

30 September 2005

Excellency,

In my statement at the end of the General Debate on 23 September I said I would write to you regarding follow-up and implementation of the 2005 World Summit Outcome.

My plans for this work are set out below. They are based on the views expressed at the World Summit and General Debate, and on those which have been communicated to me in recent days. I am grateful to all of you for your contributions.

I would like to begin by reflecting some of your general comments and observations on the way ahead:

- First, I sense an eagerness to seize this opportunity to reassert the relevance and importance of the United Nations – and the General Assembly in particular – to the issues at the top of the international agenda.
- Second, there is a recognition that it is by our actions on implementation that the Summit will be judged. For the Summit to be seen as a success, we will need to work together to reach agreements that deliver tangible outcomes to the peoples of the world.

All the Permanent Representatives
to the United Nations
New York

- Third, there is a broadly held desire to move quickly, so that the political energy generated through the Outcome Document, the Summit and the General Debate is not lost. The ongoing biennium budget process also gives us reason to deal expeditiously with issues with financial implications.
- Fourth, there is a determination that the negotiations on Summit follow-up must take place here in New York amongst Member States.
- Fifth, there is emphasis placed on the need for our work to be conducted in a manner which is fair, transparent and inclusive, but also efficient and practical. We are now familiar with each others' starting positions on the issues that confront us, and I would hope that we can now concentrate on resolving the outstanding points. We should also ensure that we hear the voices of all those – including UN agencies and NGOs – who can bring the realities of the field into our discussions.

I trust that we will all be able to work with these points in mind in the months ahead.

The Outcome Document is the primary basis of our work. It was agreed as a whole after a long process of consultation and negotiation. It is my hope that our discussions will now focus on implementation of each item on its own merits and in a manner most conducive to progress.

The Document should not set a limit on our ambitions; rather it should be a beachhead from which we launch ourselves forward. We should recognize that it does not incorporate all that many of you wanted. There are some areas which the Document does not address in detail where many would – rightly – like to see progress during the 60th session. One such area is disarmament and non-proliferation, on which I would encourage new and creative thinking in all appropriate fora.

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Let me now turn to the areas where Member States wish the President to take a lead.

The issue that remains of the utmost importance is development. It is imperative that we heed the call for the political momentum on development to be maintained and strengthened. In particular, the United Nations must play its part in ensuring that the international community has in place appropriate ways and means to achieve the timely and full realization of the Millennium Development Goals.

We must keep development high on the agenda of the General Assembly during this Session. Our ongoing work includes matters such as NEPAD, HIV/AIDS, migration and the arrangements for reviewing the implementation of the Monterrey Consensus. I also plan to hold a thematic debate related to development.

ECOSOC will have an important role in promoting and monitoring implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. In the Outcome Document we envisaged giving ECOSOC a number of specific new functions. The General Assembly needs to agree on the details of implementation of these functions as soon as possible. This will enable the Council to implement the changes at its next substantive session in 2006.

The Outcome Document also invited the Secretariat to undertake work on system-wide coherence this year, with the aim of improving the way UN development, humanitarian and environment activities are managed and coordinated. There is work that both the General Assembly and the Secretary-General will need to take forward in a timely manner. In a world of unabating natural and man-made disasters, the General Assembly will need to take early action on the improvement of humanitarian funding through the expansion of the Central Emergency Revolving Fund.

There is widespread recognition that the Peacebuilding Commission must be an area of work we focus on with urgency. The Outcome Document stipulates that the Commission should begin its work no later than 31 December 2005. For this to be possible, we should aim to conclude our negotiations by early November.

There is broad agreement that there is only a small number of issues remaining to be resolved. I intend to begin informal consultations of the plenary in the coming days with the objective of agreeing on the elements necessary for bringing the Peace Building Commission into operation. I

intend to appoint two co-chairs to assist me in conducting these inter-governmental negotiations.

There is also broad agreement that work on the Human Rights Council should begin promptly. In part this is a recognition of the range and importance of the issues which need to be discussed. I have also been reminded that there are practical and budgetary reasons to strive for agreement before the end of the year.

With this in mind, I will shortly begin informal consultations of the plenary assisted by two co-chairs. We need to start off by identifying the issues on which there is a need to find agreement. I intend to provide you with such a basis for our work. After a short period of consultations among Member States, more intense negotiations will have to follow before a draft resolution can be brought before the General Assembly.

There is widespread recognition that we should tackle the important and wide-ranging agenda of management reform with urgency and determination, not least because of the relevance of these discussions to the ongoing budget process. We will need to have open and transparent inter-governmental discussions on these issues. On much of this agenda, we have committed ourselves to take decisions by the end of March 2006. To achieve this, the Secretariat will need to begin providing us with appropriate inputs to our discussions at the earliest opportunity in order to avoid an overloaded agenda in February and March. I would also encourage the General Assembly to take as many decisions as possible well in advance of 31 March.

There is a mandate in the Outcome Document for us to conclude a comprehensive convention on international terrorism. Our universal abhorrence of terrorism generated a momentum at the Summit which we must harness to finalize the convention before the end of the year. The Chair of the Sixth Committee intends to give this priority in his work programme.

We will also need to give early attention to the development of a counter-terrorism strategy. I will revert on this matter at the appropriate time.

The Outcome Document gives the United Nations direction on the responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic

cleansing and crimes against humanity. We must build on this considerable achievement.

The Outcome Document requested the General Assembly to review progress on Security Council reform by the end of 2005. I will, for my part, be ready to listen to all interested parties regarding the continued efforts to move this important issue forward.

We will also need to take action during this session to bring into effect the Charter amendments outlined in paragraphs 176 and 177 of the Outcome Document.

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I realize that this plan constitutes an ambitious agenda. But I believe it reflects the spirit of the contributions I have received from Member States. I trust that we can use it as the basis by which we achieve concrete results.

I trust also that I will be able to count on your personal involvement in these important discussions over the coming weeks and months. I intend to keep implementation of the Outcome Document under close review and to take stock of progress at regular intervals.

I am calling an informal meeting of the plenary on Tuesday 4 October at 3.00 pm in order to involve all Member States in the finalization of our plans. I am confident that substantive work on follow-up will proceed very quickly thereafter.

I will be writing to you again during the month of October on the issue of General Assembly revitalization. It is my view, however, that timely and effective implementation of the 2005 World Summit outcome through our common efforts would be a major contribution to revitalizing the central body of the United Nations.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Jan Eliasson