁶; to enhance skills in new statistical methodologies approved by the UN Statistical Commission; and to support the implementation of norms, standards, and policy guidelines developed through the regional commissions' intergovernmental processes, as well as major regional initiatives (e.g. NEPAD in Africa).

The RPTC also provides funding for small interventions that can become catalysts for broader collaboration between normative and operational entities of the UN system, thus promoting the linkages between the normative, analytical and operational capacities of the UN entities. Similarly, the RPTC offers the UN system a way to fill the gaps created by bilateral donors' earmarking funds according to their own policy and programmatic priorities. Furthermore, it affords operative flexibility for entities to respond rapidly to new and unanticipated needs of Member States. RPTC also supplements the work of UN funds and programmes, and specialized agencies by fillings gaps in areas which fall outside the priorities or expertise of the funds and programmes and the specialized entities. A case in point is the regional and sub-regional perspectives provided by the regional commissions to the CCA/UNDAF processes at the country level, and in areas of trans-boundary nature like infrastructure development, including energy, transport and information communications technology.

Additional measures for improved coordination, transparency, and reporting should be

⁶ On trade facilitation for example, the regional commissions collaborate with UNCTAD in capacity-building efforts to the countries of their respective regions.

taken to ensure duplication of efforts does not occur. The suggestions outlined in paragraphs 21-26 of the previous note to the Working Group on the RPTC would be helpful in this regard.

- (c) **Who determines the amount of the RPTC resources to allocate to the implementing entities in the context of the budget fascicle? Who monitors and is accountable for the activities undertaken pursuant to the RPTC funds (including at the sub-programme level)?**

RPTC resources are allocated to the implementing entities according to a series of legislative decisions of the Member States. The initial allocation of resources was set by the General Assembly in 1946. Additional appropriations have been approved by subsequent legislation. For example, the public administration component was added by ECOSOC resolution 492 B (XVI) of 4 August 1953; the human rights component by General Assembly resolution 926 (X) of 14 December 1955; and the regional advisory services component by General Assembly resolution 2803 (XXVI) of 14 December 1971, in which the Assembly earmarked amounts for regional and subregional advisory services. In 1993, in its resolution 47/212B, the Assembly, approved a redistribution of resources from headquarters departments to the regional commissions.

Regarding accountability and monitoring of activities, as indicated in paragraphs 21 and 23 of the earlier note, direct accountability for the activities undertaken and the results achieved lies with the Executive Heads of the implementing entities. This could be further improved through results-based management, reporting mechanisms, and the formal designation of the Executive Heads as programme managers to be directly held accountable for results achieved.

Monitoring and reporting functions were detailed in the 2004 report of the Secretary General (A/59/397) on the RPTC, and various reporting options were suggested to improve monitoring and accountability. Since then some of these measures have been acted on where possible, such as including the RPTC in the Programme Performance Report (PPR) for the 2004-05 biennium of the Secretariat. RPTC implementing entities also report on the delivery of technical cooperation activities to their respective governing bodies (for example, the functional and regional commissions and committees). However, the preparation of a dedicated centralized report on the programme to the General Assembly would be desirable, as proposed in paragraphs 13 and 24 of the previous note to the working group on the RPTC. Doing so requires guidance from Member States, including guidance on how this report should be prepared and coordinated as, for example, through a coordinator as suggested in paragraphs 21 and 24 of the previous note.

2. Use of Advisors

- (d) **Para. 15 gives a clear expression to a number of concerns about the use of advisors, but it does not make proposals/suggestions as to how to address them.**

Ensuring that Member States have information and knowledge about the activities of the advisors, through enhanced reporting, is important to addressing any concerns that may arise about them. Since the report A/59/397, some of the implementing entities have taken a number

of steps to improve internal practices with respect to the use of interregional and regional advisors under the RPTC. Furthermore, some of the RPTC entities have committed to review regularly and update their advisory capacities, normally on a five-year cycle or less, in order to ensure acquisition of new skills and knowledge to respond to changing needs. Flexible provision for rapid response to engaging short-term specialized advisors has also been provided. Improvements in result-based advisors' work plans have been required, as has the consistent use of evaluation mechanisms, such as the UN Performance Appraisal System (PAS). Increased priority has been attributed to coordination of advisors' activities with UN entities at the regional and country levels through, inter alia, common country programming processes, such as UNDAF. Such "best practices" should be emulated in different subprogrammes of the RPTC.

(e) Are there any mechanisms to ensure that the RPTC is demand rather than supply driven?

The technical cooperation activities of the Secretariat are oriented to respond to needs expressed by Member States, and by regional/sub-regional cooperation groupings, either upon a State's request or as directed by the intergovernmental process. Demands are made through: direct requests from Member States for specific advice and interventions; guidance provided by governing bodies (functional and regional commissions, ECOSOC, committees of the GA); and priority needs identified in outcome documents of UN global conferences and summits. Information provided by the Secretariat to the ACABQ indicated that, during the 2002/2003 biennium, the programme implemented 1,659 activities, of which 1,058 (63.8%) were driven by direct expression of demand; 341 (20.6%) were designed to assist Member States in better understanding their commitments arising from global conferences outcomes; and 260 (15.7%) were initiated by the implementing entities. It is also worth noting that the RPTC plays a catalytic and intermediary role that can make the regular work programmes of the implementing entities more demand-driven. For example, through RPTC advisory services, the real needs and opportunities for fuller assistance programmes are identified together with the beneficiary countries.

(f) Who monitors advisors? Do any advisors carry out staff functions?

The advisors' reporting lines are defined in their individual job descriptions. Their performance is assessed by Directors and sometimes by executive management, including the Executive Heads of the implementing entities, within the context of the UN Performance Appraisal System (PAS). The job descriptions define the functions, and annual work plans define specific tasks to be executed by the advisers, in line with the established objectives of RPTC. At the regional level, various forms of executive intergovernmental bodies of Member States also assess the programme on advisory services in the regional commissions. By virtue of their appointments under the 200 Series Staff Rules, advisers are not allowed to perform any line functions, including responsibilities for certifying, approving, or managing. However, practice in the past has varied across the entities and some entities have adjusted their use of advisors in response to previous findings. Furthermore, some advisors, given their broad knowledge and excellent awareness of country needs, are occasionally requested to contribute their expert advice and inputs to the preparation of reports of the Secretary-General that are provided to the Member States. Such inputs ensure that situation and realities in the field are accurately reflected and

brought to the attention of Member States. As indicated in A/59/397, in some cases, when core posts cannot be obtained, advisors may perform functions that fill the gaps in meeting the needs of the regular programme of work which would normally be done by regular staff. There is sometimes a lack of clarity of what are the functions that should be performed by advisors and whether advisors can perform functions other than direct provision of advisory services. The guidelines that the working group is preparing should clarify the roles and functions of advisors to address this issue.

(g) Who evaluates the reported “achievements” in the Programme Performance Report? Are these activities subject to audit? If so, by what entity are these audits undertaken and under what circumstances (see para 24)? Do implementing agencies apply results based budgeting to these funds (see para 23)?

As noted in 1c above, reporting on the achievements of the programme was reflected for the first time in the 2004/2005 Programme Performance Report (PPR). This submission, which was coordinated by DESA, was guided by Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation (ST/SGB/2000/8) which provides detailed procedures in rule 106.1 on the performance reporting⁷. During its preparation, the information submitted by the programme managers was reviewed by the Evaluation Section of OIOS, with secondary reviews and consultations held between that office and the relevant implementing entity. The 2004/2005 PPR set the framework for future reporting, which will be evaluated in line with the Methods of Evaluation referred to above. Independent evaluation is not undertaken in the framework of the PPR; therefore, as suggested in the previous note on the RPTC, evaluation should take place and facilitated through a coordinator.

Since 2004/2005 RPTC has been programmed using the results-based budgeting methodology, that is, the logical framework being applied initially to the overall programme and in 2006/2007, at the level of implementing entities. The extension of the logical frameworks to the level of the subprogrammes in 2008/2009 will further strengthen results-based approach to utilizing these funds. Most implementing entities have been consistently using results-based budgeting in programming and assessing their performance.

RPTC as a whole has not been the subject of a distinct OIOS review, although most programme audits undertaken by OIOS on specific implementing entities may cover activities related to technical cooperation, including RPTC.

As outlined in paragraph 26 of the previous note on the RPTC, after additional transparency, coordination, and reporting measures are taken per paragraphs 21-15 of that note, an audit should be conducted to ensure the proper functioning and performance of the RPTC.

⁷ This states that: (b) Programme performance shall be reported in accordance with the following procedures: (i) Heads of departments and offices shall submit biennial programme performance reports for their departments at such time and in such detail as the Secretary-General may prescribe; (ii) The Central Monitoring and Inspection Unit shall be responsible for ascertaining programme delivery and preparing the related report to the General Assembly; (c) The Audit and Management Consulting Division shall conduct ad hoc detailed audits of output delivery.

Furthermore, if a coordinator is appointed, this could facilitate evaluations of the RPTC activities.

- (h) How has the GA resolution that stressed for the use of expertise from recipient countries been implemented as commented by the ACABQ in its report A/58/7 (para. V.91)?**

The ACABQ report A/58/7 (para. V.91) emphasized the need to use expertise from recipient countries, which is an important requirement set by the General Assembly resolution, but this resolution referred to the Development Account. Even as this did not apply specifically to the RPTC, in the delivery of technical cooperation activities, RPTC entities do rely extensively on local expertise, both in terms of advisory capacity and short-term expertise. Local experts contribute to a greater understanding of country level issues and clarify and explain the needs and opportunities for South-South cooperation.

With regard to the advisory capacity in implementing entities, the regional commissions primarily recruit advisors from their respective regions, and the global entities have advisors from both developed and developing countries, while recruitment of advisors from developing countries is particularly encouraged.