

## Environment and human settlements

In 2007, the United Nations and the international community continued to work towards protecting the environment through legally binding instruments and the activities of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

The twenty-fourth session of the UNEP Governing Council/eighth Global Ministerial Environment Forum discussed the emerging policy themes of globalization and the environment and UN reform, and adopted the updated UNEP water policy and strategy for the period 2007-2012. The Governing Council also adopted decisions on, among other issues, international environmental governance; chemicals and waste management; support to Africa in environmental management and protection; and environmental education.

During the year, UNEP published the fourth *Global Environment Outlook* report, which assessed the state of the environment and presented policy options to address present and emerging environmental issues.

In September, the Secretary-General convened a high-level event on climate change to raise the profile of the issue among world leaders and build momentum for launching negotiations on a new international framework to address climate change; the event was the largest gathering of world leaders on climate change to date. The thirteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in Bali, Indonesia, in December, launched the Bali Action Plan, a comprehensive process to enable the full, effective and sustained implementation of the Convention through long-term cooperative action. The twenty-seventh session of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), held in Valencia, Spain, in November, finalized the IPCC Fourth Assessment Report, which stated, among other findings, that climate system warming was unequivocal, and that many natural systems were being affected by regional climate changes. In December, the Nobel Prize in Peace 2007 was awarded jointly to IPCC and former United States Vice President Albert Arnold Gore, Jr., for their efforts related to the issue of climate change.

In April, the United Nations Forum on Forests adopted the text of the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests, and recommended a draft resolution for adoption by the Economic and Social Council containing the text of the instrument and a related draft resolution for adoption by the General Assembly. The Council adopted the draft resolution in October. The Assembly adopted the non-

legally binding instrument on all types of forests in December. It also declared the 2010-2020 period as the United Nations Decade for Deserts and the Fight against Desertification.

The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) continued to support the implementation of the 1996 Habitat Agenda and the Millennium Development Goals. The twenty-first session of the UN-Habitat Governing Council adopted the Medium-term Strategic and Institutional Plan for 2008-2013, which provided a road map for strengthening the role of UN-Habitat as a catalyst for the coordinated implementation of the Habitat Agenda.

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## Environment

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### UN Environment Programme

#### Governing Council/Ministerial Forum

The twenty-fourth session of the Governing Council (GC) of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), also serving as the eighth Global Ministerial Environment Forum (GMEF), was held in Nairobi from 5 to 9 February [A/62/25]. On 9 February [dec. 24/15], the Council decided to hold its tenth special session in February 2008 and its twenty-fifth session in Nairobi in February 2009, and approved the provisional agendas for those sessions.

Ministerial-level consultations (5-7 February) discussed the emerging policy themes of globalization and the environment (see p. 1051) and UN reform. GC/GMEF had before it a discussion paper on the 2006 report of the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on System-wide Coherence in the Areas of Development, Humanitarian Assistance and the Environment [YUN 2006, p. 1584], as well as the Panel Co-Chairs' summary of the informal consultative process on the institutional framework of UN environmental activities [UNEP/GC/24/11/Add.1] (see p. 1051). Also before GC/GMEF was a January note by the UNEP Executive Director [UNEP/GC/24/INF/20] on improving the modalities of the Council/Forum, particularly ministerial-level consultations; an executive summary of the status of implementation of the UNEP programme of work for the 2006-2007 biennium and the 2005 and 2006 deci-

sions of the Governing Council [UNEP/GC/24/INF/5]; and the policy statement by UNEP Executive Director Achim Steiner [UNEP/GC/24/2].

The Committee of the Whole [UNEP/GC/24/12] considered policy issues, including the state of the environment; coordination with civil society and the UN system (see p. 1055) on environmental matters; international environmental governance (see p. 1047); and the UNEP water policy and strategy (see p. 1049). It also considered the follow-up to the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development [YUN 2002, p. 821]: the contribution of UNEP to the fifteenth (2007) session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (see p. 1050); implementation of the UNEP programme of work and Governing Council decisions; and the UNEP budget and programme of work for the 2008-2009 biennium, the Environment Fund, and administrative and other budgetary matters.

On 27 July (**decision 2007/265**), the Economic and Social Council took note of the Governing Council's report on its twenty-fourth session.

The General Assembly took note of the report in resolution 62/195 of 19 December (see below).

### *Subsidiary body*

In 2007, the Committee of Permanent Representatives, which was open to representatives of all UN Member States and members of specialized agencies, held an extraordinary meeting on 18 January [UNEP/CPR/98/3] and regular meetings on 26 March [UNEP/CPR/99/2], 27 June [UNEP/CPR/100/2], 12 September [UNEP/CPR/101/2] and 5 December [UNEP/CPR/102/2]. The Committee discussed, among other matters, UNEP activities addressing the issue of mercury, the outcome of the twenty-fourth (2007) Governing Council session, and preparations for the Council's tenth special session in 2008.

The Council had before it a note by the UNEP Executive Director [UNEP/GC/24/INF/4] containing a report on the Committee's work from December 2004 to September 2006.

### **GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION**

On 19 December [meeting 78], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Second (Economic and Financial) Committee [A/62/419/Add.7 & Corr.1], adopted **resolution 62/195** without vote [agenda item 54 (g)].

### **Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its twenty-fourth session**

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolutions 2997(XXVII) of 15 December 1972, 53/242 of 28 July 1999, 56/193 of 21 December 2001, 57/251 of 20 December 2002, 58/209 of 23 Decem-

ber 2003, 59/226 of 22 December 2004, 60/189 of 22 December 2005 and 61/205 of 20 December 2006,

*Recalling also* the 2005 World Summit Outcome,

*Recognizing* the need for more efficient environmental activities in the United Nations system, and noting the need to consider possible options to address this need, including through the ongoing informal consultative process on the institutional framework for United Nations environmental activities,

*Taking into account* Agenda 21 and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development ("Johannesburg Plan of Implementation"),

*Reaffirming* the role of the United Nations Environment Programme as the principal body within the United Nations system in the field of environment, which should take into account, within its mandate, the sustainable development needs of developing countries, as well as countries with economies in transition,

*Emphasizing* that capacity-building and technology support to developing countries, as well as countries with economies in transition, in environment-related fields are important components of the work of the United Nations Environment Programme,

*Recognizing* the need to accelerate implementation of the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building, including through the provision of additional financial resources for that purpose,

*Noting* the proposal made by the Government of Egypt to establish an international centre for judicial capacity-building in environmental law in Cairo,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its twenty-fourth session and the decisions contained therein;

2. *Notes* the publication of the fourth *Global Environment Outlook: Environment for Development* by the United Nations Environment Programme;

3. *Decides* to declare the decade 2010-2020 as the United Nations Decade for Deserts and the Fight against Desertification, based on the recommendation of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme at its twenty-fourth session;

4. *Notes* that the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme at its twenty-fourth session discussed all components of the recommendations on international environmental governance as contained in its decision SS.VII/1, and also notes the continued discussions scheduled for the twenty-fifth session of the Governing Council;

5. *Stresses* the need to further advance and fully implement the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building, in this regard calls upon Governments and other stakeholders in a position to do so to provide the necessary funding and technical assistance, and also calls upon the United Nations Environment Programme to continue its efforts to fully implement the Bali Strategic Plan through strengthened cooperation with other stakeholders, based on their comparative advantages;

6. *Recognizes* the progress made so far in the implementation of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management, particularly through its Quick Start Programme, and invites Governments, regional economic integration organizations, intergovernmental organizations

and non-governmental organizations to engage actively and cooperate closely to support the Strategic Approach implementation activities of the United Nations Environment Programme, including the Quick Start Programme, including through providing adequate resources;

7. *Also recognizes* the global challenges posed by mercury, and, in this regard, notes the decision by the Governing Council to establish an ad hoc open-ended working group of Governments, regional economic integration organizations and stakeholder representatives to review and assess options for enhanced voluntary measures and new or existing international legal instruments, taking into account the terms of reference and the priorities set out in that decision, and urges Governments and other stakeholders to continue and enhance their support of the United Nations Environment Programme mercury programme partnerships through the provision of technical and financial resources;

8. *Emphasizes* the need to further enhance coordination and cooperation among the relevant United Nations organizations in the promotion of the environmental dimension of sustainable development, and welcomes the continued active participation of the United Nations Environment Programme in the United Nations Development Group and the Environment Management Group;

9. *Also emphasizes* the need for the United Nations Environment Programme, within its mandate, to further contribute to sustainable development programmes, the implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, at all levels, and to the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development, bearing in mind the mandate of the Commission;

10. *Welcomes* the continued efforts of the United Nations Environment Programme in shifting emphasis from delivery of outputs to achievement of results within its budget and programme of work, and also welcomes, in this regard, decision 24/9 of the Governing Council on the budget and programme of work of the United Nations Environment Programme;

11. *Notes* the request by the Governing Council to the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to prepare, in consultation with the Committee of Permanent Representatives, a medium-term strategy for the period 2010-2013;

12. *Recognizes* the need to strengthen the scientific base of the United Nations Environment Programme, as recommended by the intergovernmental consultation on strengthening the scientific base of the Programme, including the reinforcement of the scientific capacity of developing countries, as well as countries with economies in transition, in the area of protection of the environment, including through the provision of adequate financial resources;

13. *Notes* the ongoing consultations with a view to improving further the proposed Environment Watch strategy as an integral part of the wider strategic vision of the United Nations Environment Programme;

14. *Reiterates* the need for stable, adequate and predictable financial resources for the United Nations Environment Programme, and, in accordance with Assembly resolution 2997(XXVII), underlines the need to consider the adequate reflection of all administrative and management costs of the Programme in the context of the United Nations regular budget;

15. *Invites* Governments that are in a position to do so to increase their contributions to the Environment Fund;

16. *Emphasizes* the importance of the Nairobi headquarters location of the United Nations Environment Programme, and requests the Secretary-General to keep the resource needs of the Programme and the United Nations Office at Nairobi under review so as to permit the delivery, in an effective manner, of necessary services to the Programme and to the other United Nations organs and organizations in Nairobi;

17. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-third session, under the item entitled "Sustainable development", a sub-item entitled "Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its tenth special session".

## International environmental governance

In January [UNEP/GC/24/3], the UNEP Executive Director submitted to the Governing Council a report summarizing actions taken or proposed on international environmental governance. The report discussed the question of universal membership of GC/GMEF (see below); implementation of the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building (see below), adopted by the Council in 2005 [YUN 2005, p. 1135]; strengthening the UNEP scientific base, including consideration of the Environment Watch proposal (see p. 1056); strengthening UNEP financing (see p. 1058); multilateral environmental agreements (see p. 1059); and enhanced UN system coordination, including the work of the Environment Management Group, an inter-agency advisory group set up in 1999 [YUN 1999, p. 974].

**Governing Council action.** On 9 February, the Governing Council adopted a multi-part decision on the implementation of its 2002 decision [YUN 2002, p. 1032] on international environmental governance [A/62/25 (dec. 24/1)]. In the first part of the decision [dec. 24/1 I], the Council took note of General Assembly resolution 61/205 [YUN 2006, p. 1207], in which the Assembly decided to consider, if necessary, the issue of universal membership of GC/GMEF at its sixty-fourth (2009) session. In part VI of the decision [dec. 24/1 VI], the Council requested the Executive Director to continue to promote coordination on environmental activities across the UN system through the work of the Environment Management Group.

## Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building

On 9 February [dec. 24/1 II], the Governing Council, having considered the 2006 report of the Executive Director [YUN 2006, p. 1208] on measures taken for the implementation of the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building, adopted by the

Council in 2005 [YUN 2005, p. 1135], requested the Executive Director to continue to give high priority to the Plan's implementation as part of the approved UNEP programme of work. He was also asked to present annual progress reports on the implementation of the Plan to the Committee of Permanent Representatives, as well as biannual summaries of activities and results, and to strengthen UNEP regional offices so that they could contribute to the Plan's implementation. Governments were encouraged to support the full and effective implementation of the Plan, including through the provision of adequate resources.

## UNEP activities

### *Monitoring and assessment*

In January [UNEP/GC/24/10], the Executive Director submitted a report on the state of the environment and the UNEP contribution to addressing substantive environmental challenges. The report summarized issues arising from UNEP activities in the area of assessment, monitoring and early warning.

On 9 February [dec. 24/1 III], the Governing Council welcomed the consultative process on strengthening UNEP's scientific base, as facilitated by the Executive Director, and the inputs made by Governments and other stakeholders, which resulted in the updated draft proposal for the assessment strategy, submitted in 2006 [YUN 2006, p. 1211]. It requested the Executive Director to consult Governments, other UN bodies, financial institutions, including the Global Environment Facility (see p. 1054), the private sector and civil society, multi-lateral environmental agreements, and the scientific community, with a view to improving the strategy as an integral part of the UNEP strategic vision. He was also asked to report back to the Council in 2009 with a revised proposal, which should include component cost estimates for work proposed for the 2010-2011 biennium, and to make those estimates available to the Committee of Permanent Representatives early in the budget process. The Council reaffirmed the need to strengthen the UNEP scientific base, including through the reinforcement of the scientific capacities of developing countries and countries with economies in transition in the area of protection of the environment. It also reaffirmed environmental early warning, assessment and monitoring of the state of the global environment as core functions of UNEP. The Council underlined the vital importance of enhancing infrastructures and capacities that could sustain cooperation on environmental data and information, and reduce transaction costs for national reporting and related activities. The Council supported UNEP efforts to enhance regional and national information networks.

On the same date [dec. 24/2], the Council invited Governments, UN bodies, financial institutions, the private sector and civil society to consider the environmental challenges reported in the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment [YUN 2005, p. 1154], the final report of the Global International Waters Assessment [YUN 2006, p. 1241], the Global Environment Outlook (GEO) *Year Book 2006* [YUN 2006, p. 1218] and *Year Book 2007* (see p. 1056), and other reports/publications. It noted with concern that the documented environmental degradation and widespread changes resulting from human activity, as well as natural processes and the loss of ecosystem services, were barriers to the attainment of internationally agreed development goals. The Council emphasized that capacity-building and technology support in developing countries and countries with economies in transition, as elaborated in the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building [YUN 2004, p. 1040], needed to be strengthened with UN assistance at the national and regional levels. It called on Governments and intergovernmental organizations to continue to cooperate in efforts aimed at mitigation of, and adaptation to, adverse environmental change, including through enhancing the knowledge base for more integrated responses. The Council also called on Governments and experts to contribute to the finalization of the fourth GEO report (see p. 1056), in accordance with the process outlined by the 2005 global intergovernmental and multi-stakeholder consultation on the fourth assessment [YUN 2005, p. 1142], by reviewing the summary for decision makers in 2007, participating in the second global intergovernmental and multi-stakeholder consultation in September 2007 (see p. 1056) and supporting related outreach activities. The Executive Director was requested to present the findings of the fourth report to the Council in 2008. Governments were invited to consider conducting a systematic review of the effectiveness of their measures to address, at the national level, the escalating degradation of the global environment. The Executive Director was asked to continue, in consultation with the Executive Secretary of the 1992 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change [YUN 1992, p. 681], the work of the Convention, fully respecting its mandate and taking into account the findings of the IPCC fourth assessment report (see p. 1067).

### *Support to Africa*

**Governing Council action.** On 9 February [dec. 24/8], the Governing Council emphasized that, given UNEP's location in Africa, the Programme should take a leading role in enhancing support for environmental and natural resource management efforts on the continent. It should also spearhead international cooperation in ensuring environmental sustainability, particularly through the New Partnership for Africa's

Development (NEPAD) and the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building [YUN 2004, p. 1040], which was adopted by the Governing Council in 2005 [YUN 2005, p. 1135]. The Council reaffirmed that support to Africa should be further enhanced, taking into account the current situation and needs of the region, and called on African Governments to take primary action and responsibility for the sustainable development of their respective countries. The Council invited Governments to support the Partnership for the Development of Environmental Law and Institutions in Africa project. It requested UNEP, subject to the availability of extrabudgetary resources, to expand the Partnership to enable it to provide support to all African States and, for programming purposes, to integrate it into the UNEP regular programme. The Council requested the Executive Director to continue to support the implementation of the Action Plan for the NEPAD Environment Initiative [YUN 2002, p. 1035], particularly within the framework of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) and the African Union (AU). It also asked the Executive Director to establish working relationships with the proposed AU specialized technical committees, particularly the technical committee responsible for the environment, in order to facilitate the integration of environmental issues into the work of the institutional dispensation of the AU and NEPAD. The Executive Director was asked to work closely with partners, especially the subregional economic communities in Africa, the African Development Bank and other UN organizations, to support African countries in implementing the United Nations Declaration on NEPAD, adopted by the General Assembly in resolution 57/2 [YUN 2002, p. 908]. He was further asked to strengthen, within available means, the UNEP Regional Office for Africa in the context of the Bali Strategic Plan, and to report to the Council on the implementation of the decision in 2009.

**UNEP activities.** The UNEP Regional Office in Africa, located in Nairobi, Kenya, played a central role in spearheading the development and delivery of the UNEP programme of work in the Africa region. The Office linked various UNEP divisions and countries in Africa, and promoted collaboration and partnerships with organizations active in sustainable development in that region. The UNEP strategy was to help ensure that environmental considerations drove Africa towards recovery, stability and sustainable development. Among its objectives were encouraging and facilitating policy dialogue and cooperation between countries in the region, promoting peace and the sustainable management of transboundary natural resources and addressing environmental issues by supporting intergovernmental consultations and regional initiatives, including AMCEN, the African Ministerial Council on Water and NEPAD. In

2007, ministerial-level consultative meetings on the Subregional Environmental Action Plans for Eastern, Central, Southern, Northern and Western Africa took place between March and June; all of the Plans were endorsed by environmental ministers of those subregions, who requested their respective vice-presidents to submit the Plans to the twelfth AMCEN session in 2008. A ministerial declaration of the AMCEN session on the TerraAfrica/Global Environment Facility (GEF) Strategic Investment Programme for Sustainable Land Management in Sub-Saharan Africa (Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, April) was submitted to, and approved by, the GEF Council in June. The twenty-second meeting of the AMCEN Bureau (Johannesburg, South Africa, 5-6 November) reviewed progress towards the implementation of the AMCEN work programme and other issues.

UNEP undertook missions to Guinea, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Côte d'Ivoire to discuss the status of environmental legislation and its application, and to assess technical assistance needs in the field of environmental law. In October, a second UNEP mission to the DRC contributed to the drafting of a framework law for environmental protection in that country.

### *Water policy and strategy*

In February, the Governing Council considered a report of the Executive Director [UNEP/GC/24/4/Add.1] containing the final updated UNEP water policy and strategy as it related to freshwater for the 2007-2012 period; earlier updates were submitted in 2004 [YUN 2004, p. 1042], 2005 [YUN 2005, p. 1136] and 2006 [YUN 2006, p. 1212]. The overall goal of the policy and strategy was to contribute substantively to environmental sustainability in the management of water resources, utilizing integrated ecosystem approaches, as a contribution to the internationally agreed targets and goals relevant to water and socio-economic development. In implementing the policy and strategy, UNEP would be guided by conceptual principles, including the promotion of ecosystem-based approaches, contributing sound economic and social development, and addressing risk; and operational principles, including building national and regional capacity through the implementation of the Bali Strategic Plan [YUN 2005, p. 1135], building partnerships and programmes, and promoting multi-stakeholder participation. Three key components of UNEP's freshwater work—assessment, management and cooperation—were linked within a framework of integrated water resources management (IWRM). UNEP would focus on mainstreaming environmental considerations into IWRM at the regional, subregional, national and local levels. The policy and strategy would be in operation for six years, from 2007 through 2012. Its implementation would be monitored

by the Council against expected accomplishments and indicators.

On 9 February [dec. 24/16 A], the Council adopted the updated UNEP water policy and strategy for the period 2007-2012, as contained in a February report [UNEP/GC/24/12], to be implemented with interested countries upon their request. It requested the Executive Director to: use the policy and strategy as a framework and guide to direct the UNEP programme of work in the field of water through the year 2012; intensify collaborative activities with Governments, relevant organizations, UN agencies and other development partners, as well as partnerships with civil society, to implement the policy and strategy; provide support to developing countries and countries with economies in transition for implementation of the policy and strategy within the framework of the Bali Strategic Plan; increase support to developing countries for integrated water resources management in collaboration with regional and national institutions; and report on the implementation of the policy and strategy in 2009. Governments in a position to do so were invited to provide new and additional resources necessary for the implementation of the policy and strategy.

### **Environment and sustainable development**

The Commission on Sustainable Development, at its fifteenth session (New York, 30 April–11 May) [E/2007/29], continued to consider, for its 2006-2007 implementation cycle, the thematic cluster issues of energy for sustainable development, industrial development, air pollution and the atmosphere, and climate change (see p. 841). The Commission had before it reports of the Secretary-General on policy options and possible actions to expedite implementation of measures to reduce air pollution and protect the atmosphere [E/CN.17/2007/4] (see p. 841), and mitigate the causes and effects of climate change [E/CN.17/2007/5] (see p. 841). Also before the Commission was a 26 January letter [E/CN.17/2007/8] from Iceland to the Secretary-General transmitting a summary of the conclusions and recommendations of the International Seminar on the Hydrogen Economy for Sustainable Development (Reykjavik, 28-29 September 2006).

#### *Small island developing States*

In a 9 February decision on small island developing States (SIDS) [dec. 24/6], the Governing Council reiterated that international cooperation towards strengthening the adaptive resilience of SIDS to address vulnerability to the effects of environmental degradation, climate change and sea-level rise were urgently needed. It requested the Executive Director to further enhance UNEP activities on SIDS with a view to identifying fur-

ther efforts to mainstream the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States [YUN 2005, p. 946] into UNEP's work, taking into account General Assembly resolution 61/196 [YUN 2006, p. 1017] on the Strategy. The Council asked the Executive Director to enhance UNEP's efforts to address the issue of adaptation to the impacts of climate change in SIDS and low-lying coastal States; strengthen UNEP's links with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (see p. 1059) and other relevant bodies; and report to the Council on progress in implementing the decision in 2009.

(For further information on the sustainable development of SIDS, see p. 868.)

#### *South-South cooperation*

On 9 February [dec. 24/12], the Governing Council emphasized that South-South cooperation constituted an important means of achieving the objectives of the 2005 Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building. It requested the Executive Director to strengthen the integration of South-South cooperation in undertaking activities under the approved UNEP programme of work and, to that end, strengthen cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and other relevant organizations within and outside the UN system. The Council also requested the Executive Director to utilize the benefits of experience, expertise, technologies, human resources and centres of excellence in several countries of the South to achieve the objective of the Bali Strategic Plan and the implementation of the programme of work. The Council took note of the Bandung Roadmap for Advancement of Environmental Law in Support of the New Asian-African Strategic Partnership, adopted during the New Asian-African Strategic Partnership-UNEP Workshop on Environmental Law and Policy (Jakarta and Bandung, Indonesia, 12-16 December 2006), and initiatives that promoted South-South cooperation in achieving sustainable development, particularly in areas in which UNEP held a comparative advantage. The Executive Director was asked to report to the Governing Council in 2009 on progress made in promoting South-South cooperation for achieving sustainable development.

(For more information on South-South cooperation, see p. 906.)

#### *Tourism and the environment*

In 2007, UNEP activities on sustainable tourism placed a greater focus on addressing climate change. UNEP, together with the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and the World Meteorological Organization, organized the Second Interna-

tional Conference on Climate Change and Tourism (Davos, Switzerland, 1-3 October), which explored actions that could be taken within the tourism sector to mitigate and adapt to climate change. Following the Conference, UNEP signed a memorandum of understanding with UNWTO, focusing on climate change, resource efficiency and ecosystem management. The Marrakech Task Force on Sustainable Tourism Development, which comprised 14 countries, 11 international organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and industry associations, and 80 experts on sustainable tourism, initiated 11 pilot projects in 2007, including 3 managed by UNEP on environmental management in the accommodation sector, tourism and climate change management, and sustainable tourism in natural and cultural heritage sites. UNEP, the UN Foundation, the Rainforest Alliance, the World Conservation Union, the Sustainable Tourism Certification Network of the Americas and ECOTRANS, a European network of experts and organizations in tourism, environment and regional development, joined forces to develop a set of general baseline criteria to enhance the implementation of sustainable tourism principles. UNEP also co-organized the Global Ecotourism Conference (Oslo, May), which focused on the challenge of resource efficiency and sustainable consumption and production. A GEF-funded project on the reduction of the environmental impact from coastal tourism was launched at the joint Conference of the Parties (Johannesburg, South Africa, 5-8 November) of the 1981 Abidjan Convention for Cooperation in the Protection and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the West and Central African Region [YUN 1981, p. 840] and the 1985 Nairobi Convention for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the East Africa Region [YUN 1985, p. 816].

### *Globalization and the environment*

GC/GMEF held ministerial consultations on globalization and the environment on 6 and 7 February. The Council/Forum had before it a January background paper on globalization, ecosystem services and human well-being [UNEP/GC/24/11]. It stated that globalization was commonly viewed as a process of increasing international flows of goods, services, capital, technology, information, ideas and labour. Globalization was driven by the liberalization of trade and investment, and by technological change. In most cases, the effects of globalization reflected positive and negative changes in the ways that humans interacted with each other and their natural environment. The paper described several broad categories of globalization, including globalization of the economy, and of knowledge, institutions and governance, and presented a series of questions for discussion during the ministerial consultations. It also

contained a summary of UNEP's mandate and other international mandates that had a direct impact on globalization.

An addendum to the background paper [UNEP/GC/24/11/Add.1] summarized UNEP work on international environmental governance; the findings of the report of the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on System-wide Coherence [YUN 2006, p. 1584]; and the informal consultative process, initiated by the General Assembly President in 2006, on the institutional framework of UN environmental activities. It also highlighted issues for discussion during the ministerial consultations.

A January note [UNEP/GC/24/INF/24] contained a further background paper, entitled "Environment and globalization: five propositions", which was prepared by the International Institute for Sustainable Development, with financial support from Denmark.

## **Coordination and cooperation**

### *Business and industry*

UNEP's relationships with business and industry were helping promote corporate environmental responsibility considerations throughout the private sector. The United Nations Global Compact Leaders Summit (Geneva, 5-6 July) included the launch of the Caring for Climate statement, which was signed by chief executive officers of 153 companies in an initiative led by the Global Compact, UNEP and the World Business Council for Sustainable Development. The statement committed the signatories to take action to increase energy efficiency and reduce the carbon burden of products, services and processes; set voluntary targets for doing so; and report publicly on the achievement of those targets annually. UNEP, in cooperation with the Global Compact and with the support of Singapore, hosted the first Business for Environment Summit (Singapore, 19-20 April). The twenty-fourth annual UNEP consultative meeting with business and industry (São Paulo, Brazil, 15-16 October) took the form of a global dialogue. UNEP continued its role as a board member and participant in the Global Reporting Initiative, collecting reports from 19 business and industry organizations on their efforts to build the environmental capacity of business managers and employees in the developing world.

### *Environmental emergencies*

In January, the UNEP Post-Conflict and Disaster Management Branches were merged into a single entity (see p. 1052). As a result, work intensified in crisis response and recovery and expanded into risk reduction and peacebuilding. UNEP conducted environmental as-

assessments in crisis-affected countries and strengthened national environmental management capacity through institution-building, promoting regional cooperation, providing technical legal assistance and environmental information management, and integrating environmental concerns and risk reduction measures in reconstruction programmes. In June, UNEP published the *Sudan Post-Conflict Assessment* report, the largest post-conflict assessment conducted by UNEP to date; the report covered the entire country, including Darfur. It indicated that the Sudan faced a range of environmental issues, including water scarcity, desertification and climate change, which threatened the livelihoods of its people and the prospects for long-term peace and food security in the Sudan. The independent assessment, which was requested and endorsed by the Government of National Unity and the Government of Southern Sudan, outlined a detailed action plan with an estimated cost of \$120 million over three to five years. As a follow-up to the report, UNEP was asked to implement a national-level environmental programme to build the capacity of national authorities and their UN colleagues for the sustainable use of resources and the rehabilitation of degraded areas in Southern Sudan and Darfur.

In 2007, the UNEP Capacity-Building Programme for Afghanistan continued to provide support to the National Environmental Protection Agency and the Ministry of Agriculture, implementing six community-based natural resources management pilot projects dealing with reforestation, irrigation, solar electrification and other areas of activity. In Iraq, the UNEP support project for the environmental management of the Iraqi marshlands began its third phase of activities. UNEP participated in the Regional Parliamentary Meeting on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes Region (Kinshasa, DRC, February). In September, a UNEP mission to the DRC met with the Minister for Environment and senior Government officials to identify potential areas for environmental assistance to the country.

The Joint UNEP/Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Environment Unit responded to emergencies in Mozambique, Indonesia, Suriname, the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Mongolia, Kuwait, Kosovo, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Swaziland, Nepal, Haiti, the Dominican Republic and Nicaragua. In addition, experts were deployed as part of UN Disaster Assessment and Coordination teams to assess flooding impacts in Madagascar and Uruguay; earthquake damage in Peru; and the impact of oil spills in the Black/Azov Sea in Ukraine, and in the Yellow Sea off the western coast of the Republic of Korea. In cooperation with the Unit, UNEP organized the seventh meeting of the Advisory Group on Environmental Emergencies, in association with the Awareness and Preparedness for Emergencies at the

Local Level Programme (Rosenberg, Sweden, June). UNEP finalized Community Vulnerability Reduction Projects in Sri Lanka and Morocco. Working with the World Conservation Union and the Wetlands International organization, UNEP was coordinating projects to rehabilitate mangroves affected by the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami [YUN 2004, p. 952] on Huraa Island, the Maldives; in Banda Aceh, Indonesia; and in Ampara District, Sri Lanka. In August, UNEP published *After the Tsunami: Sustainable building guidelines for South-East Asia*, a manual designed to help project managers choose appropriate design and construction methods, as well as sustainable materials and technologies to protect natural resources and reduce energy consumption and pollution.

#### Post-conflict assessment and disaster management

In a February note [UNEP/GC/24/INF/11], the Executive Director provided information on responses to the recommendations contained in the 2005 report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the activities of the Post-Conflict Assessment Unit [YUN 2005, p. 1143], which was transformed into the Post-Conflict Branch in August 2005. On 1 January, the Post-Conflict Branch was merged with the Disaster Management Branch, in order to provide a coherent, effective approach to post-conflict and disaster situations at the field level. The new Post-Conflict and Disaster Management Branch, located in Geneva, Switzerland, supported the Joint UNEP/OCHA Environmental Emergencies Unit during the immediate response phase. Under the new arrangement, OCHA would continue to provide UNEP with access to disaster response tools and mechanisms, while UNEP would continue to provide technical expertise to the UN system and affected countries to ensure that environmental issues were integrated into post-disaster, post-conflict recovery and reconstruction plans. The new Branch would continue to mobilize and coordinate urgent international assistance in environmental emergencies; conduct rapid appraisals and environmental needs assessments, costing and prioritization; and act as the focal point within inter-agency processes. It would provide advice and training, information and coordination in the early stages of recovery, as well as environmental diplomacy assistance. The Branch would also implement prevention, preparedness, risk reduction and recovery projects, and facilitate fund-raising for its activities. The reform of the former Post-Conflict Assessment Unit was conducted within the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building [YUN 2006, p. 1208].

#### Oil slick in Lebanon

In response to resolution 61/194 [YUN 2006, p. 1215], the Secretary-General submitted an October report

[A/62/343] reviewing the impact of the 2006 oil spill on the shores of Lebanon on human health, biodiversity, fisheries and tourism, as well as its implications for the livelihoods and economy of Lebanon. The spill resulted from the destruction by Israel of oil storage tanks in Lebanon following the outbreak of hostilities between Israel and the paramilitary group Hizbullah [YUN 2006, p. 574]. The release of 15,000 tons of fuel oil into the Mediterranean Sea led to the contamination of 150 kilometres of coastline in Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic.

In October 2006, UNEP conducted a post-conflict environmental assessment of Lebanon, focusing on conditions in the near-shore zone. According to the findings of the assessment, which were released in January 2007, the oil spill caused significant contamination of the Lebanese coastline. While clean-up operations were continuing, the safe disposal of oily waste remained a serious concern. A proportion of the spilled oil sank in the vicinity of the seaside town of el Jiyeh and covered the seabed over an area of a few hundred metres, smothering biota in the sediment. Most of the oil remained on the coastline, adding petroleum hydrocarbon contamination in the seabed sediments along the coast. The report recommended that concentrations of pollutants and biological parameters be monitored on a routine basis to track the recovery of affected sites and the general state of the environment.

UNDP initiated a rapid environmental assessment of the area in August 2006; the assessment was completed in December 2006 and published in February 2007. The assessment report identified 46 environmental impacts, of which nine were related to the marine oil spill. The report also addressed the impact of the oil spill on cultural heritage in the area of the spill. The findings of environmental assessments conducted by the World Conservation Union and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) were also discussed in the Secretary-General's report.

The World Bank, in its economic assessment of environmental degradation resulting from the July 2006 hostilities in Lebanon, estimated the costs of damage and clean-up related to the oil spill at \$203 million, excluding health-related impacts and losses to ecosystem services; other damage that occurred during the period of hostilities; and the costs of future clean-up operations. In resolution 61/194, the General Assembly had called on Israel to assume responsibility for prompt and adequate compensation to the Government of Lebanon for the costs of repairing the environmental damage resulting from the hostilities, including the restoration of the marine environment. At the time of the Secretary-General's report, Israel had yet to assume such responsibility. UNDP reviewed the many conventions related to oil pollution at sea,

but all conventions were inapplicable during armed hostilities, and agreements related to spill compensation pertained only to spills from tanker vessels at sea. UNDP recommended examination of the United Nations Compensation Commission as the only precedent major oil-spill compensation regime for spills resulting from armed hostilities.

The report discussed progress made in the provision of financial and technical assistance from the international community in support of Lebanon's efforts to clean its polluted shores and sea, and preserve its ecosystem, including a two-phase clean-up and rehabilitation plan.

The Secretary-General urged Israel to take the necessary actions towards assuming responsibility for prompt and adequate compensation to Lebanon for costs related to the environmental damage caused by the 2006 oil spill. He also urged Member States, international organizations, international and regional financial institutions, NGOs and the private sector to continue their support for Lebanon in its efforts to address the impacts of the spill. The international effort should be intensified, as Lebanon was still engaged in oil removal, the treatment of wastes and monitoring the recovery process.

#### GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 19 December [meeting 78], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Second Committee [A/62/419 (Part II)], adopted **resolution 62/188** by recorded vote (169-8-3) [agenda item 54].

#### Oil slick on Lebanese shores

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution 61/194 of 20 December 2006 on the oil slick on Lebanese shores,

*Reaffirming* the outcome of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, especially principle 7 of the Declaration of the Conference, in which States were requested to take all possible steps to prevent pollution of the seas,

*Emphasizing* the need to protect and preserve the marine environment in accordance with international law,

*Taking into account* the 1992 Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, especially principle 16, in which it was stipulated that the polluter should, in principle, bear the cost of pollution, and taking into account also chapter 17 of Agenda 21,

*Noting again with great concern* the environmental disaster caused by the destruction by the Israeli Air Force on 15 July 2006 of the oil storage tanks in the direct vicinity of el Jiyeh electric power plant in Lebanon, resulting in an oil slick that covered the entirety of the Lebanese coastline and extended to the Syrian coastline,

*Noting again with appreciation* the assistance offered by donor countries and international organizations for the early recovery and reconstruction of Lebanon through bi-

lateral and multilateral channels, including the Athens Coordination Meeting on the response to the marine pollution incident in the Eastern Mediterranean, held on 17 August 2006, as well as the Stockholm Conference for Lebanon's Early Recovery, held on 31 August 2006,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 61/194 on the oil slick on Lebanese shores;

2. *Reiterates the expression of its deep concern* about the adverse implications of the destruction by the Israeli Air Force of the oil storage tanks in the direct vicinity of the Lebanese el Jiyeh electric power plant for the achievement of sustainable development in Lebanon;

3. *Considers* that the oil slick has heavily polluted the shores of Lebanon and partially polluted Syrian shores and consequently has had serious implications for livelihoods and the economy of Lebanon, owing to the adverse implications for natural resources, biodiversity, fisheries and tourism, and for human health, in the country;

4. *Requests* the Government of Israel to assume responsibility for prompt and adequate compensation to the Government of Lebanon and other countries directly affected by the oil slick for the costs of repairing the environmental damage caused by the destruction, including the restoration of the marine environment;

5. *Expresses its appreciation* for the efforts of the Government of Lebanon and those of the Member States, regional and international organizations, regional and international financial institutions, non-governmental organizations and the private sector in the initiation of clean-up and rehabilitation operations on the polluted shores, and encourages the Member States and above-mentioned entities to continue their financial and technical support to the Government of Lebanon towards achieving the completion of clean-up and rehabilitation operations, with the aim of preserving the ecosystem of Lebanon and that of the Eastern Mediterranean Basin;

6. *Calls for* the mobilization of international technical and financial assistance through donor support for the creation of an eastern Mediterranean oil spill restoration fund, based on voluntary contributions, to support the integrated environmentally sound management, from clean-up to safe disposal of oily waste, of this environmental disaster resulting from the destruction by the Israeli Air Force of the oil storage tanks at el Jiyeh electric power plant;

7. *Recognizes* the multidimensionality of the adverse impact of the oil slick, and requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-third session a report on the implementation of the present resolution under the item entitled "Sustainable development".

#### RECORDED VOTE ON RESOLUTION 62/188:

*In favour:* Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Ger-

many, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Moldova, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

*Against:* Australia, Canada, Czech Republic, Israel, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Palau, United States.

*Abstaining:* Cameroon, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire.

#### Global Environment Facility

The Global Environment Facility (GEF), a joint programme of UNDP, UNEP and the World Bank, was established in 1991 [YUN 1991, p. 505] to help solve global environmental problems. GEF functioned as the designated financial mechanism for the 1992 Convention on Biological Diversity [YUN 1992, p. 683] (see p. 1062), the 1992 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change [ibid., p. 681] (see p. 1059) and the 1994 United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa [YUN 1994, p. 944] (see p. 1064). GEF also served as the interim financial mechanism for the 2001 Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) [YUN 2001, p. 971] (see p. 1079).

Since 1991, GEF had provided \$7.4 billion in grants and leveraged \$28 billion in co-financing for more than 1,900 projects in over 160 countries. For the 2006-2007 period, \$1.6 billion was provided by GEF, and \$9.7 billion was co-financed. GEF projects dealt with issues related to biodiversity, climate change, international waters, land degradation, the ozone layer, and POPs.

At the end of 2007, the cumulative UNEP/GEF work programme since 1991 was financed to \$2.18 billion, including \$697.6 million in GEF resources for activities in 153 countries. Through GEF enabling activities related to biodiversity, climate change, POPs and capacity-building needs assessment for global environmental management, UNEP assisted 139 countries in meeting their obligations to the global environmental conventions and in building capacity to implement

them. Twenty-one new UNEP/GEF initiatives were approved in 2007, with funding of \$278.2 million, including \$65.3 million in GEF grant financing.

A January report of the Executive Director [UNEP/GC/24/10] contained background information on an amendment to the Instrument for the Establishment of the Restructured Global Environment Facility that provided the GEF Council with the flexibility to hold its meetings outside the seat of the secretariat in Washington, D.C., if necessary; the amendment was approved by the third GEF assembly in 2006 [YUN 2006, p. 1216]. In a 9 February decision [dec. 24/13], the UNEP Governing Council adopted the amendment and asked the Executive Director to transmit the decision to the Chief Executive Officer or Chair of GEF.

**UNDP action.** In a 10 July note [DP/2007/49], the UNDP Administrator put forth the 2006 amendment to the Instrument for the Establishment of the Restructured Global Environment Facility. On 14 September [E/2007/35 (dec. 2007/39)], the UNDP/United Nations Population Fund Executive Board adopted the amendment.

### *Participation of civil society*

The eighth Global Civil Society Forum (Nairobi, 3-4 February) [UNEP/GCS/8/1] discussed globalization, ecosystem services and human well-being (see p. 1051); the UNEP water policy and strategy (see p. 1049); gender and the environment (see below); international chemicals management (see p. 1077); the work programme of the Global Civil Society Steering Committee; civil society engagement at the twenty-fourth (2007) GC/GMEF session; and the way forward to engage major groups in UNEP's work. The global civil society statement to the twenty-fourth session was contained in a note by the Executive Director [UNEP/GC/24/INF/10]. Regional civil society statements from the Asia and Pacific, European, Latin American and Caribbean, North American, and West Asian regions were also submitted [UNEP/GC/24/INF/10/Add.1-6].

The UNEP Tunza strategy (2003-2008) for the engagement and involvement of young people in environmental issues [YUN 2002, p. 1040] expanded to more than 7,800 active members in 2007. At the Tunza International Youth Conference (Leverkusen, Germany, 26-30 August), 180 participants from 80 countries discussed technology at the service of the environment; developed regional action plans; and reached an accord on their commitment to environmental action. One hundred and eighty children from Kenya, Malaysia, Sweden, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania attended the 2007 session of the UNEP Governing Council in February (see p. 1045), marking the first occasion in which children were represented at the Council.

### *Environmental education*

On 9 February [dec. 24/11], the Governing Council acknowledged the role of environmental education as an effective tool for building an environmentally sensitive and responsive populace capable of partnering with Governments to achieve policy goals and targets. It urged the Executive Director to intensify UNEP efforts in the area of environmental education; continue to strive to make resources available for promoting and supporting environmental education programmes, projects and activities, particularly in developing countries; and keep Governments informed of progress achieved.

### *Cooperation with UNDP*

The Governing Council considered a note by the Executive Director [UNEP/GC/24/INF/19], which contained information on cooperation between UNEP and UNDP, with a focus on the UNDP-UNEP Poverty and Environment Initiative, the joint climate change initiative, and the partnership on chemicals. UNEP-UNDP cooperation had increased significantly since 2005, partly in response to the key recommendations for UN reform, which highlighted the need for UN agencies to improve cooperation. The Initiative developed an operational model for mainstreaming environment into development strategies.

The UNDP-UNEP Partnership on Climate Change aimed at broadening the existing cooperation between the two Programmes to help countries achieve sustainable development in the face of a changing climate. The objectives of the climate change initiative were to incorporate adaptation into national development plans and UN cooperation frameworks, and enable countries to access carbon finance and cleaner technologies to stimulate sustainable development. Following the adoption of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) by the International Conference on Chemicals Management in 2006 [YUN 2006, p. 1246], UNDP and UNEP developed a partnership initiative to help client countries assess their sound management of chemicals regimes relative to the strategic objectives of the SAICM Overarching Policy Strategy and improve the incorporation of chemicals management priorities into the national development planning agenda. Despite tactical difficulties, the strategic benefits of expanded cooperation between the two Programmes were clear, and they would identify opportunities for further cooperation.

### *Gender and the environment*

On 9 February [dec. 24/7], the Governing Council urged the Executive Director to continue to implement the UNEP Gender Plan of Action adopted by the 2006

UNEP Senior Management Group Workshop on gender mainstreaming [YUN 2006, p. 1217], including the projects on gender equality and the environment. The Executive Director was also urged to develop a monitoring and evaluation mechanism to implement the Plan effectively. The Council invited Governments to make voluntary financial contributions to facilitate the provision of adequate resources to implement the Plan fully.

### Environmental information

A January note by the Executive Director [UNEP/GC/24/INF/12] provided an overview of existing regional, subregional and national-level environmental information networking initiatives, including information on the background and legislative authority, objectives, structure, activities and outputs of each initiative. The information was presented in the context of the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building, adopted by the Governing Council in 2005 [YUN 2005, p. 1135], and the proposed Environment Watch Strategy: Vision 2020, which was outlined in 2006 [YUN 2006, p. 1211]. Information networks discussed in the note included the European Environment Information and Observation Network, the Africa Environment Information Network, the Inter-American Biodiversity Information Network, the Southern Africa Subregional INFOTERRA Network, and several national networks.

### General Assembly issues

The Executive Director provided information on issues arising from resolutions adopted by the General Assembly in 2006 that called for action by, or were of relevance to, UNEP [UNEP/GC/24/INF/3].

### Global Environment Outlook

In October UNEP published the *Global Environment Outlook 4* (GEO-4), the fourth in a series of reports produced by UNEP since 1997 on the state of the global environment [YUN 1997, p. 1043]. The report assessed the current state of the global atmosphere, land, water and biodiversity. It also discussed environmental changes that had taken place in the two decades since the World Commission on Environment and Development produced its seminal report, entitled *Our Common Future*, in 1987 [YUN 1987, p. 660], including changes caused by human activity in an increasingly industrialized and interconnected world, and how those changes affected human security, health, social relations, well-being and development. The report presented an outlook for the future using four scenarios and policy options to address present and emerging environmental issues. It also highlighted environment-

related challenges and opportunities for development and human well-being.

The Executive Director set out the GEO-4 findings in a November report [UNEP/GCSS.X/3]. The report presented key messages for decision makers, as endorsed by the second global intergovernmental and multi-stakeholder consultation on GEO-4 (Nairobi, 24-26 September); a statement issued by the consultation was annexed to the report. The Executive Director suggested that GC/GMEF consider a three-tiered approach to respond to the GEO-4 findings, including urging Governments, UN bodies, international organizations, the private sector and the public to work with UNEP to identify environmental targets for sustainable development; enhancing UNEP capacity to respond to environmental change; and further strengthening UNEP's scientific base through the evolution of the future global environmental assessment process.

### GEO Year Book

UNEP published the *GEO Year Book 2007*, which presented a global and regional overview of the changing environment; highlighted linkages among ecosystem health, human well-being and economic development; examined new concepts of the value of ecosystem services and the threat from ecosystem degradation; and described recent findings and policy decisions that affected responses to global change. The *Year Book 2007* focused on the environment and globalization, and discussed the emerging scientific and policy challenges of nanotechnology from an environmental perspective.

### Administrative and budgetary matters

#### Environment Fund

In a January note [UNEP/GC/24/INF/6], the Executive Director provided information on the status of the Environment Fund and other sources of UNEP funding, as well as an overview of the availability of resources and their use over the 2006-2007 biennium.

Following consideration of the proposed 2008-2009 biennial programme and support budget [UNEP/GC/24/9] and the related report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions [UNEP/GC/24/9/Add.1], the Governing Council, on 9 February [dec. 24/9], approved appropriations for the Environment Fund in the amount of \$152 million, including \$16 million for the support budget and \$6 million for the Fund programme reserve. It urged Governments to support further strengthening of the Fund through the options envisaged by the Council in a 2002 decision [YUN 2002, p. 1032], including the extended pilot phase of the voluntary indicative scale

of contributions (see p. 1058). The Council authorized the Executive Director to reallocate resources between subprogrammes up to a maximum of 10 per cent of the appropriation to which the resources were reallocated. It requested that, should the Executive Director need to reallocate funds in excess of 10 per cent and up to 20 per cent of an appropriation, he do so in consultation with the Committee of Permanent Representatives. The Executive Director was also authorized to adjust, in consultation with the Committee, the level of allocations for programme activities to bring it into line with possible variations in income compared to the approved level of appropriations. He was urged to increase the level of the financial reserve to \$20 million as carry-over resources became available over and above those needed to implement the programme approved for the 2006-2007 and 2008-2009 bienniums. The Council recommended that the Executive Director take a cautious approach to the creation of additional posts under the Environment Fund programme, and asked him to step up his efforts to mobilize resources from all sources.

The Council requested the Executive Director to continue to shift emphasis from delivering outputs to achieving results, ensuring that UNEP managers took responsibility for achievement of objectives and the efficient and transparent use of resources to that end. He was also asked to: keep Governments informed, through the Committee of Permanent Representatives on a quarterly basis and the Governing Council at its regular and special sessions, of the execution of the Environment Fund budget; continue his consultations with the Committee for the preparation of each biennial budget and programme of work; and prepare, in consultation with the Committee, a medium-term strategy for the 2010-2013 period with a clearly defined vision, objectives, priorities, impact measures and a robust mechanism for review by Governments, for approval by the Council in 2009. The Council requested Governments, where possible, to pay their contributions before or, at the latest, the beginning of the year to which they related, to enable UNEP to plan and execute the Fund programme more effectively. They were also asked to make pledges of their future contributions to the Fund at least one year in advance of the year to which they related and, if possible, on a multi-year basis. The Council approved the Executive Director's recommendation that outstanding pledges for the 2001-2002 period should not be regarded as assets for accounting purposes. It also approved the proposed staffing tables under the 2008-2009 Environment Fund biennial support budget, as set forth in the Executive Director's report.

The Council requested the Executive Director to provide, twice yearly, financial details of work programmes to Governments, as well as information on progress made in implementation of the work programme, and that the information be structured in

accordance with the work programme. He was asked to: provide the Committee of Permanent Representatives, on a quarterly basis, with comprehensive information on all financial facilities made available for UNEP, including core funding, the Environment Fund, earmarked funds and payments by GEF and other sources; and ensure that earmarked contributions to UNEP, apart from those for which UNEP acted only as treasurer, were used to fund activities that were in line with the programme of work. He was also asked to propose, in consultation with the Committee of Permanent Representatives, ways and means of addressing the balance between earmarked and non-earmarked funding, and ensure clarity with respect to resources and expected results; prepare a 2010-2011 work programme consisting of Environment Fund programme activities amounting to an indicative figure of \$140 million; and submit a prioritized, results-oriented and streamlined draft budget and work programme for the 2010-2011 biennium for consideration and approval by the Council in 2009. The Executive Director was authorized to enter into forward commitments not exceeding \$20 million for Fund programme activities for the 2010-2011 biennium.

The Executive Director was further asked to give priority to the effective and immediate implementation of the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building [YUN 2004, p. 1040] as part of the implementation of the approved work programme for the 2008-2009 biennium; undertake further action to mainstream the objectives of the Bali Strategic Plan in UNEP work; promote understanding of the linkages between poverty and the environment; and assist Governments to integrate environmental policy and decision-making into social and economic policies on poverty eradication, in accordance with the UNEP mandate.

(For further information on the Bali Strategic Plan, see p. 1047.)

### *Trust funds*

At its session in February, the Governing Council had before it an addendum to a report of the Executive Director [UNEP/24/9/Add.2], which contained information on the management of the 81 UNEP-administered trust funds that were active as at 15 November 2006. During the period between the twenty-third (2005) Council session [YUN 2005, p. 1132] and 15 November 2006, the Executive Director established 10 new trust funds, of which 4 provided direct support for the UNEP programme of work, 5 provided support for conventions, and 1 related specifically to GEF.

The addendum also contained a proposed amendment of the General Procedures governing the Opera-

tions of the Fund of the United Nations Environment Programme, which would allow the Executive Director to make timely decisions during the Governing Council's intersessional periods.

On 9 February [dec. 24/10], the Governing Council approved the establishment of 10 trust funds, the extension of 32 and the closure of 3.

### *Indicative scale of contributions*

In response to a 2005 Governing Council decision which dealt with, among other issues, strengthening UNEP financing [YUN 2005, p. 1145], the Executive Director submitted a note providing information on the assessment of the operation of the pilot phase of the voluntary indicative scale of contributions to the Environment Fund [UNEP/GC/24/INF/22], which was launched in 2003 [YUN 2003, p. 1048] and extended to 2004-2005 [YUN 2004, p. 1049], and other voluntary options. The note stated that Governments remained the most important factor in the process of ensuring adequate, stable and predictable financial resources for UNEP. In mid-2005, UNEP prepared a new voluntary indicative scale of contributions for the 2006-2007 biennium; the new scale took into consideration an increased level of annual contributions from \$65 million to \$72 million, which equalled half of the Environment Fund budget of \$144 million approved by the Governing Council for 2006-2007. In order to maintain the stability of financial support to UNEP, all countries were invited to at least maintain and not decrease their payments to the Fund. The minimum requirement from 2003 was applied to all countries, irrespective of whether they paid above or below the UN scale of assessment.

The introduction of the pilot phase of the voluntary indicative scale of contributions resulted in higher voluntary payments to the Environment Fund from most countries; higher predictability of voluntary contributions; and improved financial stability. The donor base was also broadened significantly, as 147 Member States pledged/paid one or more contributions during the previous four years. Unfortunately, not all countries, including some major donors, increased their payments in accordance with the new voluntary indicative scale for 2006-2007. Some of the main donors decreased their contributions in 2006 and one made no contribution. Despite increased payments by more than 55 countries, Environment Fund income was expected to be about \$10.5 million below the target of \$72 million for 2006, undermining the capacity of UNEP to implement its work plan. Adequate, increased and timely contributions in a biennium could not be guaranteed by the indicative scale of contributions, as the contributions remained voluntary. All countries, especially the major donors, had to commit to adequate financial support to UNEP. UNEP should

build donor confidence through efficient delivery of its programme and more efficient use of available funds. The voluntary indicative scale of contributions for the 2008-2009 biennium would be based on the principles of the 2006-2007 scale and cover the costs of the approved Environment Fund budget. Any funds received in excess of the budget target would be transferred to the financial reserve to increase its level to \$20 million. The 2008-2009 voluntary scale would re-emphasize the recommendation made during the 2002 special session of the Governing Council that each Member State inform UNEP prior to 1 January of each year of its intended contribution for the year and the projected timing of that contribution.

On 9 February [dec. 24/1 IV], the Governing Council reaffirmed its support for the provision of adequate, stable and predictable financing of UNEP and encouraged Governments to make voluntary contributions to the Environment Fund starting in 2007 in an amount equal to or greater than that suggested by the extended pilot phase of the voluntary indicative scale of contributions, or on the basis of any of the other voluntary options listed in the appendix to the 2002 Council decision on international environmental governance [YUN 2002, p. 1032]. In accordance with that decision, the Council requested the Executive Director to notify all Member States of the voluntary indicative scale of contributions which he intended to propose for the 2008-2009 biennium, and urged each Member State to inform the Executive Director of whether or not it would use the proposed scale. The Executive Director was also asked to submit a report to the Council in 2009 assessing the operation of the extended pilot phase of the voluntary indicative scale of contributions and the other voluntary options listed in its 2002 decision, and to continue to seek an increase in funding from all sources for strengthening the UNEP financial base. Governments were also encouraged to move towards contributions to the Environment Fund in preference to contributions to earmarked trust funds, with a view to enhancing the role of the Governing Council in determining the UNEP programme of work and priorities.

### *Environmental and equity considerations in procurement practices*

In response to a 2005 Governing Council decision [YUN 2005, p. 1145], the Executive Director submitted to the Council a report on environmental and equity considerations in UNEP procurement practices [UNEP/GC.24/6]. The report described UNEP procurement practices; UNEP work on the procurement practices of public authorities, and in support of sustainable procurement in the UN system; facilities management and environmental housekeeping in UNEP; and voluntary action by staff to advance environmental housekeeping. UNEP actively promoted sustainable

procurement, which it defined as the process by which organizations bought goods or services, taking into account the life cycle of those goods or services. As a promoter of the sustainable procurement concept, UNEP saw itself playing a role in facilitating global consensus on the integration of sustainable development considerations into procurement at all levels; fostering information exchange; and providing practical tools for capacity-building.

Several initiatives had been launched and implemented by UNEP staff on an ad hoc or voluntary basis. The ability of UNEP to internalize environmental or equity considerations in its procurement, housekeeping and office management was hampered by a shortage of human and financial resources. Procurement officers were not qualified to spearhead the integration of environmental issues into building or procurement activities, except instances in which they developed some knowledge through personal interest and self-training. Qualified staff members were not formally assigned to building projects at the United Nations Office at Nairobi (UNON), where UNEP was headquartered. The report stated that an effort should be made to advance the general awareness and capacity of staff responsible for procurement and management of facilities. It was also essential that general staff were trained in sustainable office behaviour. UNEP was exploring ways to develop a more systematic approach to greening procurement practices throughout the United Nations, including initiatives through the Environment Management Group and partnerships with the United Nations Office for Project Services. An official mandate for UNON to implement sustainable procurement and facilities management could help systematize and strengthen the current relationship with UNEP and current work in that area.

### International conventions and mechanisms

At its February session, the Governing Council considered a note by the Executive Director [UNEP/GC/24/INF/23] on compliance with, and enforcement of, multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs). The note described the UNEP mandate related to MEA compliance and enforcement, and the UNEP strategy for strengthening such agreements. It also provided information on the Colombo Process on enhancing MEA compliance and enforcement, launched by UNEP in January 2006, and contained the Chairman's summaries of the first and second meetings of the Process (Colombo, Sri Lanka, 21-22 January 2006, and Geneva, 31 May-2 June 2006, respectively). The summaries highlighted key challenges in the effective implementation and enforcement of, and compliance with, MEAs, including the need to reinforce measures to en-

hance national implementation; engage stakeholders in MEA negotiation and implementation; and mainstream environmental protection into economic development and poverty reduction issues, and use those policies as an entry point for the effective national implementation of MEAs. The challenges deserved further consideration and possible action, including through capacity-building and the facilitation of access to resources by UNEP and its partners.

In a February note [UNEP/GC/24/INF/8], the Executive Director provided information on the status of new and existing conventions and protocols in the field of the environment, covering the period from 1 January 2005 to 31 January 2007.

On 9 February [dec. 24/1 V], the Governing Council took note of the activities undertaken by the Executive Director to improve the effectiveness of, and the coordination and synergy among, MEAs, as well as activities supporting Governments in their efforts to better implement, comply with and enforce such agreements. It requested the Executive Director to: build capacity and, upon request, assist countries, particularly developing countries and countries with economies in transition, to integrate MEA objectives into national sustainable development strategies, including poverty reduction strategy papers; assist Governments to develop strategies for facilitating MEA implementation at the national level; and cooperate with the 2001 Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants [YUN 2001, p. 971], the 1998 Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade [YUN 1998, p. 997], and the 1989 Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal [YUN 1989, p. 420] to enhance synergies between the relevant programme activities of UNEP and those conventions.

**Note by Secretary-General.** In response to General Assembly resolutions 61/201 [YUN 2006, p. 1220], 61/202 [ibid., p. 1226] and 61/204 [ibid., p. 1223], the Secretary-General, by an August note [A/62/276], transmitted reports submitted by the secretariats of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (see below), the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa (see p. 1064) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (see p. 1062).

### Climate change convention

As at 31 December, 191 States and the European Commission (EC) were parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which was opened for signature in 1992 [YUN 1992, p. 681] and entered into force in 1994 [YUN 1994, p. 938].

During the year, eight countries became parties to the Convention.

At year's end, 176 States and the EC were parties to the Kyoto Protocol to the Convention [YUN 1997, p. 1048], which entered into force in 2005 [YUN 2005, p. 1146]. There were eight parties to the 2006 amendment to annex B of the Protocol [YUN 2006, p. 1220], which had not yet entered into force.

The thirteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to UNFCCC (Bali, Indonesia, 3-15 December) [UNFCCC/CP/2007/6 & Add.1,2] launched the Bali Action Plan, a comprehensive process to enable the full, effective and sustained implementation of the Convention through long-term cooperative action up to and beyond 2012. The Plan sought to establish a long-term goal for emissions reductions and outlined measures to enhance action on climate change mitigation, adaptation, technology development and transfer, and the provision of financial resources and investment to support those measures. It established the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention, a subsidiary body that would conduct the process; the Working Group would complete its work by 2009.

The Conference decided to reconstitute the Expert Group on Technology Transfer for a further five years and extend the mandate of the Least Developed Countries Expert Group. It adopted the amended New Delhi work programme on article 6 of the Convention relating to education, training and public awareness; the first version of the work programme was adopted in 2002 [YUN 2002, p. 1042]. The Conference also adopted revised UNFCCC reporting guidelines on global climate change observing systems. Other decisions were related to reducing emissions from deforestation in developing countries; the development and transfer of technologies under the Subsidiary Body for Implementation; the IPCC fourth assessment report (see p. 1067); additional guidance for GEF; the compilation and synthesis of fourth national communications; reporting on global observing systems for climate; and administrative and financial matters.

The third session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, held concurrently with the thirteenth Conference of the Parties [FCCC/KP/CMP/2007/9 & Add.1,2], adopted decisions related to the Adaptation Fund; the clean development mechanism; implementation of article 6 of the Protocol; the second review of the Protocol pursuant to article 9; compliance; good practice guidance for land use, land-use change and forestry activities under article 3; progress in achieving commitments by parties included in annex I to the Convention; compilation and synthesis of supplementary information incorporated in fourth communications submitted in accordance with article 7 of the Protocol; the implications of possible changes to the limit for

small-scale afforestation and reforestation clean development mechanism project activities; and administrative and budgetary matters.

In November, the Executive Board of the Protocol's clean development mechanism issued, in two parts, its annual report to the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol: the first part [FCCC/KP/CMP/2007/3 (Part I)] covered the mechanism's activities during the period from 1 November 2006 to 19 October 2007; the second contained recommendations to the Meeting of the Parties [FCCC/KP/CMP/2007/3 (Part II)].

The Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) [FCCC/SBSTA/2007/4] and the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) [FCCC/SBI/2007/15 & Corr.1 & Add.1 & Add.1/Corr.1] held their twenty-sixth sessions (Bonn, Germany, 7-18 May). SBSTA [FCCC/SBSTA/2007/16] and SBI [FCCC/SBI/2007/34] also held their twenty-seventh sessions in 2007 (Bali, Indonesia, 3-11 December).

#### GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 10 December [meeting 65], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Second Committee [A/62/419/Add.4], adopted **resolution 62/86** without vote [agenda item 54 (d)].

#### Protection of global climate for present and future generations of mankind

##### *The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolutions 43/53 of 6 December 1988 and 54/222 of 22 December 1999, its decision 55/443 of 20 December 2000 and its resolutions 56/199 of 21 December 2001, 57/257 of 20 December 2002, 58/243 of 23 December 2003, 59/234 of 22 December 2004, 60/197 of 22 December 2005 and 61/201 of 20 December 2006 and other resolutions relating to the protection of the global climate for present and future generations of mankind,

*Recalling also* the provisions of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, including the acknowledgement that the global nature of climate change calls for the widest possible cooperation by all countries and their participation in an effective and appropriate international response, in accordance with their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities and their social and economic conditions,

*Recalling further* the United Nations Millennium Declaration, in which Heads of State and Government resolved to make every effort to ensure the entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol and to embark on the required reduction in emissions of greenhouse gases,

*Recalling* the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development, the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development ("Johannesburg Plan of Implementation"), the Delhi Ministerial Declaration on Climate Change and Sustainable Development, adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change at its eighth session,

held in New Delhi from 23 October to 1 November 2002, the outcome of the ninth session of the Conference of the Parties, held in Milan, Italy, from 1 to 12 December 2003, the outcome of the tenth session of the Conference of the Parties, held in Buenos Aires from 6 to 18 December 2004, the outcome of the eleventh session of the Conference of the Parties and the first session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, held in Montreal, Canada, from 28 November to 10 December 2005, and the outcome of the twelfth session of the Conference of the Parties and the second session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, held in Nairobi from 6 to 17 November 2006,

*Reaffirming* the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, the Mauritius Declaration and the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States,

*Recalling* the 2005 World Summit Outcome,

*Remaining deeply concerned* that all countries, in particular developing countries, including the least developed countries and small island developing States, face increased risks from the negative effects of climate change, and stressing the need to address adaptation needs relating to such effects,

*Noting* that, to date, there are one hundred and ninety-two parties to the Convention, including one hundred and ninety-one States and one regional economic integration organization,

*Noting also* that, currently, the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change has attracted one hundred and seventy-six ratifications, accessions, acceptances or approvals, including by thirty-eight parties included in annex I to the Convention,

*Noting further* the amendment to annex B to the Kyoto Protocol,

*Noting* the work of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the need to build and enhance scientific and technological capabilities, inter alia, through continuing support to the Panel for the exchange of scientific data and information, especially in developing countries,

*Noting also* the significance of the scientific findings of the fourth assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which contribute positively to the discussions under the Convention and the understanding of the phenomenon of climate change, including its impacts and risks,

*Noting with appreciation* the initiative of the President of the General Assembly at its sixty-first session, in having convened the informal thematic debate on "Climate change as a global challenge" from 31 July to 2 August 2007,

*Noting also with appreciation* the initiative of the Secretary-General in having convened the informal high-level event entitled "The future in our hands: addressing the leadership challenge of climate change" on 24 September 2007, aimed at providing impetus and political support to the Convention and raising awareness of the global challenge of climate change,

*Reaffirming its commitment* to the ultimate objective of the Convention, namely, to stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that prevents dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system,

*Taking note* of the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,

1. *Stresses* the seriousness of climate change, and calls upon States to work cooperatively towards achieving the ultimate objective of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change through the implementation of its provisions;

2. *Notes* that States that have ratified the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change welcome the entry into force of the Protocol on 16 February 2005 and strongly urge States that have not yet done so to ratify it in a timely manner;

3. *Takes note* of the outcome of the eleventh and twelfth sessions of the Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention and the first and second sessions of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol;

4. *Takes note with appreciation* of the offer of the Government of Indonesia to host the thirteenth session of the Conference of the Parties and the third session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, to be held in Bali from 3 to 14 December 2007, and looks forward to a successful outcome, including the advancement of negotiations on the way forward;

5. *Also takes note with appreciation* of the offer of the Government of Poland to host the fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties and the fourth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, to be held in Poznań from 1 to 12 December 2008;

6. *Recognizes* that climate change poses serious risks and challenges to all countries, particularly to developing countries, especially the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing States and countries in Africa, including those that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change, and calls upon States to take urgent global action to address climate change in accordance with the principles identified in the Framework Convention, including the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, and, in this regard, urges all countries to fully implement their commitments under the Convention, to take effective and concrete actions and measures at all levels, and to enhance international cooperation in the framework of the Convention;

7. *Also recognizes* the need to provide financial and technical resources, as well as capacity-building and access to and transfer of technology, to assist those developing countries adversely affected by climate change;

8. *Reaffirms* that efforts to address climate change in a manner that enhances the sustainable development and sustained economic growth of the developing countries and the eradication of poverty should be carried out through promoting the integration of the three components of sustainable development, namely, economic development, social development and environmental protection, as interdependent and mutually reinforcing pillars, in an integrated, coordinated and balanced manner;

9. *Calls upon* the international community to fulfil the commitments made during the fourth replenishment of the Global Environment Facility Trust Fund;

10. *Notes* the ongoing work of the liaison group of the secretariats and offices of the relevant subsidiary bodies of the Framework Convention, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, and the Convention on Biological Diversity, and encourages cooperation to promote complementarities among the three secretariats while respecting their independent legal status;

11. *Requests* the Secretary-General to make provisions for the sessions of the Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention and its subsidiary bodies in his proposal for the programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009;

12. *Invites* the conferences of the parties to the multilateral environmental conventions, when setting the dates of their meetings, to take into consideration the schedule of meetings of the General Assembly and the Commission on Sustainable Development so as to ensure the adequate representation of developing countries at those meetings;

13. *Invites* the secretariat of the Framework Convention to report, through the Secretary-General, to the General Assembly at its sixty-third session on the work of the Conference of the Parties;

14. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-third session the sub-item entitled "Protection of global climate for present and future generations of mankind".

### Vienna Convention and Montreal Protocol

As at 31 December, the total number of parties to the 1985 Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer [YUN 1985, p. 804], which entered into force in 1988 [YUN 1988, p. 810], stood at 190 States and the EC.

Parties to the Montreal Protocol, which was adopted in 1987 [YUN 1987, p. 686], numbered 190 States and the EC; the 1990 Amendment to the Protocol, 185 States and the EC; the 1992 Amendment, 178 States and the EC; the 1997 Amendment, 158 States and the EC; and the 1999 Amendment, 135 States and the EC.

The nineteenth Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer (Montreal, 17-21 September) [UNEP/OzL.Pro.19/7] adopted the Montreal Declaration, by which the parties to the Protocol reaffirmed their commitment to phase out the consumption and production of ozone-depleting substances. It decided that South Africa was eligible for financial assistance from the Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol; extended until 31 December 2011 the global laboratory and analytical-use exemption for controlled substances listed in the Protocol; and approved Romania's request to be removed from the list of developing countries under the Protocol. Other decisions related to ratification of the Convention, the Protocol and amendments to the Protocol; adjustments to the Protocol with regard to hydrochlorofluorocarbons and additional work on those compounds; critical-use exemptions for methyl

bromide for 2008 and 2009; terms of reference for the study on the 2009-2011 replenishment of the Multilateral Fund; preventing illegal trade in ozone-depleting substances; essential-use nominations for controlled substances for 2008 and 2009; an essential-use exemption for chlorofluorocarbon-113 for aerospace applications in the Russian Federation for 2008; changes in the list of uses of controlled substances as process agents; follow-up to a 2006 assessment report by the Halons Technical Options Committee; the use of carbon tetrachloride for laboratory and analytical uses; terms of reference for the Scientific Assessment, Environmental Effects Assessment, and Technology and Economic Assessment Panels; Turkmenistan's request for a change in baseline data for 1998 for the consumption of methyl bromide; data and information provided by parties in accordance with article 7 of the Protocol; reporting on licensing systems for ozone-depleting substances; the reporting of the production of chlorofluorocarbons; compliance issues; and administrative and budgetary matters.

The Implementation Committee under the Non-compliance Procedure held its thirty-eighth (Nairobi, 8-9 June) [UNEP/OzL.Pro/ImpCom/38/5] and thirty-ninth (Montreal, 12-14 September) [UNEP/OzL.Pro/ImpCom/39/7] meetings.

### Convention on air pollution

As at 31 December, the number of parties to the 1979 Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution [YUN 1979, p. 710], which entered into force in 1983 [YUN 1983, p. 645], remained at 50 States and the EC. Eight protocols to the Convention dealt with the programme for monitoring and evaluation of the pollutants in Europe (1984), the reduction of sulphur emissions or their transboundary fluxes by at least 30 per cent (1985), the control of emissions of nitrogen oxides or their transboundary fluxes (1988), the control of volatile organic compounds or their transboundary fluxes (1991), further reduction of sulphur emissions (1994), heavy metals (1998), persistent organic pollutants (1998) and the abatement of acidification, eutrophication and ground-level ozone (1999).

The twenty-fifth session of the Executive Body for the Convention (Geneva, 10-13 December) [ECE/EB.AIR/91 & Corr.1 & Add.1,2 & Add.2/Amend.1] established a task force on reactive nitrogen and adopted a number of decisions dealing with compliance with reporting obligations.

### Convention on Biological Diversity

As at 31 December, the number of parties to the 1992 Convention on Biological Diversity [YUN 1992, p. 638], which entered into force in 1993 [YUN 1993, p. 210], stood at 189 countries and the EC.

At year's end, 143 States and the EC were parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, which was adopted in 2000 [YUN 2000, p. 973] and entered into force in 2003 [YUN 2003, p. 1051].

The twelfth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (Paris, 2-6 July) [UNEP/CBD/COP/9/2] adopted recommendations for consideration by the ninth (2008) meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention.

#### GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 19 December [meeting 78], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Second Committee [A/62/419/Add.6], adopted **resolution 62/194** without vote [agenda item 54 (f)].

#### Convention on Biological Diversity

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolutions 55/201 of 20 December 2000, 56/197 of 21 December 2001, 57/253 and 57/260 of 20 December 2002, 58/212 of 23 December 2003, 59/236 of 22 December 2004, 60/202 of 22 December 2005 and 61/204 of 20 December 2006,

*Recalling also* its resolution 61/203 of 20 December 2006 on the International Year of Biodiversity, 2010,

*Reiterating* that the Convention on Biological Diversity is the key international instrument for the conservation and sustainable use of biological resources, and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources,

*Noting* that one hundred and eighty-nine States and one regional economic integration organization have ratified the Convention and that one hundred and forty-two States and one regional economic integration organization have ratified the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to the Convention on Biological Diversity,

*Recalling* the commitments of the World Summit on Sustainable Development to pursue a more efficient and coherent implementation of the three objectives of the Convention and the achievement by 2010 of a significant reduction in the current rate of loss of biological diversity, which will require action at all levels, including the implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans and the provision of new and additional financial and technical resources to developing countries,

*Concerned* by the continued loss of biological diversity, and acknowledging that an unprecedented effort would be needed to achieve by 2010 a significant reduction in the rate of loss of biological diversity,

*Noting* the need for enhanced cooperation among the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (the "Rio Conventions"), while respecting their individual mandates, concerned by the negative impacts that loss of biodiversity, desertification, land degradation and climate change have on each other, and recognizing the potential benefits of complemen-

tarities in addressing these problems in a mutually supportive manner with a view to achieving the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity,

*Acknowledging* the contribution that the ongoing work of the Intergovernmental Committee on Intellectual Property and Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Folklore, of the World Intellectual Property Organization, can make in enhancing the effective implementation of the provisions of the Convention on Biological Diversity,

*Noting* the contribution that South-South cooperation can make in the area of biological diversity,

*Taking note* of the reports of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity on the work of the Convention;

2. *Encourages* developed countries parties to the Convention to contribute to the relevant trust funds of the Convention, in particular so as to enhance the full participation of the developing countries parties in all of its activities;

3. *Urges* all Member States to fulfil their commitments to significantly reduce the rate of loss of biodiversity by 2010, and emphasizes that this will require an appropriate focus on the loss of biodiversity in their relevant policies and programmes and the continued provision of new and additional financial and technical resources to developing countries, including through the Global Environment Facility;

4. *Urges* parties to the Convention to facilitate the transfer of technology for the effective implementation of the Convention in accordance with its provisions;

5. *Notes* the establishment of the Heads of Agencies Task Force on the 2010 Biodiversity Target, as well as the convening of the first meeting of the Chairpersons of the scientific advisory bodies of the biodiversity-related conventions and the Rio Conventions aimed at enhancing scientific and technical collaboration for achieving the 2010 biodiversity target;

6. *Recognizes* the importance of the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, to be held in Bonn, Germany, from 12 to 16 May 2008, and the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, to be held in Bonn from 19 to 30 May 2008;

7. *Notes* the progress made in the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Access and Benefit-sharing towards elaborating and negotiating the international regime on access and benefit-sharing, stresses the importance of finalizing the negotiations on the international regime on access and benefit-sharing within the framework of the Convention, and urges parties to make every effort to complete negotiations at the earliest possible time, before the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to be held in 2010;

8. *Takes note* of the establishment by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention of seven thematic programmes of work, and welcomes the work initiated on cross-cutting issues;

9. *Reaffirms* the commitment, subject to national legislation, to respect, preserve and maintain the knowledge,

innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities embodying traditional lifestyles relevant to the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, promote their wider application with the approval and involvement of the holders of such knowledge, innovations and practices and encourage the equitable sharing of the benefits arising from their utilization;

10. *Stresses* the importance of private-sector engagement for the implementation of the objectives of the Convention and the achievement of the 2010 target, and invites businesses to align their policies and practices more explicitly with the objectives of the Convention, including, inter alia, through partnerships;

11. *Takes note* of initiatives for the enhanced implementation of the three objectives of the Convention, in particular those that are promoted by developing countries;

12. *Invites* parties to the Convention, other Governments, relevant international organizations and other relevant stakeholders to make preparations to celebrate in 2010 the International Year of Biodiversity;

13. *Takes note* of the ongoing work of the Joint Liaison Group of the secretariats and offices of the relevant subsidiary bodies of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, and the Convention on Biological Diversity, and further encourages continuing cooperation in order to promote complementarities among the secretariats, while respecting their independent legal status;

14. *Invites* the countries that have not yet done so to ratify or to accede to the Convention;

15. *Invites* countries to consider ratifying or acceding to the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture;

16. *Invites* the parties to the Convention that have not yet ratified or acceded to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to consider doing so, reiterates the commitment of States parties to the Protocol to support its implementation, and stresses that this will require the full support of parties and of relevant international organizations, in particular with regard to the provision of assistance to developing countries in capacity-building for biosafety;

17. *Invites* the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity to report, through the Secretary-General, to the General Assembly at its sixty-third session on the work of the Conference of the Parties;

18. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-third session, under the item entitled "Sustainable development", the sub-item entitled "Convention on Biological Diversity".

### Convention to combat desertification

As at 31 December, 192 States and the EC were parties to the 1994 United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa (UNCCD) [YUN 1994, p. 944], which entered into force in 1996 [YUN 1996, p. 958].

The fifth session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC) (Buenos Aires, Argentina, 12-21 March) [ICCD/CRIC(5)/11] discussed implementation of the Convention in regions other than Africa and at the global level, and made recommendations relating to those issues. At its sixth session (Madrid, Spain, 4-7 September), CRIC discussed the implementation of the Convention and its institutional arrangements, as well as the activities of the Global Mechanism, which advised developing country parties to the Convention on up-scaling public financing for sustainable land management activities. The Committee on Science and Technology, another Conference subsidiary body, held its eighth session (Madrid, 4-6 September).

The eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention (Madrid, 3-14 September) [ICCD/COP(8)/16/ & Add.1] adopted a 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention (2008-2018) (see below). The plan, which was later submitted to the Second Committee in an October note by the UN Secretariat [A/C.2/62/7], set out strategic and operational objectives that would guide the actions of all UNCCD stakeholders and partners during the 2008-2018 period. The Conference also renewed the mandate of CRIC as a subsidiary body of the Conference of the Parties; and requested the UNCCD secretariat to establish a UNCCD fellowship programme, subject to voluntary funding, according to the terms of reference contained in a secretariat note [ICCD/COP(8)/CST/5]. Other Conference decisions related to strengthening implementation of the Convention in all regions; follow-up to the outcome of the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development [YUN 2002, p. 821] and preparation for the sixteenth (2008) and seventeenth (2009) sessions of the Commission on Sustainable Development; activities for promoting and strengthening relationships and synergies with other relevant conventions and international organizations; mobilization of resources for the implementation of the Convention; collaboration between UNCCD and the Global Environment Facility (GEF); the roster of independent experts; the functioning of the Committee on Science and Technology and reshaping its operation in line with the recommendations of the 10-year strategic plan; networking of institutions, agencies and bodies to support UNCCD implementation; the Land Degradation Assessment in Drylands project; the final report of the Group of Experts [ICCD/COP(8)/CST/2/Add.1-9]; procedures and institutional mechanisms for the resolution of implementation questions; arbitration and conciliation procedures; and administrative matters. Among the documents considered by the Conference was a July note by the UNCCD secretariat [ICCD/COP(8)/INF.5] on follow-up to the 2005 report of the Joint Inspection

Unit [YUN 2005, p. 1150] and strategy development to foster implementation of the Convention.

In a decision adopted by the first extraordinary session of the Conference of the Parties (New York, 26 November) [ICCD/COP(ES-1)/5], the Conference introduced the euro as the accounting currency of the Convention for the 2010-2011 period and approved a core budget of €14,896,000 for the 2008-2009 biennium. It also adopted the indicative scale of contributions for 2008 and 2009, which was annexed to the decision.

#### GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 19 December [meeting 78], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Second Committee [A/62/419/Add.5], adopted **resolution 62/193** without vote [agenda item 54 (e)].

#### Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolutions 58/211 of 23 December 2003, 61/202 of 20 December 2006 and other resolutions relating to the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa,

*Recalling also* the 2005 World Summit Outcome,

*Reasserting its commitment* to promoting desertification control, eradicating extreme poverty, promoting sustainable development in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas and improving the livelihoods of people affected by drought and/or desertification,

*Determined* to build upon the momentum and to boost the spirit of international solidarity generated by the designation of 2006 as the International Year of Deserts and Desertification,

*Reaffirming* the universal membership of the Convention, and acknowledging that desertification and drought are problems of a global dimension in that they affect all regions in the world,

*Emphasizing* that desertification seriously threatens the ability of developing countries to achieve the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, and recognizing that the timely and effective implementation of the Convention would help to achieve these goals,

*Concerned* about the negative impacts desertification, land degradation, loss of biological diversity and climate change have on each other, while emphasizing the potential benefits of complementarities in addressing these problems in a mutually supportive manner,

*Reaffirming* the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development ("Johannesburg Plan of Implementation"), which recognizes the Convention as one of the tools for poverty eradication,

*Recognizing* the need to provide the secretariat of the Convention with stable, adequate and predictable resources

in order to enable it to continue to discharge its responsibilities in an efficient and timely manner,

*Welcoming* the decision of the eleventh session of the Commission on Sustainable Development to consider, among others, the issue of desertification and drought during its sixteenth and seventeenth sessions,

*Expressing its deep appreciation* to the Government of Spain for hosting the eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention in Madrid from 3 to 14 September 2007,

*Expressing also its deep appreciation* to the Government of Argentina for hosting the fifth session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention in Buenos Aires from 12 to 21 March 2007,

*Welcoming* the offer made by the Government of Turkey to host the seventh session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention in conjunction with the special intersessional session of the Committee on Science and Technology, in Istanbul, from 20 to 29 October 2008,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa;

2. *Reaffirms its resolve* to support and strengthen the implementation of the Convention with a view to addressing causes of desertification and land degradation, as well as poverty resulting from land degradation, through, inter alia, the mobilization of adequate and predictable financial resources, the transfer of technology and capacity-building at all levels;

3. *Welcomes* the adoption by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention at its eighth session, in its decision 3/COP.8, of the ten-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention (2008-2018), invites all parties, the secretariat of the Convention and other institutions and supporting bodies to cooperate and coordinate their activities for a successful implementation of the strategy, and also invites all parties to report on the progress made in the implementation of the strategy;

4. *Expresses its appreciation* for the financial contributions made by Member States and other relevant stakeholders in support of the activities of the Intersessional Intergovernmental Working Group on the ten-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention;

5. *Notes* the request made for an assessment of the Global Mechanism by the Joint Inspection Unit of the United Nations, and looks forward to its findings;

6. *Reiterates its call upon* Governments, where appropriate, in collaboration with relevant multilateral organizations, including the Global Environment Facility implementation agencies, to integrate desertification into their plans and strategies for sustainable development;

7. *Invites* developed countries parties to the Convention and other Governments, multilateral organizations, the private sector and other relevant organizations to make resources available to affected developing countries for the implementation of the ten-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention;

8. *Notes with appreciation* the efforts of the Secretariat to continue its administrative renewal and reform and to streamline its functions in order to fully implement the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit and bring them into line with the ten-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention;

9. *Invites* the States parties to the Convention to provide the new Executive Secretary of the Convention with full support in the fulfilment of his mandate and in promoting the implementation of the Convention;

10. *Notes* the ongoing work of the Joint Liaison Group of the secretariats and offices of the relevant subsidiary bodies of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, and further encourages continuing cooperation in order to promote complementarities in the work of the secretariats, while respecting their independent legal status;

11. *Also notes* the decision of the Conference of the Parties at its eighth session to renew the mandate of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention as a subsidiary body of the Conference of the Parties;

12. *Further notes* the decision taken by the Council of the Global Environment Facility in December 2006 to invite the fourth Assembly of the Facility to amend the Instrument for the Establishment of the Restructured Global Environment Facility so as to list the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification among the conventions for which the Facility plays the role of financial mechanism;

13. *Recalls* the fourth replenishment of the Global Environment Facility Trust Fund, stresses the importance of the fulfilment of the commitments made, and emphasizes in this regard the need to continue to allocate adequate financial resources to the focal area of land degradation;

14. *Welcomes* the ongoing process of addressing the issue of adopting the euro as the budgetary and accounting currency of the Convention, and in this regard requests the Secretary-General, taking into account the institutional linkage and related administrative arrangements between the Convention secretariat and the United Nations Secretariat, to facilitate the implementation of decisions of the Conference of the Parties related to the protection of the Convention budget against negative effects of currency fluctuations;

15. *Invites* the Executive Secretary of the Convention, in coordination with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, to actively prepare for and participate in the sixteenth and seventeenth sessions of the Commission on Sustainable Development with a view to ensuring that the Convention core issues, in particular those relating to land degradation, drought and desertification, are duly considered in the context of sustainable development during the deliberations of the review session, with a view to ensuring a successful outcome from the entire cycle of the Commission;

16. *Invites* the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, when setting the dates of its meetings, to take into consideration the schedule of meetings of the General As-

sembly and the Commission on Sustainable Development so as to help ensure the adequate representation of developing countries at those meetings;

17. *Requests* the Secretary-General to make provision for the sessions of the Conference of the Parties and its subsidiary bodies in his proposal for the programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009;

18. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-third session the sub-item entitled "Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa";

19. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a report on the implementation of the present resolution, including a report on the implementation of the Convention, to the General Assembly at its sixty-third session.

### *United Nations Decade for Deserts and the Fight against Desertification (2010-2020)*

On 9 February [dec. 24/14], the UNEP Governing Council, reasserting its commitment to promoting desertification control and sustainable development in deserts and arid areas, eradicating extreme poverty, and improving the lives of affected populations, recommended that the General Assembly, during its sixty-second (2007) session, declare the decade 2010-2020 as the United Nations Decade for Deserts and the Fight against Desertification. The Assembly declared the Decade in resolution 62/195 of 19 December (see p. 1046).

## **Environmental activities**

### **The atmosphere**

The Secretary-General convened a high-level event on climate change (New York, 24 September) to raise the profile of the issue among world leaders and build momentum for launching negotiations on a new international framework to address climate change during the thirteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (see p. 1059). The event, attended by representatives of 168 Member States, including 50 Heads of State and 20 Heads of Government, was the largest gathering of world leaders on climate change to date. In a 29 October letter [A/62/511], the Secretary-General forwarded to the General Assembly President a background note issued in advance of the event. The note provided an overview of the issues to be discussed during the event, including the challenge of adaptation to climate change, the role of technology and its dissemination, financing the response to climate change, and reducing emissions and stabilizing the climate. The letter also contained the text of the Chair's summary of the event, which was presented orally by the Secretary-General at the event's closing.

The general debate on 25 September [A/62/PV.4] of the Assembly's sixty-second (2007) session was held on the theme "Responding to climate change". The Assembly President proposed the creation of a comprehensive road map to guide the way forward for the UN system and Member States in dealing with the issue.

**Communications.** In a 5 June letter to the Secretary-General [A/62/88], China transmitted its National Climate Change Programme, which reflected China's policies and actions taken to address climate change comprehensively.

On 31 October [A/62/516-S/2007/648], Bahrain transmitted to the Secretary-General the statement of the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Bahrain, Nizar Bin Sadeq Al-Baharna, made on the occasion of United Nations Day (24 October). According to the statement, Bahrain approved, in September, the establishment of a joint national committee to address the effects of climate change. It also identified ways and means to introduce environment-friendly technology; draft measures for the implementation of environmental agreements, in conformity with national laws; and prepare national climate change reports.

#### GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 19 November [meeting 53], the General Assembly adopted **resolution 62/8** [draft: A/62/L.11/Rev.1] without vote [agenda items 48, 54 & 116].

#### Overview of United Nations activities relating to climate change

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling the 2005 World Summit Outcome,*

*Recalling also the views expressed by Member States during the general debate of the General Assembly at its sixty-second session on the suggested thematic issue "Responding to climate change", the Secretary-General's high-level event on climate change on 24 September 2007 and the informal thematic debate at its sixty-first session on "Climate change as a global challenge",*

*Requests the Secretary-General, in this context, to submit, by 25 January 2008, a comprehensive report providing an overview of the activities of the United Nations system in relation to climate change.*

#### *Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change*

The twenty-sixth session of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) (Bangkok, Thailand, 4 May) adopted its budget for 2008 and took note of the forecast budget for 2009 and the indicative budget for 2010. It also took action with regard to its terms of reference and further work on emission scenarios.

The twenty-seventh session of IPCC (Valencia, Spain, 12-17 November) finalized the IPCC fourth assessment report, "Climate Change 2007", and adopted the Synthesis Report of the Assessment and the Summary for Policy Makers. The assessment found, among other things, that warming of the climate system was unequivocal, and many natural systems were being affected by regional climate changes, particularly temperature increases. It was likely that most of the observed increase in global average temperatures since the mid-twentieth century resulted from increases in anthropogenic greenhouse gas concentrations. The summary report identified several risks associated with climate change, and found that efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change impacts could together significantly reduce those risks. IPCC also adopted a revised budget for 2008 and discussed the membership of the IPCC and Task Force Bureaux, as well as its future work.

**Nobel Prize.** On 10 December, the Nobel Prize in Peace 2007 was awarded jointly to IPCC and former United States Vice President Albert Arnold Gore, Jr., "for their efforts to build up and disseminate greater knowledge about man-made climate change, and to lay the foundations for the measures that are needed to counteract such change".

#### Terrestrial ecosystems

##### *Deforestation and forest degradation*

A 27 September letter from Indonesia [A/C.2/62/3] contained the joint statement of the leaders of tropical rainforest countries, made at the conclusion of the Special Leaders' Meeting of Tropical Rainforest Countries (New York, 24 September).

##### United Nations Forum on Forests

The United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF), at its seventh session (New York, 16-27 April) [E/2007/42 & Corr.1], adopted, in a resolution [res. 7/1] brought to the attention of the Economic and Social Council, its multi-year programme of work for the period 2007-2015. UNFF recommended a draft resolution for adoption by the Council containing the text of the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests, which was adopted by the Forum in response to Council resolution 2006/49 [YUN 2006, p. 1229], as well as a draft resolution for adoption by the General Assembly. The Forum also recommended draft decisions on the term of office of its Bureau, the report on its seventh session, and the dates, venue and provisional agenda for its eighth (2009) session.

The Forum had before it a report of the Secretary-General on the UNFF multi-year programme of work

[E/CN.18/2007/2]; secretariat notes on the revised composite draft text for developing a non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests [E/CN.18/2007/3]; the 2007 multi-stakeholder dialogue [E/CN.18/2007/4 & Add.1-6] and enhanced cooperation and policy and programme coordination [E/CN.18/2007/5]; an information document on the Collaborative Partnership on Forests Framework 2007 [E/CN.18/2007/6]; and a 23 February letter from Indonesia [E/CN.18/2007/7] containing the Co-Chair's summary report of the International Expert Meeting on the Multi-Year Programme of Work of the United Nations Forum on Forests: Charting the Way Forward to 2015 (Nusa Dua, Indonesia, 13-16 February), a country-level initiative co-hosted by Germany and Indonesia.

By **decision 2007/257** of 26 July, the Council deferred action on the report of UNFF on its seventh session until its resumed substantive session.

On 4 October, the Council decided that, beginning with the eighth session of UNFF, officers elected to the UNFF Bureau would hold office for a two-year term (**decision 2007/273**), and that the eighth session would be held in New York from 20 April to 1 May 2009 (**decision 2007/274**).

On 17 October (**decision 2007/277**), the Council took note of the report of UNFF on its seventh session and approved the provisional agenda for its eighth (2009) session. On the same date (**decision 2007/278**), the Council, taking note of UNFF [resolution 7/1] (see p. 1067), decided that, in order for Bureau members to carry out their functions effectively, consideration should be given to providing financial support, consisting of travel and daily subsistence, to Bureau members from developing countries and countries with economies in transition through designated contributions to the UNFF trust fund. It also decided that such financial support should cover participation in at least one Bureau meeting per year, to be held in or outside New York, and invited donor Governments, institutions and other organizations to contribute to the trust fund.

#### ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL ACTION

On 17 October [meeting 49], the Economic and Social Council, on the recommendation of the United Nations Forum on Forests [E/2007/42 & Corr.1 & E/2007/L.39], adopted **resolution 2007/40** without vote [agenda item 13 (i)].

#### Non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests

*The Economic and Social Council,*

*Recalling* its resolution 2006/49 of 28 July 2006, in which it requested the United Nations Forum on Forests

to conclude and adopt at its seventh session a non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests,

1. *Notes* that the United Nations Forum on Forests, at its seventh session, adopted a non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests;

2. *Reiterates* paragraph 17 of its resolution 2006/49 in which it decided to consider ways of strengthening the secretariat of the Forum, within existing resources, as well as through increased voluntary extrabudgetary resources, to enable it to fulfil its function more effectively, bearing in mind paragraph 163 (b) of the 2005 World Summit Outcome;

3. *Refers in particular* to paragraphs 5 (f), 20 and 21 of its resolution 2006/49, in which it invited the members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests to undertake activities related to supporting developing countries, as well as countries with economies in transition, in accessing additional national and international funding; monitoring, assessment and reporting; and the submission of consolidated reports on initiatives and activities of the Partnership;

4. *Recommends* to the General Assembly that it adopt the draft resolution contained in the annex to the present resolution;

5. *Invites* the Forum to establish and maintain cooperation with relevant multilateral environmental agreements, instruments, processes and United Nations bodies, relevant international and regional organizations, institutions and major groups in order to facilitate enhanced cooperation to achieve the purposes of the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests;

6. *Decides* to develop and consider, with a view to its adoption at the eighth session of the Forum, a voluntary global financial mechanism/portfolio approach/forest financing framework for all types of forests, aimed at mobilizing significantly increased, new and additional resources from all sources, based on existing and emerging innovative approaches, also taking into account assessments and reviews of current financial mechanisms, to support the implementation of sustainable forest management, the achievement of the global objectives on forests and the implementation of the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests;

7. *Also decides* that the Forum should, within existing resources, convene before its eighth session an open-ended ad hoc expert group meeting to develop proposals for the development of a voluntary global financial mechanism/portfolio approach/forest financing framework, and invites the Collaborative Partnership on Forests to assist in the development of these proposals.

#### ANNEX

#### Non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* Economic and Social Council resolution 2006/49 of 28 July 2006, in which the Council requested the United Nations Forum on Forests to conclude and adopt at its seventh session a non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests,

1. *Decides* to adopt the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests as contained in the appendix to the present resolution;

2. *Invites* members of the governing bodies of the member organizations of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests to support the implementation of the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests, consistent with the mandates of those organizations, and, to that end, invites the United Nations Forum on Forests to provide guidance to the Partnership;

3. *Also invites* donor Governments and other countries in a position to do so, financial institutions and other organizations to make voluntary financial contributions to the trust fund for the United Nations Forum on Forests so that the Forum may address, within the context of its multi-year programme of work, the implementation of the non-legally binding instrument and provide support for participants from developing countries and countries with economies in transition to attend its meetings;

4. *Decides* that the Forum will review the effectiveness of the non-legally binding instrument as part of the overall review of the effectiveness of the international arrangement on forests decided upon by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 2006/49.

## Appendix

### Non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests

#### *Member States,*

*Recognizing* that forests and trees outside forests provide multiple economic, social and environmental benefits, and emphasizing that sustainable forest management contributes significantly to sustainable development and poverty eradication,

*Recalling* the Non-legally Binding Authoritative Statement of Principles for a Global Consensus on Management, Conservation and Sustainable Development of All Types of Forests (Forest Principles); chapter 11 of Agenda 21; the proposals for action of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/Intergovernmental Forum on Forests; resolutions and decisions of the United Nations Forum on Forests; the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development; the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development; the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals; the 2005 World Summit Outcome; and existing international legally binding instruments relevant to forests,

*Welcoming* the accomplishments of the international arrangement on forests since its inception by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 2000/35 of 18 October 2000, and recalling the decision of the Council, in its resolution 2006/49 of 28 July 2006, to strengthen the international arrangement on forests,

*Reaffirming their commitment* to the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, including that States have, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international law, the sovereign right to exploit their own resources pursuant to their own environmental and developmental policies and the responsibility to ensure that activities within their jurisdiction or control do not cause damage to the environment of other States or of areas beyond the limits of national jurisdiction, and to the common but differentiated responsibilities of countries, as set out in Principle 7 of the Rio Declaration,

*Recognizing* that sustainable forest management, as a dynamic and evolving concept, is intended to maintain and enhance the economic, social and environmental values of all types of forests, for the benefit of present and future generations,

*Expressing their concern* about continued deforestation and forest degradation, as well as the slow rate of afforestation and forest cover recovery and reforestation, and the resulting adverse impact on economies, the environment, including biological diversity, and the livelihoods of at least a billion people and their cultural heritage, and emphasizing the need for more effective implementation of sustainable forest management at all levels to address these critical challenges,

*Recognizing* the impact of climate change on forests and sustainable forest management, as well as the contribution of forests to addressing climate change,

*Reaffirming* the special needs and requirements of countries with fragile forest ecosystems, including those of low forest cover countries,

*Stressing* the need to strengthen political commitment and collective efforts at all levels, to include forests in national and international development agendas, to enhance national policy coordination and international cooperation and to promote intersectoral coordination at all levels for the effective implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests,

*Emphasizing* that effective implementation of sustainable forest management is critically dependent upon adequate resources, including financing, capacity development and the transfer of environmentally sound technologies, and recognizing in particular the need to mobilize increased financial resources, including from innovative sources, for developing countries, including least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States, as well as countries with economies in transition,

*Also emphasizing* that implementation of sustainable forest management is also critically dependent upon good governance at all levels,

*Noting* that the provisions of this instrument do not prejudice the rights and obligations of Member States under international law,

*Have committed* themselves as follows:

### I. Purpose

1. The purpose of this instrument is:

(a) To strengthen political commitment and action at all levels to implement effectively sustainable management of all types of forests and to achieve the shared global objectives on forests;

(b) To enhance the contribution of forests to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, in particular with respect to poverty eradication and environmental sustainability;

(c) To provide a framework for national action and international cooperation.

### II. Principles

2. Member States should respect the following principles, which build upon the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development and the Rio Forest Principles:

(a) The instrument is voluntary and non-legally binding;  
 (b) Each State is responsible for the sustainable management of its forests and for the enforcement of its forest-related laws;

(c) Major groups as identified in Agenda 21, local communities, forest owners and other relevant stakeholders contribute to achieving sustainable forest management and should be involved in a transparent and participatory way in forest decision-making processes that affect them, as well as in implementing sustainable forest management, in accordance with national legislation;

(d) Achieving sustainable forest management, in particular in developing countries as well as in countries with economies in transition, depends on significantly increased, new and additional financial resources from all sources;

(e) Achieving sustainable forest management also depends on good governance at all levels;

(f) International cooperation, including financial support, technology transfer, capacity-building and education, plays a crucial catalytic role in supporting the efforts of all countries, particularly developing countries as well as countries with economies in transition, to achieve sustainable forest management.

### III. Scope

3. The present instrument applies to all types of forests.

4. Sustainable forest management, as a dynamic and evolving concept, aims to maintain and enhance the economic, social and environmental values of all types of forests, for the benefit of present and future generations.

### IV. Global objectives on forests

5. Member States reaffirm the following shared global objectives on forests and their commitment to work globally, regionally and nationally to achieve progress towards their achievement by 2015:

#### Global objective 1

Reverse the loss of forest cover worldwide through sustainable forest management, including protection, restoration, afforestation and reforestation, and increase efforts to prevent forest degradation;

#### Global objective 2

Enhance forest-based economic, social and environmental benefits, including by improving the livelihoods of forest-dependent people;

#### Global objective 3

Increase significantly the area of protected forests worldwide and other areas of sustainably managed forests, as well as the proportion of forest products from sustainably managed forests;

#### Global objective 4

Reverse the decline in official development assistance for sustainable forest management and mobilize significantly increased, new and additional financial resources from all sources for the implementation of sustainable forest management.

### V. National policies and measures

6. To achieve the purpose of the present instrument, and taking into account national policies, priorities, conditions and available resources, Member States should:

(a) Develop, implement, publish and, as necessary, update national forest programmes or other strategies for sustainable forest management which identify actions needed and contain measures, policies or specific goals, taking into account the relevant proposals for action of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/Intergovernmental Forum on Forests and resolutions of the United Nations Forum on Forests;

(b) Consider the seven thematic elements of sustainable forest management, which are drawn from the criteria identified by existing criteria and indicators processes, as a reference framework for sustainable forest management and, in this context, identify, as appropriate, specific environmental and other forest-related aspects within those elements for consideration as criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management;

(c) Promote the use of management tools to assess the impact on the environment of projects that may significantly affect forests, and promote good environmental practices for such projects;

(d) Develop and implement policies that encourage the sustainable management of forests to provide a wide range of goods and services, and that also contribute to poverty reduction and the development of rural communities;

(e) Promote efficient production and processing of forest products, with a view, inter alia, to reducing waste and enhancing recycling;

(f) Support the protection and use of traditional forest-related knowledge and practices in sustainable forest management with the approval and involvement of the holders of such knowledge, and promote fair and equitable sharing of benefits from their utilization, in accordance with national legislation and relevant international agreements;

(g) Further develop and implement criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management that are consistent with national priorities and conditions;

(h) Create enabling environments to encourage private-sector investment, as well as investment by and involvement of local and indigenous communities, other forest users and forest owners and other relevant stakeholders, in sustainable forest management, through a framework of policies, incentives and regulations;

(i) Develop financing strategies that outline the short-, medium- and long-term financial planning for achieving sustainable forest management, taking into account domestic, private-sector and foreign funding sources;

(j) Encourage recognition of the range of values derived from goods and services provided by all types of forests and trees outside forests, as well as ways to reflect such values in the marketplace, consistent with relevant national legislation and policies;

(k) Identify and implement measures to enhance cooperation and cross-sectoral policy and programme coordination among sectors affecting and affected by forest policies and management, with a view to integrating the forest sector into national decision-making processes and promoting sustainable forest management, including by addressing the

underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation, and by promoting forest conservation;

(l) Integrate national forest programmes, or other strategies for sustainable forest management, as referred to in paragraph 6 (a) above, into national strategies for sustainable development, relevant national action plans and poverty-reduction strategies;

(m) Establish or strengthen partnerships, including public-private partnerships, and joint programmes with stakeholders to advance the implementation of sustainable forest management;

(n) Review and, as needed, improve forest-related legislation, strengthen forest law enforcement and promote good governance at all levels in order to support sustainable forest management, to create an enabling environment for forest investment and to combat and eradicate illegal practices, in accordance with national legislation, in the forest and other related sectors;

(o) Analyse the causes of, and address solutions to, threats to forest health and vitality from natural disasters and human activities, including threats from fire, pollution, pests, disease and invasive alien species;

(p) Create, develop or expand, and maintain networks of protected forest areas, taking into account the importance of conserving representative forests, by means of a range of conservation mechanisms, applied within and outside protected forest areas;

(q) Assess the conditions and management effectiveness of existing protected forest areas with a view to identifying improvements needed;

(r) Strengthen the contribution of science and research in advancing sustainable forest management by incorporating scientific expertise into forest policies and programmes;

(s) Promote the development and application of scientific and technological innovations, including those that can be used by forest owners and local and indigenous communities to advance sustainable forest management;

(t) Promote and strengthen public understanding of the importance of and the benefits provided by forests and sustainable forest management, including through public awareness programmes and education;

(u) Promote and encourage access to formal and informal education, extension and training programmes on the implementation of sustainable forest management;

(v) Support education, training and extension programmes involving local and indigenous communities, forest workers and forest owners, in order to develop resource management approaches that will reduce the pressure on forests, particularly fragile ecosystems;

(w) Promote active and effective participation by major groups, local communities, forest owners and other relevant stakeholders in the development, implementation and assessment of forest-related national policies, measures and programmes;

(x) Encourage the private sector, civil society organizations and forest owners to develop, promote and implement in a transparent manner voluntary instruments, such as voluntary certification systems or other appropriate mechanisms, to develop and promote forest products from sustainably managed forests harvested in accordance with domestic legislation, and to improve market transparency;

(y) Enhance access by households, small-scale forest owners, forest-dependent local and indigenous communities, living in and outside forest areas, to forest resources and relevant markets in order to support livelihoods and income diversification from forest management, consistent with sustainable forest management.

## VI. International cooperation and means of implementation

7. To achieve the purpose of the present instrument, Member States should:

(a) Make concerted efforts to secure a sustained high-level political commitment to strengthen the means of implementation of sustainable forest management, including financial resources, to provide support, in particular for developing countries and countries with economies in transition, as well as to mobilize and provide significantly increased, new and additional financial resources from private, public, domestic and international sources to and within developing countries, as well as countries with economies in transition;

(b) Reverse the decline in official development assistance for sustainable forest management and mobilize significantly increased, new and additional financial resources from all sources for the implementation of sustainable forest management;

(c) Take action to raise the priority of sustainable forest management in national development plans and other plans, including poverty-reduction strategies, in order to facilitate increased allocation of official development assistance and financial resources from other sources for sustainable forest management;

(d) Develop and establish positive incentives, in particular for developing countries as well as countries with economies in transition, to reduce the loss of forests, to promote reforestation, afforestation and rehabilitation of degraded forests, to implement sustainable forest management and to increase the area of protected forests;

(e) Support the efforts of countries, particularly developing countries as well as countries with economies in transition, to develop and implement economically, socially and environmentally sound measures that act as incentives for the sustainable management of forests;

(f) Strengthen the capacity of countries, in particular developing countries, to significantly increase the production of forest products from sustainably managed forests;

(g) Enhance bilateral, regional and international cooperation with a view to promoting international trade in forest products from sustainably managed forests harvested according to domestic legislation;

(h) Enhance bilateral, regional and international cooperation to address illicit international trafficking in forest products through the promotion of forest law enforcement and good governance at all levels;

(i) Strengthen, through enhanced bilateral, regional and international cooperation, the capacity of countries to combat effectively illicit international trafficking in forest products, including timber, wildlife and other forest biological resources;

(j) Strengthen the capacity of countries to address forest-related illegal practices, including wildlife poaching,

in accordance with domestic legislation, through enhanced public awareness, education, institutional capacity-building, technological transfer and technical cooperation, law enforcement and information networks;

(k) Enhance and facilitate access to and transfer of appropriate, environmentally sound and innovative technologies and corresponding know-how relevant to sustainable forest management and to efficient value-added processing of forest products, in particular to developing countries, for the benefit of local and indigenous communities;

(l) Strengthen mechanisms that enhance sharing among countries and the use of best practices in sustainable forest management, including through freeware-based information and communications technology;

(m) Strengthen national and local capacity in keeping with their conditions for the development and adaptation of forest-related technologies, including technologies for the use of fuelwood;

(n) Promote international technical and scientific cooperation, including South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation, in the field of sustainable forest management, through the appropriate international, regional and national institutions and processes;

(o) Enhance the research and scientific forest-related capacities of developing countries and countries with economies in transition, particularly the capacity of research organizations to generate and have access to forest-related data and information, and promote and support integrated and interdisciplinary research on forest-related issues, and disseminate research results;

(p) Strengthen forestry research and development in all regions, particularly in developing countries and countries with economies in transition, through relevant organizations, institutions and centres of excellence, as well as through global, regional and subregional networks;

(q) Strengthen cooperation and partnerships at the regional and subregional levels to promote sustainable forest management;

(r) As members of the governing bodies of the organizations that form the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, help ensure that the forest-related priorities and programmes of members of the Partnership are integrated and mutually supportive, consistent with their mandates, taking into account relevant policy recommendations of the United Nations Forum on Forests;

(s) Support the efforts of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests to develop and implement joint initiatives.

### VII. Monitoring, assessment and reporting

8. Member States should monitor and assess progress towards achieving the purpose of the present instrument.

9. Member States should submit, on a voluntary basis, taking into account the availability of resources and the requirements and conditions for the preparation of reports for other bodies or instruments, national progress reports as part of their regular reporting to the Forum.

### VIII. Working modalities

10. The Forum should address, within the context of its multi-year programme of work, the implementation of the present instrument.

### GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 17 December [meeting 74], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Second Committee [A/62/419 (Part I)], adopted **resolution 62/98** without vote [agenda item 54].

### Non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* Economic and Social Council resolution 2006/49 of 28 July 2006, in which the Council requested the United Nations Forum on Forests to conclude and adopt at its seventh session a non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests,

1. *Decides* to adopt the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests as contained in the annex to the present resolution;

2. *Invites* members of the governing bodies of the member organizations of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests to support the implementation of the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests, consistent with the mandates of those organizations, and, to that end, invites the United Nations Forum on Forests to provide guidance to the Partnership;

3. *Invites* donor Governments and other countries in a position to do so, financial institutions and other organizations to make voluntary financial contributions to the trust fund for the United Nations Forum on Forests so that the Forum may address, within the context of its multi-year programme of work, the implementation of the non-legally binding instrument and provide support for participants from developing countries and countries with economies in transition to attend its meetings;

4. *Decides* that the Forum will review the effectiveness of the non-legally binding instrument as part of the overall review of the effectiveness of the international arrangement on forests decided upon by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 2006/49.

### ANNEX

#### Non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests

(The text of the non-legally binding instrument is appended to Economic and Social Council resolution 2007/40 (see p. 1069).)

#### *Sustainable mountain development*

In response to General Assembly resolution 60/198 [YUN 2005, p. 1156], the Secretary-General submitted an August report [A/62/292] describing the status of sustainable mountain development at the national, regional and international levels. It also discussed the activities of the Mountain Partnership, formerly known as the International Partnership for Sustainable Development in Mountain Regions, which was launched as an outcome of the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development [YUN 2002, p. 821]; communications and networking on mountain issues; and funding and fi-

nancial mechanisms for mountain development. The report stated that there had been significant progress in sustainable mountain development, including increased awareness of the global importance of mountains, the strengthening and creation of institutional arrangements, and greater collaborative action by the international community to address specific mountain issues. However, constraints to alleviating poverty, averting environmental degradation and attaining sustainable development in mountain regions remained. There was a clear need for higher levels of funding and investment in mountain areas, enhanced coordination and collaboration, and a stronger enabling environment with more supportive laws, policies and institutions. The report put forth recommendations for the Assembly to continue to promote sustainable development in mountain regions within the existing policy context, including chapter 13 of Agenda 21 [YUN 1992, p. 672] on sustainable mountain development, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) [YUN 2000, p. 51].

#### GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 19 December [meeting 78], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Second Committee [A/62/419/Add.8], adopted **resolution 62/196** without vote [agenda item 54 (b)].

#### Sustainable mountain development

*The General Assembly,*

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

*Recalling also* its resolutions 55/189 of 20 December 2000, 57/245 of 20 December 2002, 58/216 of 23 December 2003 and 60/198 of 22 December 2005,

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

*Noting* the Bishkek Mountain Platform, the outcome document of the Bishkek Global Mountain Summit, held in Bishkek from 28 October to 1 November 2002, which was the concluding event of the International Year of Mountains,

*Noting also* the International Partnership for Sustainable Development in Mountain Regions ("Mountain Partnership"), launched during the World Summit on Sustainable Development, with benefits from the committed support of forty-eight countries, fifteen intergovernmental organizations and eighty-three organizations from major groups, as an important approach to addressing the various inter-related dimensions of sustainable development in mountain regions,

*Noting further* the conclusions of the global meetings of the members of the Mountain Partnership, held, respec-

tively, in Merano, Italy, in October 2003 and in Cusco, Peru, in October 2004, and the first Andean Meeting of the Andean Initiative, held in San Miguel Tucuman, Argentina, in September 2007,

*Noting* the outcome of the meeting of the Adelboden Group on Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development in Mountain Regions, which met in Rome from 1 to 3 October 2007,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on sustainable mountain development;

2. *Notes with appreciation* that a growing network of Governments, organizations, major groups and individuals around the world recognize the importance of the sustainable development of mountain regions for poverty eradication, and recognizes the global importance of mountains as the source of most of the Earth's freshwater, as repositories of rich biological diversity and other natural resources, including timber and minerals, as providers of some sources of renewable energy, as popular destinations for recreation and tourism and as areas of important cultural diversity, knowledge and heritage, all of which generate positive, unaccounted economic benefits;

3. *Recognizes* that mountains provide indications of global climate change through phenomena such as modifications of biological diversity, the retreat of mountain glaciers and changes in seasonal runoff that may impact major sources of freshwater in the world, and stresses the need to undertake actions to minimize the negative effects of these phenomena;

4. *Recognizes also* that sustainable mountain development is a key component in achieving the Millennium Development Goals in many regions of the world;

5. *Notes with concern* that there remain key challenges to achieving sustainable development, eradicating poverty in mountain regions and protecting mountain ecosystems, and that populations in mountain regions are frequently among the poorest in a given country;

6. *Encourages* Governments to adopt a long-term vision and holistic approaches in their sustainable development strategies, and to promote integrated approaches to policies related to sustainable development in mountain regions;

7. *Also encourages* Governments to integrate mountain sustainable development in national, regional and global policymaking and development strategies, including through incorporating mountain-specific requirements in sustainable development policies or through specific mountain policies;

8. *Notes* that the growing demand for natural resources, including water, the consequences of erosion, deforestation and other forms of watershed degradation, the occurrence of natural disasters, as well as increasing out-migration, the pressures of industry, transport, tourism, mining, agriculture and the consequences of global climate change are some of the key challenges in fragile mountain ecosystems to implementing sustainable development and eradicating poverty in mountain regions, consistent with the Millennium Development Goals;

9. *Underlines* the importance of sustainable forest management, the avoidance of deforestation, as well as the restoration of lost and degraded forest ecosystems of moun-

tains in order to enhance the role of mountains as natural carbon and water regulators;

10. *Notes* that sustainable agriculture in mountain regions is important for the protection of the mountain environment and the promotion of the regional economy;

11. *Expresses its deep concern* at the number and scale of natural disasters and their increasing impact in recent years, which have resulted in massive loss of life and long-term negative social, economic and environmental consequences for vulnerable societies throughout the world, in particular in mountain regions, especially those in developing countries, and urges the international community to take concrete steps to support national and regional efforts to ensure the sustainable development of mountains;

12. *Encourages* Governments, the international community and other relevant stakeholders to improve the awareness, preparedness and infrastructure to cope with the increasing impact of disasters in mountain regions, such as flash floods, including glacial lake outburst floods, as well as landslides, debris flow and earthquakes;

13. *Encourages* Governments, with the collaboration of the scientific community, mountain communities and intergovernmental organizations, where appropriate, to study, with a view to promoting sustainable mountain development, the specific concerns of mountain communities, including the effects of global climate change on mountain environments and biological diversity, in order to elaborate sustainable adaptation strategies to cope with the adverse effects of climate change;

14. *Underlines* the fact that action at the national level is a key factor in achieving progress in sustainable mountain development, welcomes its steady increase in recent years with a multitude of events, activities and initiatives, and invites the international community to support the efforts of developing countries to develop and implement strategies and programmes, including, where required, enabling policies and laws for the sustainable development of mountains, within the framework of national development plans;

15. *Encourages* the further establishment of committees or similar multi-stakeholder institutional arrangements and mechanisms at the national and regional levels, where appropriate, to enhance intersectoral coordination and collaboration for sustainable development in mountain regions;

16. *Also encourages* the increased involvement of local authorities, as well as other relevant stakeholders, including civil society and the private sector, in the development and implementation of programmes, land-use planning and land tenure arrangements, and activities related to sustainable development in mountains;

17. *Underlines* the need for improved access to resources, including land, for women in mountain regions as well as the need to strengthen the role of women in mountain regions in decision-making processes that affect their communities, cultures and environments;

18. *Encourages*, in this regard, Governments and intergovernmental organizations to integrate the gender dimension, including, inter alia, gender disaggregated indicators, in mountain development activities, programmes and projects;

19. *Stresses* that indigenous cultures, traditions and knowledge, including in the field of medicine, are to be fully considered, respected and promoted in development policy and planning in mountain regions, and underlines

the importance of promoting the full participation and involvement of mountain communities in decisions that affect them and of integrating indigenous knowledge, heritage and values in all development initiatives;

20. *Underscores* the need to take into account relevant articles of the Convention on Biological Diversity;

21. *Recognizes* that many developing countries as well as countries with economies in transition need to be assisted in the formulation and implementation of national strategies and programmes for sustainable mountain development, through bilateral, multilateral and South-South cooperation, as well as through other forms of collaborative approaches;

22. *Notes* that funding for sustainable mountain development has become increasingly important, especially in view of the greater recognition of the global importance of mountains and the high level of extreme poverty, food insecurity and hardship facing mountain communities;

23. *Invites* Governments, the United Nations system, the international financial institutions, the Global Environment Facility, all relevant United Nations conventions and their funding mechanisms, within their respective mandates, and all relevant stakeholders from civil society and the private sector to consider providing support, including through voluntary financial contributions, to local, national and international programmes and projects for sustainable development in mountain regions, particularly in developing countries;

24. *Underlines* the importance for sustainable development in mountains of exploring a wide range of funding sources, such as public-private partnerships, increased opportunities for microfinance, including microcredit and microinsurance, small housing loans, savings, education and health accounts, and support for entrepreneurs seeking to develop small- and medium-sized businesses and, where appropriate, on a case-by-case basis, debt for sustainable development swaps;

25. *Notes* that public awareness needs to be raised with respect to the positive and unaccounted economic benefits that mountains provide, and underlines the importance of enhancing the sustainability of ecosystems that provide essential resources and services for human well-being and economic activity and of developing innovative means of financing for their protection;

26. *Recalls with satisfaction* the adoption by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity of a programme of work on mountain biological diversity, the overall purpose of which is the significant reduction of the loss of mountain biological diversity by 2010 at the global, regional and national levels, and its implementation, which aims at making a significant contribution to poverty eradication in mountain regions;

27. *Recognizes* that mountain ranges are usually shared among several countries, and in this context encourages transboundary cooperation approaches, where the States concerned agree, to the sustainable development of mountain ranges and information-sharing in this regard;

28. *Notes with appreciation*, in this context, that the Convention on the Protection of the Alps promotes constructive new approaches to integrated, sustainable development of the Alps, including through its thematic protocols on spatial planning, mountain farming, conservation

of nature and landscape, mountain forests, tourism, soil protection, energy and transport, as well as its Declaration on Population and Culture;

29. *Also notes with appreciation* the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians, adopted and signed by the seven countries of the region to provide a framework for cooperation and multisectoral policy coordination, a platform for joint strategies for sustainable development and a forum for dialogue between all involved stakeholders;

30. *Further notes with appreciation* the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development, which promotes transboundary cooperation among eight regional member countries of the Himalaya Hindu Kush region to foster action and change for overcoming mountain peoples' economic, social and physical vulnerability;

31. *Notes with appreciation* the contribution of the Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development in Mountain Regions project of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the statement of the Adelboden Group in promoting specific policies, appropriate institutions and processes for mountain regions, and the positive, unaccounted economic benefits they provide;

32. *Stresses* the importance of building capacity, strengthening institutions and promoting educational programmes in order to foster sustainable mountain development at all levels and to enhance awareness of challenges to and best practices in sustainable development in mountain regions and in the nature of relationships between highland and lowland areas;

33. *Encourages* the development and implementation of global, regional and national communication programmes to build on the awareness and momentum for change created by the International Year of Mountains in 2002 and the opportunity provided annually by International Mountain Day on 11 December;

34. *Also encourages* Member States to collect and produce information and to establish databases devoted to mountains so as to capitalize on knowledge to support interdisciplinary research, programmes and projects and to improve decision-making and planning;

35. *Further encourages* all relevant entities of the United Nations system, within their respective mandates, to further enhance their constructive efforts to strengthen inter-agency collaboration to achieve more effective implementation of the relevant chapters of Agenda 21, including chapter 13, and paragraph 42 and other relevant paragraphs of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, taking into account the efforts of the Inter-Agency Group on Mountains and the need for the further involvement of the United Nations system, in particular the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations University, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the United Nations Children's Fund, as well as international financial institutions and other relevant international organizations;

36. *Recognizes* the efforts of the Mountain Partnership implemented in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 2003/61 of 25 July 2003, invites the international community and other relevant stakeholders,

including civil society and the private sector, to consider participating actively in the Mountain Partnership to increase its value added, and invites the Partnership secretariat to report on its activities and achievements to the Commission on Sustainable Development at its sixteenth session in 2008, including in regard to the thematic issues of agriculture, rural development, land, drought, desertification and Africa;

37. *Notes with appreciation* in this context the efforts of the Mountain Partnership to cooperate with existing multilateral instruments relevant to mountains, such as the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and mountain-related regional instruments such as the Convention on the Protection of the Alps and the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians;

38. *Takes note with appreciation* of the offer of the Government of Kyrgyzstan to host a second Bishkek Global Mountain Summit in October 2009, and of the invitation to Member States, the United Nations system and other relevant stakeholders to take part in such a summit;

39. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session on the implementation of the present resolution, under a sub-item entitled "Sustainable mountain development" of the item entitled "Sustainable development".

## Marine ecosystems

### Oceans and seas

In response to General Assembly resolution 61/222 [YUN 2006, p. 1557], the eighth meeting of the United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and Law of the Sea (New York, 25-29 June) [A/62/169] focused on marine genetic resources. Annexed to the meeting report were possible elements for action on that topic, which were proposed by the Co-Chairpersons of the Consultative Process for consideration by the Assembly. The Assembly took action with regard to the Consultative Process in section XIV of **resolution 62/215** of 22 December (see p. 1412).

### Assessment of assessments

The Group of Experts for the start-up phase of the "assessment of assessments" of the regular process for global reporting and assessment of the state of the marine environment, including socio-economic aspects, held its first meeting (Paris, 28-30 March) [GRAME/GOE/1/7]; the Group was selected by the Ad Hoc Steering Group for the "assessment of assessments" in 2006 [YUN 2006, p. 1242]. The Group developed the overall working approach of the "assessment of assessments", as well as an annotated outline, work plan and timetable. It

also considered the utility of the survey and database for the “assessment of assessments”, which was to be completed within two years of its launch date, subject to the provision of the necessary financial resources.

The Ad Hoc Steering Group for the “assessment of assessments”, established by the General Assembly in resolution 60/30 [YUN 2005, p. 1436], held its second meeting (New York, 22 June) [UNGA 60/30-A of A-AHSG/2]. The meeting agreed on the overall working approach, as proposed by the Group of Experts; the outline of the “assessment of assessments”; and the timeline for the implementation of the activities for the production of the “assessment of assessments” report, including a revised implementation budget of \$1.97 million. It also agreed, on a tentative basis, on the regional breakdown of oceans and seas for the purpose of the “assessment of assessments”, consisting of 21 regions.

The second meeting of the Group of Experts (Paris, 8-10 November) [UNGA 60/30 Regular Process/GOE/2/3] reviewed progress made on part I of the “assessment of assessments” and the state of the assessment of oceans and coasts in the 21 regions. The Group agreed to commission additional studies on global assessments and supranational issues, including climate change, marine pollution and fisheries.

In support of the implementation of the “assessment of assessments”, the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre produced the report “Global Marine Assessments: A survey of global and regional assessments and related activities of the marine environment”, which was built on a similar survey published in 2003 [YUN 2003, p. 1066].

The Assembly, in section XII of **resolution 62/215** of 22 December (see p. 1411), took note of the report of the second meeting of the Ad Hoc Steering Group and urged Member States from the African regional group to propose the remaining representative to the Chairman of that group. It also noted the overall working approach, outline for the “assessment of assessments” report and the timeline and work plan endorsed by the Ad Hoc Steering Group.

#### Global Programme of Action

On 9 February [dec. 24/16B] the UNEP Governing Council endorsed the Beijing Declaration on Furthering the implementation of the Global Programme of Action (GPA) for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities, adopted by the second session of the Intergovernmental Review Meeting on the Implementation of GPA in 2006 [YUN 2006, p. 1242]; adopted the GPA Coordination Office programme of work for the period 2007-2011, as endorsed by the Meeting in 2006 [ibid.]; and took note of the outcomes of the second session. The Council invited international and regional financial institutions,

particularly GEF, and called on donor countries, to continue to support GPA implementation and consider increasing their contributions and technical assistance for building the capacity of developing countries, particularly small island developing States, to mainstream GPA implementation in national development programmes and budgets.

The General Assembly, in section IX of **resolution 62/215** of 22 December (see p. 1408), called on States to implement GPA and take all appropriate measures to fulfil the commitments of the international community embodied in the Beijing Declaration.

#### Regional Seas Programme

The ninth Global Meeting of the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans (Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, 29-31 October) reviewed progress made in the implementation of the Global Regional Seas Strategic Directions for 2004-2007 [YUN 2004, p. 1060] and discussed climate change, mainstreaming coastal and marine issues into national planning, and the delineation of the continental shelf, among other issues. It approved the Global Strategic Directions for the Regional Seas Programmes 2008-2012 [UNEP/(DEPI)/RS.9/6]. The Meeting also adopted the Jeddah Declaration on furthering the implementation of the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans towards the sustainable development of the marine and coastal environment [UNEP/(DEPI)/RS.9/8], in which the Chairs and heads of the Conferences of the Parties/Intergovernmental Meetings of the Conventions and Action Plans recommitted themselves to the existing resolutions and agreements of the Global Regional Seas Programmes and Strategic Directions for 2004-2007, and called on the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum to endorse and enhance the implementation of the Global Strategic Directions for 2008-2012.

#### Protection against harmful products and waste

##### Chemical safety

As at 31 December, 119 States and the EC were parties to the 1998 Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade [YUN 1998, p. 997], which entered into force in 2004 [YUN 2004, p. 1063].

The Chemical Review Committee, a subsidiary body of the Conference of the Parties to the Rotterdam Convention, at its third meeting (Rome, Italy, 20-23 March) [UNEP/FAO/RC/CRC.3/15], reviewed the notifications of final regulatory action for five chemicals and finalized the decision guidance documents for endosulfan and tributyltin compounds. The Committee also discussed policy guidance and working procedures related to its work.

### *International chemicals management*

In February, the UNEP Governing Council considered a report on chemicals management [UNEP/GC/24/7], which was submitted by the Executive Director in response to Council decisions of 2005 [YUN 2005, p. 1161] and 2006 [YUN 2006, p. 1247]. The report provided information on cooperation between UNEP and multilateral environmental agreements and other organizations; the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM), which was endorsed by the Council in 2006 [ibid.]; lead and cadmium (see p. 1078); and the mercury programme (see p. 1078).

A note by the Executive Director [UNEP/GC/24/INF/15] contained additional information on initial activities and planning in support of SAICM. In 2007, UNEP continued ongoing activities; developed activities to enhance the UNEP role as SAICM facilitator; provided technical assistance to countries seeking support from the Quick Start Programme trust fund, the establishment of which was authorized by the Governing Council in 2006 [YUN 2006, p. 1247]; and consulted with developing countries and countries with economies in transition to refine future activities. Ongoing UNEP activities on the sound management of chemicals related to capacity-building, risk assessment, management and communication, and specific chemicals and multilateral environmental agreements of relevance to chemicals. Future activities would include the monitoring of progress on SAICM implementation. The report outlined short- and long-term implementing activities, to be initiated in the 2008-2011 and 2012-2020 periods, respectively. UNEP would develop a resource mobilization strategy for the implementation of the proposed activities, which would be coordinated with the strategy requested by the Governing Council in 2005 for the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building [YUN 2004, p. 1040]. Additional earmarked contributions for activities to support the sound management of chemicals would be sought and secured through bilateral partnerships.

The Council also considered a note by the Executive Director [UNEP/GC/24/INF/21] containing information on regional meetings held in 2006 and to be held in 2007 on SAICM implementation.

On 9 February, the Council adopted a multi-part decision on chemicals management [dec. 24/3]. In the part dealing with cooperation between UNEP, multilateral environmental agreements and other organizations [dec. 24/3 I], the Council reinforced the applicability of its decision dealing with international environmental governance (see p. 1047). In the part dealing with SAICM [dec. 24/3 II], the Council urged all stakeholders to integrate the Strategic Approach into their activities as a priority. It also urged Governments,

intergovernmental organizations, NGOs and others in a position to do so to contribute financially and in kind to the Quick Start Programme and its trust fund. It requested the Executive Director to encourage the full participation of Governments and other stakeholders in the UNEP plan of work in support of SAICM implementation, including initiatives related to indicators and tools for evaluation, and to report to GC/GMEF on progress in 2009. The SAICM secretariat was encouraged to explore ways to make more effective use of the funding provisions of the SAICM Overarching Policy Strategy [YUN 2006, p. 1246], and the Executive Director was asked to report on the results of those efforts in 2008. He was also asked to continue to provide for the implementation of UNEP responsibilities under SAICM; and continue the collaboration between UNEP and other participating organizations of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC) and report to GC/GMEF in 2008 on IOMC efforts to implement SAICM.

In a November report [UNEP/GCSS.X/4], the Executive Director provided information on the efforts of the SAICM secretariat to explore more effective use of funding provisions of the Strategic Approach and the implementation of SAICM by IOMC.

A November note by the Executive Director [UNEP/GCSS.X/INF/7] contained a report on the SAICM implementation activities of IOMC and its participating organizations, including UNEP. The three main incremental UNEP activities related to SAICM since its adoption by the Governing Council included the establishment of the SAICM secretariat, the development of a work programme for SAICM implementation in UNEP, and the establishment of the trustee function for the Quick Start Programme. The trust fund was officially established on 1 December 2006; by the end of 2006, pledges totalling approximately \$5,968,000 had been received from 15 Governments. Arrangements for the management of trust fund projects were completed in March 2007. As of December, the secretariat had received eight pledges, totaling \$1,064,000, from eight Governments, and agreements were being finalized with the European Commission, Norway and Sweden for contributions totalling approximately \$6.3 million. In the first round of applications, the Trust Fund Implementation Committee approved eight projects valued at a total of \$1,966,262, involving activities in 20 countries, including eight least developed countries (LDCs). In the second round, a total of \$1,861,841 was allocated to 21 project proposals relating to activities in 21 countries, including nine LDCs and four small island developing States. In the third round, the Committee approved 11 projects with a combined value of \$2,232,155, involving activities in 17 countries, including four LDCs.

The second meeting of the Quick Start Programme Executive Board (23–24 April), which was organized by the SAICM secretariat, adopted a business plan for the Programme. The third (Geneva, 29–30 May) and fourth (New York, 30–31 October) meetings of the Quick Start Programme Trust Fund Implementation Committee reviewed applications to the second and third rounds of the fund, and provided operational guidance on application procedures and arrangements for project management and implementation.

### *Lead and cadmium*

On 9 February [dec. 24/3 II], the Governing Council acknowledged the data and information gaps identified in the 2006 UNEP interim scientific reviews on lead and cadmium [YUN 2006, p. 1247], and that further action was needed to fill those gaps, taking into account the specific situations of developing countries and countries with economies in transition. It requested the Executive Director to provide available information on lead and cadmium to address the gaps, and compile an inventory of existing risk management measures. The Council also encouraged efforts by Governments and others to reduce the risks to human health and the environment of lead and cadmium throughout the life cycle of those substances.

### *Mercury*

In February, the Governing Council considered a note by the Executive Director [UNEP/GC/24/INF/7], submitted in response to a 2005 Council decision [YUN 2005, p. 1161], containing a status report on the partnerships as one approach to reducing the risks to human health and the environment from the release of mercury and its compounds into the environment; a report detailing the preparation and main findings of the report on supply, trade and demand information for mercury, including in artisanal and small-scale gold mining; and a report of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) Global Mercury Project on the global impacts of mercury supply and demand in small-scale gold mining.

The report on supply, trade and demand information for mercury found that the five most common sources of mercury were mining and processing of mercury ores; mercury produced as a by-product of ferrous and non-ferrous mining and natural gas cleaning; the recovery of mercury from decommissioned mercury cell chlor-alkali plants; recycled mercury from products containing mercury or mercury waste; and mercury stocks obtained from one of the other main sources. The largest use of mercury globally was in small-scale and artisanal gold mining. A number of countries indicated that they had either imposed or planned to impose restrictions on the import or export of mercury, which

would lead to reductions in the quantity of mercury moving in trade. Mercury was consistently moving from higher- to lower-income countries, but improving available information and systems for recording cross-border movements of mercury might support national and regional initiatives addressing supply and demand issues, and provide a tool to measure progress towards national and international objectives of reducing mercury flow in the biosphere.

The UNIDO report on mercury use in artisanal and small-scale gold mining indicated that at least 100 million people in more than 55 countries depended on artisanal and small-scale gold mining, which produced between 20 and 30 per cent of the world's gold production. The main legal sources of mercury for sub-Saharan Africa were countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. Health and environmental effects from the uncontrolled use of mercury in mining could be severe. It was considered possible to reduce mercury emissions by 50 per cent by 2017 by eliminating whole ore amalgamation; decreasing mercury use in the amalgamation of concentrates; eliminating the burning of mercury without the use of a retort; and by introducing mercury-free technology, where feasible. The Global Mercury Programme focused on activities in six countries and worked with Governments and communities to develop and implement new policies and practices.

On 9 February [dec. 24/3 IV], the Governing Council recognized that current efforts to reduce risks from mercury were not sufficient and concluded that further long-term international action was required to reduce risks to human health and the environment. For that reason, the options of enhanced voluntary measures and new or existing international legal instruments would be reviewed and assessed in order to address the issue. It also recognized that a range of activities were required to address the challenges posed by mercury, including substitution of products and technologies; technical assistance and capacity-building; development of national policy and regulation; and data collection, research and information provision. The Council committed itself to increasing efforts to reduce risks from mercury releases, taking into account the following priorities to: reduce atmospheric mercury emissions from human sources; find environmentally sound solutions for the management of waste containing mercury and mercury compounds; reduce global mercury supply and demand; find environmentally sound storage solutions for mercury; address the remediation of existing contaminated sites affecting public and environmental health; and increase knowledge on inventories, human and environmental exposure, environmental monitoring, socio-economic impacts and related issues. Governments were urged to gather information on means to reduce risk that

might be caused by the supply of mercury and provide that information to the Executive Director. Governments were also urged to develop and analyse options for addressing the trade and supply of mercury, and UNEP was requested to provide technical assistance to developing countries for that purpose.

The Council requested the Executive Director to prepare a report, drawing on, among other things, ongoing work in other forums addressing atmospheric emission and transport of mercury. It also asked him to continue to facilitate work between the UNEP mercury programme and Governments, other international organizations, NGOs, the private sector and the partnerships established under the programme to improve global understanding of international mercury emissions sources and transport, and promote the development of inventories of mercury uses and emissions. The Executive Director was asked, working in consultation with Governments and other stakeholders, to strengthen the mercury programme partnerships by: developing an overarching framework for the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership; expanding the number and scope of partnerships to include new, growing or related sectors; enhancing artisanal and small-scale gold mining; and working to secure adequate funds for Global Mercury Partnership efforts. Governments and other stakeholders were urged to continue and enhance their support of the UNEP mercury programme partnerships.

The Council established an ad hoc open-ended working group of Governments, regional economic integration organizations and stakeholder representatives to review and assess options for enhanced voluntary measures and new or existing international legal instruments. It decided that the working group would be guided by the priorities set out in the decision (see p. 1078), and adopted the terms of reference for the group. It also decided that the working group would meet once before the tenth (2008) GC/GMEF special session and once between the special session and the Council/Forum's twenty-fifth (2009) regular session; and that it would provide to GC/GMEF a progress report in 2008 and a final report in 2009. The Council further decided that GC/GMEF might provide further guidance to the ad hoc open-ended working group in 2008. The Chemicals Branch of the UNEP Division of Technology, Industry and Economics was asked to serve as secretariat of the ad hoc working group to prepare the analytical and summary reports necessary for its work. The Executive Director was requested to compile other relevant information for consideration by the ad hoc open-ended working group and report in 2009.

In response to the Council's decision, the Executive Director submitted a November progress report [UNEP/GCSS.X/5] on the ad hoc open-ended working group on mercury, which contained the working group's report on its first meeting (Bangkok, 12-16

November) [UNEP/DTIE/Hg/OEWG.1/6]. In its review of options for enhanced voluntary measures and new or existing international legal instruments for the global control of mercury, the working group considered a study on those options, prepared by UNEP [UNEP(DTIE)/Hg.OEWG.1/2], which listed specific response measures under each of the priorities set out in the Council's February decision (see p. 1078). The working group also discussed the framework in which the response measures might best be implemented, including the suitability of various legally binding and voluntary measures. It agreed on an intersessional work programme, and estimated the total cost of work programme activities and its second meeting, to be held in October 2008, at \$1.5 million.

### *Harmful products*

In May [A/62/78-E/2007/62], the Secretary-General submitted a report on products harmful to health and the environment. The report covered the eighth triennial review of the Consolidated List of Products Whose Consumption and/or Sale Have Been Banned, Withdrawn, Severely Restricted or Not Approved by Governments, and updated developments since the submission of the Secretary-General's 2004 report [YUN 2004, p. 1065].

The Secretary-General made recommendations to the Economic and Social Council relating to the implementation by Member States of national development strategies to achieve the 2020 target of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management on the use and production of chemicals [YUN 2006, p. 1246]; the strengthening of capacity-building and technical assistance activities in developing countries; the provision of additional financial support for national efforts to improve the environmentally sound management of toxic chemicals; and the elimination of the mandate of regularly updating the Consolidated List, as set out in General Assembly resolution 37/137 [YUN 1982, p. 1011].

In **decision 2007/264** of 27 July, the Council took note of the Secretary-General's report on products harmful to health and the environment; and requested the Secretary-General, in consultation with Member States and relevant intergovernmental entities, to evaluate the continued usefulness for Member States of the Consolidated List and report to the Council at its substantive session of 2008.

### *Persistent organic pollutants*

As at 31 December, 151 States and the EC were parties to the 2001 Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) [YUN 2001, p. 971], which entered into force in 2004 [YUN 2004, p. 1066].

The third meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention (Dakar, Senegal, 30 April–4 May) [UNEP/POPS/COP.3/30] approved operational budgets of \$5,424,545 for 2008 and \$5,446,792 for 2009; adopted the indicative scale of contributions for the apportionment of expenses for 2008–2009; and decided to keep the working capital reserve at the level of 8.3 per cent of the annual average of the biennial operational budget. It adopted the revised process for reporting, assessing and evaluating the use of dichloro-diphenyl-trichloroethane; the revised process for the review of entries in the Register of Specific Exemptions; the code of practice for the treatment of confidential information by the Persistent Organic Pollutants Review Committee (see below); revised terms of reference for work on the assessment of funding needs for parties that were developing countries or countries with economies in transition to implement the Convention over the 2010–2014 period; and the amended implementation plan for the global monitoring plan for POPS. Other decisions dealt with the guidelines on best available techniques and provisional guidance on best environmental practices; the Standard Toolkit for Identification and Quantification of Dioxin and Furan Releases; measures to reduce or eliminate releases of POPS from wastes; national plans for implementation of the Convention; information exchange; technical assistance; implementation of the memorandum of understanding between the Conference of the Parties and the GEF Council; resource mobilization; additional guidance to, and the second review of, the Convention's financial mechanism; national reporting under the Convention; non-compliance; cooperation and coordination between the 1989 Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, the 1998 Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade, and the Stockholm Convention; and other matters.

The third meeting of the Persistent Organic Pollutants Review Committee (Geneva, 19–23 November) [UNEP/POPS/POPRC.3/20] adopted risk management evaluations for commercial pentabromodiphenyl ether, chlordecone, hexabromobiphenyl, lindane and perfluorooctane sulfonate; and risk profiles for commercial octabromodiphenyl ether, pentachlorobenzene, alpha hexachlorocyclohexane and beta hexachlorocyclohexane. It also adopted decisions on short-chained chlorinated paraffins and perfluorooctane sulfonyl fluoride.

### *Hazardous wastes*

As at 31 December, 169 States and the EC were parties to the 1989 Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal [YUN 1989, p. 420], which entered into force in 1992 [YUN 1992, p. 685]. The 1995 amendment

to the Convention [YUN 1995, p. 1333], not yet in force, had been ratified, accepted or approved by 63 parties. The number of parties to the 1999 Basel Protocol on Liability and Compensation for Damage Resulting from Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal [YUN 1999, p. 998] rose to eight.

The first meeting of the Expanded Bureau of the eighth (2006) meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention (Geneva, 17–18 April) [UNEP/SBC/BUREAU/8/7] discussed the report of the mission undertaken in Côte d'Ivoire [UNEP/SBC/BUREAU/8/1/INF/2] following a 2006 incident, condemned by the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties [YUN 2006, p. 1248], in which hazardous wastes from the vessel *Probo Koala* were dumped in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. The meeting also discussed cooperation and coordination between the 1998 Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade, the 2001 Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants and the Basel Convention; and administrative matters.

The sixth session of the Open-ended Working Group of the Convention (3–7 September) [UNEP/CHW/OEWG/6/29] adopted decisions related to the 2006 hazardous waste incident in Côte d'Ivoire; the Basel Convention regional and coordination centres; work on guidance papers on hazard characteristics H10 and H11; the Mobile Phone Partnership Initiative; administrative and budgetary matters; and other issues.

**Governing Council action.** On 9 February [dec. 24/5], the UNEP Governing Council requested the Executive Director to prepare, in consultation with the secretariat of the Basel Convention, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, UNDP and other relevant UN bodies and international institutions, a report on waste management for consideration by GC/GMEF in 2008. The report should contain a review of the work being carried out or planned by organizations working in the field of waste management; identify successful examples and possible gaps in waste management; and provide tangible recommendations on bridging gaps, identifying parties responsible for action and assisting developing countries and countries with economies in transition in the development of waste management strategies. The Council invited the Executive Director to work in cooperation with relevant UN bodies in the area of waste management to improve coordination and avoid duplication of work, and to report on the outcome of the process to GC/GMEF in 2008. International organizations and Governments were invited to provide resources and technical assistance to developing countries and countries with economies in transition to enable them to pursue integrated waste management. The Executive Director was requested to strengthen UNEP capacity to support waste man-

agement in developing countries and countries with economies in transition, subject to the availability of extrabudgetary resources. He was also asked to continue to implement existing demonstration projects and develop new ones in developing countries and countries with economies in transition on integrated waste management under the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building [YUN 2004, p. 1040], and to disseminate widely the results and lessons learned.

(For information on the human rights aspects of the illicit movement and dumping of toxic and dangerous products and wastes, see p. 781.)

### *Prevention of illegal trade in hazardous chemicals*

In a 9 February decision [dec. 24/4], the Governing Council, recognizing that international cooperation was essential to the prevention of illegal international traffic in hazardous chemicals, requested the Executive Director to promote the implementation of paragraph 18 of the Overarching Policy Strategy of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) [YUN 2006, p. 1246], which dealt with illegal international traffic in toxic, hazardous, banned and severely restricted chemicals, and called on Governments and other actors to provide UNEP with the necessary financial and technical resources to do so. It invited the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals to present recommendations to the governing bodies of its participating organizations for consideration within their respective mandates on the prevention of illegal international traffic in hazardous chemicals. The Council also invited the World Customs Organization to consider participating in the activities described in the decision. The Executive Director was asked to transmit the decision to the secretariats of the 1989 Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, the 1998 Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade, and the 2001 Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, and report to GC/GMEF in 2008 on progress in implementing the decision.

In November [UNEP/GCSS.X/6], the Executive Director submitted a progress report on the implementation of the Governing Council's February decision on the prevention of illegal international trade in hazardous chemicals. The report described UNEP activities to implement paragraph 18 of the SAICM Overarching Policy Strategy. The Chemicals Branch of the UNEP Division of Technology, Industry and Economics (UNEP Chemicals) finalized a project funded by Canada on assistance to customs officials, including training, in the implementation of the Stockholm Convention. Based on that project, UNEP Chemicals, in cooperation with

Cotecna, a trade inspection, security and certification company, convened a training workshop for customs officers (Senegal, 17-19 April) on the implementation of the relevant provisions of the Stockholm Convention.

### **Other matters**

#### *International Year of Planet Earth (2008)*

In October [A/62/376], the Secretary-General submitted a report on preparations for the International Year of Planet Earth, 2008, which was declared by the General Assembly in resolution 60/192 [YUN 2005, p. 1164]. As part of the Year's science programme, scientists would be invited to submit proposals for 10 science themes relating to groundwater, geo-hazards, health, climate, resources, megacities, the deep earth, oceans, soil and biodiversity. A group of Senior Advisers would advise the Year's Management Team concerning specific contributions to activities for the Year. In addition, a small number of distinguished individuals agreed to serve as Goodwill Ambassadors for the Year, and 26 Associate Partners would support the Year prior to the implementation of its activities. As at 3 September, National Committees for the implementation of the Year's activities were operational in 48 countries. Attainment of the objectives of the Year would depend on attracting substantial financial income from various sources. The targeted budget for implementation of the Year was \$5 million. About \$20 million in cash and in-kind contributions had been raised by the National Committees and \$1.2 million was raised by the Corporation for the Year. At least three years would be required—from 2007 to 2009—to realize most of the Year's science and outreach plans. After the completion of the triennium, an additional period of six months would be required for completing activities in 2010 and for reporting to stakeholders, the Assembly and the geoscience communities involved in the Year. The report also described the outreach programme, political support, and the organizational structure of the Year, as well as links with other initiatives.

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## **Human settlements**

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### **Follow-up to the 1996 UN Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and the 2001 General Assembly special session**

In August [A/62/219], the Secretary-General, in response to General Assembly resolution 61/206 [YUN 2006, p. 1252], reported on follow-up to the Assembly's twenty-fifth special session [YUN 2001, p. 973] to review and appraise the implementation of the Habitat

Agenda [YUN 1996, p. 994], adopted by the 1996 United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) [ibid., p. 992], and on the strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat). The Secretary-General's report provided an overview of progress on programme implementation. It highlighted major results achieved towards the targets of the MDGs [YUN 2000, p. 51] on slum upgrading and on water and sanitation.

The report *State of the World's Cities 2006-2007: the Millennium Development Goals and Urban Sustainability —30 Years of Shaping the Habitat Agenda* provided, for the first time, empirical evidence of the scale and scope of urban poverty and deprivation. It highlighted several new findings, including the fact that the urban poor were as likely to suffer from malnutrition, poor health and disease as their rural counterparts. The report revealed that the rate of urban growth was virtually equivalent to that of slum formation. Despite regional variations, those trends implied that the vast majority of people migrating to, or born in, cities were joining the ranks of the urban poor. The report also provided compelling evidence that the attainment of the MDGs would depend largely on the ability of Member States to manage the process of urbanization. Prevailing statistical analyses at the city level tended to mask the true extent of urban poverty and deprivation. That observation led UN-Habitat to work with the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean to develop urban indicators that would better inform public policies at the national and city levels regarding poverty reduction strategies. UN-Habitat was leading the preparation of the first report on the state of African cities, which would profile at least 50 cities of the continent. In Europe, UN-Habitat strengthened its cooperation with the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) through its Committee on Housing and Land Management, which would focus on the development of operational activities at the country level, in line with ECE instruments on housing and national housing profiles. UN-Habitat also continued to strengthen its cooperation with the EC in the field of sustainable urban development. The Commission's commitment to the implementation of the MDGs, with a particular focus on poverty eradication, provided a solid basis for cooperation in promoting adequate shelter for all and urban environmental sustainability, particularly in developing countries and countries with economies in transition. Memorandums of understanding signed with the secretariat of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States and the EC had enabled UN-Habitat to develop activities for urban poverty reduction in countries of the Group.

UN-Habitat continued to take the lead in packaging capacity-building technical assistance with domestic and

international finance to support efforts by Member States to attain the MDG target on water and sanitation. That approach was being implemented in partnership with the African Development Bank and the Asian Development Bank, with the support of bilateral donors in 19 countries in Africa and Asia, as well as the UN-Habitat Water and Sanitation Trust Fund. In addition to an agreement signed in 2006 with the African Development Bank to support fast-track investments totalling \$540 million in water and sanitation [YUN 2006, p. 1250], a memorandum of understanding with the Asian Development Bank to expand investments by a further \$1 billion, with a strong focus on sanitation, was expected. The expansion would be linked to the Bank's Water Financing Programme and would cover five countries: India, Indonesia, Pakistan, the Philippines and Viet Nam.

UN-Habitat worked closely with the Division for Sustainable Development in the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs and other bodies in organizing the fifteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (New York, 30 April–11 May) (see p. 841). It presented lessons derived from best practices and made substantive contributions on the issues of energy for sustainable urban development, air pollution in cities and climate change. Major emphasis was placed on highlighting access to energy by the urban and near-urban poor, recommending widespread slum electrification programmes and promoting new and renewable energy applications to provide better access to basic services. UN-Habitat also reviewed current knowledge and identified gaps in water and sanitation services provision.

Contributions to the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation increased by 10 per cent, from \$111.4 million in 2005 to \$126.0 million in 2006. Non-earmarked contributions amounted to \$10 million. With 90 per cent of non-earmarked resources received from 10 donors, UN-Habitat remained in a vulnerable financial position. The increasing imbalance between earmarked and non-earmarked contributions created difficulties in ensuring an effective and efficient implementation of approved work programmes and distorted programme priorities.

The Secretary-General stated that issues facing human settlements, particularly in rapidly growing slums, were complex and urgent. If those issues were left unaddressed, they could cause instability as they affected human beings and the natural environment. Addressing those issues required the collaboration of all parties at all levels, based on a shared vision. He added that the Medium-term Strategic and Institutional Plan for 2008-2013 (see p. 1086) and the experimental reimbursable seeding operations in support of pro-poor housing and urban development (see p. 1083) were pivotal to that vision. The Plan provided a road map for strengthening the role of UN-Habitat as a robust catalyst for the coordinated

implementation of the Habitat Agenda. The seeding operations were designed to support access by the poor to housing finance and strengthen the capacity of Governments and local authorities to provide affordable urban infrastructure and basic services.

The Secretary-General encouraged Governments to create a conducive environment for realizing the main goals of shelter for all and sustainable urbanization by: providing the necessary support and resources to begin the implementation of the Medium-term Strategic and Institutional Plan for 2008-2013; strengthening the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation by contributing to its experimental reimbursable seeding operations; and revitalizing or strengthening broad-based national UN-Habitat committees, with a view to mainstreaming urban poverty reduction in national development strategies, developing sustainable urban development strategies, and promoting the implementation of the UN-Habitat Enhanced Normative and Operational Framework at the country level. They were also encouraged to recommend that the issues of access to basic services for all and sustainable urbanization be included in the high-level discussions of the Economic and Social Council and other intergovernmental mechanisms, with a view to promoting the guiding principles on access to basic services and further mainstreaming access by the poor to water and sanitation as a key contribution to the attainment of the MDGs.

### Coordinated implementation of Habitat Agenda

In response to a 2006 Economic and Social Council decision [YUN 2006, p. 1251], the Secretary-General submitted a May report [E/2007/58] on the coordinated implementation of the Habitat Agenda [YUN 1996, p. 994]. The report highlighted key outcomes and activities undertaken by UN-Habitat to enhance the implementation of the Agenda, and assessed key obstacles to more effective responses. It described actions to harmonize the monitoring of, and advocacy for, sustainable urbanization and poverty reduction throughout the UN system; focus efforts on key determinants of sustainable urbanization and slum prevention; and strengthen partnerships.

The Secretary-General said that rapid urbanization and the increasing migration of the world's people to cities and towns was creating unprecedented social, political, cultural and environmental challenges that had to be addressed by the global community. Most of the urban growth in rapidly urbanizing developing countries was being absorbed in life-threatening slums, posing a direct challenge for the implementation of the Habitat Agenda and the attainment of internationally agreed development goals. He encouraged Governments to review macroeconomic policies that favoured investment in pro-poor housing and

urban development as a means of: addressing the social consequences of rapid urbanization; stimulating local economic development and employment generation; and contributing to the achievement of the MDGs at the city level. Governments were also encouraged to take urgent action to mainstream the sustainable urbanization and urban poverty reduction agenda in their national development strategies, poverty reduction strategies and United Nations Development Assistance Framework processes at all levels. The Secretary-General recommended that urban poverty reduction be integrated in the monitoring of progress towards the MDGs, including those dealing with equal access to land, shelter, water and sanitation. He also recommended that Member States revitalize the National Habitat Committees, which were established in preparation for the 1996 United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) [YUN 1996, p. 992] and the twenty-fifth special session of the General Assembly to review and appraise the implementation of the Habitat Agenda [YUN 2001, p. 973], in order to facilitate the development of inclusive sustainable urban development strategies. In addition, the Secretary-General recommended that a task manager system for reporting and enhancing programme coordination be established within the Environment Management Group, an inter-agency advisory group set up in 1999 [YUN 1999, p. 974], and that sustainable urbanization be introduced as a standing item of the agenda for the high-level discussions on sustainable development.

On 26 July, the Economic and Social Council, by **decision 2007/249**, took note of the Secretary-General's report; decided to transmit it to the Assembly for consideration at its sixty-second (2007) session; and requested the Secretary-General to submit a report on the coordinated implementation of the Habitat Agenda to the Council in 2008.

In response to the Council's decision, the Secretary-General, by a September note [A/62/339], transmitted his May report to the Assembly.

### GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 19 December [meeting 78], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Second Committee [A/62/420], adopted **resolution 62/198** without vote [agenda item 55].

### Implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolutions 3327(XXIX) of 16 December 1974, 32/162 of 19 December 1977, 34/115 of 14 December 1979, 56/205 and 56/206 of 21 December 2001, 57/275 of 20 December 2002, 58/226 and 58/227 of 23 December

2003, 59/239 of 22 December 2004, 60/203 of 22 December 2005 and 61/206 of 20 December 2006,

*Taking note* of Economic and Social Council resolutions 2002/38 of 26 July 2002 and 2003/62 of 25 July 2003 and Council decisions 2004/300 of 23 July 2004, 2005/298 of 26 July 2005, 2006/247 of 27 July 2006 and 2007/249 of 26 July 2007,

*Recalling* the goal contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration of achieving a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum-dwellers by 2020 and the goal contained in the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (“Johannesburg Plan of Implementation”) to halve, by 2015, the proportion of people who lack access to safe drinking water and sanitation,

*Recalling also* the Habitat Agenda, the Declaration on Cities and Other Human Settlements in the New Millennium, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development,

*Recalling further* the 2005 World Summit Outcome, which calls upon the States Members of the United Nations to achieve significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum-dwellers by 2020, recognizing the urgent need for the provision of increased resources for affordable housing and housing-related infrastructure, prioritizing slum prevention and slum upgrading, and to encourage support for the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation and its Slum Upgrading Facility,

*Recognizing* the significance of the urban dimension of poverty eradication and the need to integrate water and sanitation and other issues within a comprehensive framework for sustainable urbanization,

*Recognizing also* the importance of decentralization policies for achieving sustainable human settlements development in line with the Habitat Agenda and the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals,

*Acknowledging* the importance of the seminal findings on the scale and pace of the urbanization of poverty and deprivation contained in the report entitled *State of the World's Cities 2006-2007: the Millennium Development Goals and Urban Sustainability—30 Years of Shaping the Habitat Agenda* and the *Global Report on Human Settlements 2007: Enhancing Urban Safety and Security*,

*Recognizing* the negative impact of environmental degradation, including climate change, desertification and loss of biodiversity, on human settlements,

*Conscious* of the unique opportunity provided by the Cities Without Slums Initiative mentioned in the Millennium Declaration for realizing economies of scale and substantial multiplier effects in helping to attain the other internationally agreed development goals,

*Welcoming* the offer of the Government of China and the city of Nanjing to host the fourth session of the World Urban Forum from 13 to 17 October 2008,

*Recognizing* the need for UN-Habitat to sharpen its focus on all areas within its mandate,

*Recognizing also* the continued need for increased and predictable financial contributions to the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation to ensure timely, effective and concrete global implementation of the

Habitat Agenda, the Declaration on Cities and Other Human Settlements in the New Millennium and the relevant internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration and the Johannesburg Declaration and Plan of Implementation,

*Acknowledging* the ongoing efforts of UN-Habitat towards more sustainable post-disaster and post-conflict reconstruction and recovery through its participation in the Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs,

*Noting* the efforts of UN-Habitat in strengthening its collaboration with the World Bank, the regional development banks and domestic financial institutions, ensuring that its policy advisory and capacity-building activities leverage investment finance to improve water and sanitation as an entry point to the attainment of internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the coordinated implementation of the Habitat Agenda and the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat);

2. *Encourages* Governments to consider an enhanced approach to achieving the Cities Without Slums Initiative mentioned in the United Nations Millennium Declaration by upgrading existing slums and creating policies and programmes, according to national circumstances, to forestall the growth of future slums, and in this regard invites the international donor community and multilateral and regional development banks to support the efforts of developing countries, inter alia, through increased voluntary financial assistance;

3. *Recognizes* that Governments have the primary responsibility for the sound and effective implementation of the Habitat Agenda, the Declaration on Cities and Other Human Settlements in the New Millennium and the Millennium Declaration, and stresses the need for the international community to implement fully its commitment to support Governments of developing countries in their efforts to develop inclusive urban development and urban poverty reduction strategies, through the provision of the requisite resources, capacity-building, the transfer of technology on mutually agreed terms and the creation of an international enabling environment;

4. *Welcomes* the vision, sharpened thematic focus and emphasis on management excellence of the UN-Habitat medium-term strategic and institutional plan for the period 2008-2013, and encourages ongoing efforts towards its effective implementation, including through improvements in the internal operations and programme management of UN-Habitat;

5. *Also welcomes* the ongoing efforts of UN-Habitat to develop a results-based and less fragmented budget structure with a view to securing maximum efficiency, accountability and transparency in programme delivery regardless of funding source;

6. *Takes note* of the decision of the Governing Council of UN-Habitat to enable UN-Habitat to undertake from 2007 to 2011 a four-year phase of experimental reimbursable seeding operations and other innovative financing ar-

rangements, as defined in Governing Council resolution 21/10, bearing in mind the provisions of the special annex for the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation appended by the Secretary-General to the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations, and taking into consideration the relevant elements of the operational procedures and guidelines;

7. *Notes* the approval by the Governing Council of UN-Habitat of the guidelines on decentralization and strengthening of local authorities, and requests UN-Habitat to assist interested Governments in adapting the guidelines to their national contexts, where appropriate, and in further developing tools and indicators as part of its support for the application of the guidelines, bearing in mind that the guidelines do not constitute a uniform or rigid blueprint applicable to all States Members of the United Nations;

8. *Encourages* relevant United Nations bodies and other international and regional organizations to mainstream the guiding principles on access to basic services for all, within the context of human settlements, in their development policies and programmes, and requests UN-Habitat to assist interested Governments in adapting the guiding principles and any guidelines adopted by the Governing Council to their national contexts, where appropriate;

9. *Encourages* Governments to promote the principles and practice of sustainable urbanization as a major contribution to mitigating the causes of climate change, adapting to the effects of climate change and reducing risks and vulnerabilities in a rapidly urbanizing world, including human settlements in fragile ecosystems, and invites the international donor community to support the efforts of developing countries in this regard;

10. *Calls for* continued financial support to UN-Habitat through increased voluntary contributions, and invites Governments in a position to do so to provide predictable multiyear funding and increased non-earmarked contributions to support programme implementation;

11. *Invites* the international donor community and financial institutions to contribute generously to the Water and Sanitation Trust Fund, the Slum Upgrading Facility and the technical cooperation trust funds to enable UN-Habitat to assist developing countries in mobilizing public investment and private capital for slum upgrading, shelter and basic services;

12. *Also invites* the international donor community and financial institutions to support the experimental reimbursable seeding operations trust fund of the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation;

13. *Requests* the Secretary-General to keep the resource needs of UN-Habitat under review so as to enhance its effectiveness in supporting national policies, strategies and plans in attaining the poverty eradication, gender equality, water and sanitation and slum upgrading targets of the Millennium Declaration, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and the 2005 World Summit Outcome;

14. *Emphasizes* the importance of the Nairobi headquarters location of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, and requests the Secretary-General to keep the resource needs of UN-Habitat and the United Nations Office at Nairobi under review so as to permit the delivery, in an effective manner, of necessary services to

UN-Habitat and the other United Nations organs and organizations in Nairobi;

15. *Acknowledges* contributions of the regional consultative initiatives, including conferences of ministers in the area of human settlements, for the implementation of the Habitat Agenda and the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals, and invites the international community to continue to support such efforts and the implementation of the outcomes of those initiatives;

16. *Calls upon* UN-Habitat to strengthen efforts to coordinate and implement its normative and operational activities through the enhanced normative and operational framework elaborated in the medium-term strategic and institutional plan, reinforcing its normative activities, and invites all countries in a position to do so to support the activities of UN-Habitat in this regard;

17. *Requests* UN-Habitat to promote, in consultation with national Governments, urban poverty reduction within the framework of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework and the common country assessment and to align its policy advisory and capacity-building activities with the World Bank, regional development banks, other financial institutions, regional organizations and other relevant partners to field-test innovative policies, practices and pilot projects in order to mobilize resources to increase the supply of affordable credit for slum upgrading and other pro-poor human settlements development in developing countries;

18. *Also requests* UN-Habitat to encourage collaboration among all the Habitat Agenda partners on analytical policy work, including the preparation of its flagship reports and monitoring activities, and to identify opportunities for strengthening joint programmes of work on capacity-building for the reduction of urban poverty, including on “localizing the Millennium Development Goals”;

19. *Reiterates its invitation* to all Governments to participate actively in the fourth session of the World Urban Forum, and invites donor countries to support the participation of representatives from developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, including women and young people, in the Forum;

20. *Requests* UN-Habitat, through its involvement in the Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs and through contacts with relevant United Nations agencies and partners in the field, to promote the early involvement of human settlements experts in the assessment and development of prevention, rehabilitation and reconstruction programmes to support the efforts of developing countries affected by natural disasters and complex humanitarian emergencies;

21. *Also requests* UN-Habitat, within its mandate, to continue to work closely with other relevant agencies of the United Nations system, and strongly reiterates its invitation to the Inter-Agency Standing Committee to consider including UN-Habitat in its membership, acknowledging the important role and contribution of UN-Habitat in supporting the efforts of countries affected by natural disasters and complex emergencies to develop prevention, rehabilitation and reconstruction programmes for the transition from relief to development;

22. *Encourages* Member States to strengthen or establish, as appropriate, broad-based national Habitat commit-

tees with a view to mainstreaming sustainable urbanization and urban poverty reduction in their respective national development strategies;

23. *Encourages* the Economic and Social Council to include in its high-level discussions the issues of sustainable urbanization, urban poverty reduction and slum-upgrading, including access to basic services for all and further mainstreaming access by the poor to water and sanitation as a key contribution to the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals;

24. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-third session a report on the implementation of the present resolution;

25. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-third session the item entitled "Implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)".

## UN Human Settlements Programme

### Governing Council

In 2007, the Governing Council of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) held its twenty-first session (Nairobi, 16-20 April) [A/62/8]. The Council adopted 10 resolutions on various aspects of the work of UN-Habitat and one decision on future Council sessions.

The Council approved the 2008-2013 UN-Habitat Medium-term Strategic and Institutional Plan [res. 21/2], as set out in a March note by the Executive Director [HSP/GC/21/5/Add.1], with the exception of proposals for the establishment of a revolving fund account (see p. 1088) and a voluntary indicative scale of contributions [HSP/GC/21/5/Add.2]. It took note of the Executive Director's proposal regarding a results-based framework for the 2008-2013 period [HSP/GC/21/5 & Corr.1]. The Council endorsed the six focus areas of the Strategic and Institutional Plan: effective advocacy, monitoring and partnerships; promotion of participatory urban planning, management and governance; promotion of pro-poor land and housing; environmentally sound basic urban infrastructure and services; strengthened human settlements finance systems; and management excellence. It requested the Executive Director to elaborate a process for improving the Plan, including agreement on specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound indicators, targets and priorities; and establish a dialogue with the Committee of Permanent Representatives on refining the resource mobilization strategy. It also asked the Executive Director to ensure, within the context of sustainable development, that cross-cutting issues were reflected in the Enhanced Normative and Operational Framework; establish, in consultation with the Committee,

clear criteria for UN-Habitat country-level activities and the deployment of Habitat programme managers; give immediate priority to the institutional reforms proposed in the Plan; and review human resource requirements and implement a human resources policy based on merit, balanced geographical and gender representation, and strategic use of external expertise. The Council requested that the strategic policy for addressing the sustainable human settlements aspects of man-made and natural disaster management be put forward for review by the Committee by the end of 2007. The Executive Director was further asked to: strengthen partnerships with other UN organizations, the World Bank Group and regional development banks to achieve the Plan's overarching vision and objectives, in line with UN system-wide reform; make optimal use of efficiency gains arising from the reform process; establish an annual peer-review process for the implementation of the Plan; report on progress on the implementation of the Plan to the Council's twenty-second (2009) session; report regularly to the Committee on progress and challenges related to the Plan's implementation; and, in collaboration with the Committee, conduct a midterm review of the Plan and report to the Council's twenty-third (2011) session.

In a resolution on urban youth development [res. 21/6], the Council requested the Executive Director to establish a special fund within the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation, to be designated the Opportunities Fund for Urban Youth-led Development. The fund would support youth-led initiatives to pursue the Habitat Agenda, the UN-Habitat work programme and the overall strategy with regard to: mobilizing young people to help strengthen youth-related policy formulation; building the capacities of Governments, NGOs, and civil society organizations and private-sector entities to better respond to the needs of young people; supporting the development of interest-based information and communication networks; piloting and demonstrating new and innovative approaches to employment, good governance, adequate shelter and secure tenure; sharing and exchanging information on best practices; facilitating vocational training and credit mechanisms to promote entrepreneurship and employment for young women and men; and promoting gender mainstreaming in activities related to urban youth. The Executive Director was asked to target support from the special fund to young people most in need of assistance; establish an advisory committee to develop criteria for the operation of the fund and mainstream youth issues in UN-Habitat work; encourage contributions from multilateral agencies, Governments, the private sector and civil society for the establishment of the fund; and evaluate the operation of the fund and submit a report to the Council in 2011. She was also asked to mainstream age-related instruments in the overall UN-Habitat

work programme and report to the Council in 2009 on progress made in the implementation of the resolution.

The Council approved the guidelines on decentralization and strengthening of local authorities, as set out in the Executive Director's report on cooperation with local authorities and other Habitat Agenda partners [HSP/GC/21/2/Add.2]. It asked UN-Habitat to assist interested Governments in adapting the guidelines to their national contexts, where appropriate, and to further develop tools and indicators as part of its support for the application of the guidelines. The Council called on UN-Habitat to develop innovative partnerships with local authorities and their associations, including United Cities and Local Governments, in order to support ownership and the application of the guidelines. The Executive Director was asked to include a discussion of the implementation of the resolution in her overall progress report to the Council in 2009 [res. 21/3].

The Council considered the Executive Director's report on access to basic services [HSP/GC/21/2/Add.7], which set out guiding principles on access to basic services for all, and a secretariat note on documented best practices with regard to the principles [HSP/GC/21/INF/3]. In a related resolution [res. 21/4], the Council requested UN-Habitat to develop draft guidelines on access to basic services for all, based on further consultations with other UN bodies and concerned stakeholders, and in line with the draft guidelines on decentralization and the guiding principles on access to basic services for all, to be submitted to the Council for its consideration in 2009. UN-Habitat was also asked to assist interested Governments in adapting the guiding principles and any guidelines adopted by the Council to their national contexts, where appropriate, and to develop tools and indicators as part of its support for the application of the guiding principles and guidelines. The Executive Director was asked to discuss the implementation of the resolution in her overall progress report to the Council in 2009.

Regarding the sustainable development of Arctic human settlements cities [res. 21/5], the Council requested the Executive Director to expand the establishment of UN-Habitat partnerships across the UN system and with other regional stakeholders, including existing networks of circumpolar cooperation, for the promotion of the Habitat Agenda in the sustainable development of human settlements in the Arctic region. She was also asked to apply for observer status for UN-Habitat at the Arctic Council, and report to the Governing Council in 2009.

In a resolution on sustainable public-private partnership incentives for attracting large-scale private-sector investment in low-income housing [res. 21/7], the Council took note of the Executive Director's report on sustainable urbanization: local action for urban

poverty reduction [HSP/GC/21/3], which emphasized the importance of public-private partnerships on poverty reduction. It called on Governments, particularly in developing countries and countries with economies in transition, to encourage private-sector participation in the provision of infrastructure and affordable housing, and urged them to enhance the contribution of the housing sector to national economic growth, wealth creation, employment generation and poverty reduction, in line with the MDGs [YUN 2000, p. 51]. The Executive Director was requested to: promote, in consultation with Governments, the use of incentives and market measures as a sustainable partnership strategy for attracting large-scale private-sector investment and resources for affordable housing; work with Governments to encourage and promote the mobilization of domestic and international financial resources to support private-sector investment in affordable housing; promote the sharing of experiences and best practices gathered from the implementation of the resolution; and report to the Council in 2009.

The Council took note of the proposal by the African Ministerial Conference on Housing and Development to establish an earmarked Africa fund/financing mechanism for participatory slum prevention and upgrading, which was to be administered by UN-Habitat in collaboration with the executive secretariat of the Conference [res. 21/8]. It invited the executive secretariat to prepare, in consultation with Conference members, a comparative feasibility study on the establishment of such a fund for consideration by the Conference in 2008. In keeping with a 2005 Council resolution [YUN 2005, p. 1169], the Council requested the Executive Director to provide technical support to the executive secretariat in the preparation of the study, and ensure adequate coordination and complementarity between the proposed fund and other financial instruments, including those administered by UN-Habitat. The Executive Director was also asked to submit a similar concept to the ministerial conferences on housing and urban development of the Asia-Pacific and the Latin America and the Caribbean regions, and report to the Council in 2009.

In a resolution on women's land and property rights, and access to finance [res. 21/9], the Council asked the Executive Director to promote access to finance by low-income women as a major contribution to the overall implementation of the Habitat Agenda and to urban poverty reduction; develop a gender action plan with performance indicators to ensure concrete, measurable gains for the realization of gender equality and women's empowerment; and report on the implementation of the resolution to the Council in 2009. It urged Governments and their development partners to support women's land access trusts, housing cooperatives and other women's organizations working on land, housing and housing finance.

The Council considered the Executive Director's report on the proposed 2008-2009 UN-Habitat work programme and budget [HSP/GC/21/4 & Add.2] and the related report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions [HSP/GC/21/4/Add.1]. It approved the 2008-2009 work programme and budget, which included a general-purpose budget of \$32,795,100 and a special-purpose budget of \$72,933,500 [res. 21/1]. The Council also approved an increase in the general-purpose statutory reserve from \$2,419,100 to \$3,279,500 for the 2008-2009 biennium. The Council requested the Executive Director to prepare, in consultation with the UN-Habitat Committee of Permanent Representatives, a revised strategic framework, work programme and budget for the 2008-2009 biennium, and authorized her to make additional commitments of up to \$15 million for the implementation of the revised work programme and budget against general-purpose funds and additional special-purpose funds. The Executive Director was also authorized to adjust the level of allocations for programme activities with the actual level of income, and reallocate general-purpose resources between subprogrammes up to a maximum 25 per cent of that budget. The Council asked the Executive Director to develop a specific gender equality action plan for the 2008-2013 period concerning UN-Habitat policies, programmes and activities, together with performance indicators, to be submitted to the Council in 2009; report periodically to Governments on progress made in the implementation of the revised 2008-2009 work programme and budget; and report all allocations and adjustments to the Committee in her quarterly financial reports.

The Council also adopted a resolution on the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation (see below).

Among other documents, the Governing Council also considered the Executive Director's progress report on UN-Habitat activities [HSP/GC/21/2], as well as her reports on cooperation with UN system agencies and other organizations [HSP/GC/21/2/Add.3], energy consumption in human settlements [HSP/GC/21/Add.6] and the third (2006) session [YUN 2006, p. 1255] of the World Urban Forum [HSP/GC/21/Add.1]; the executive summary of the 2006 independent strategic evaluation of the performance and impact of Habitat Programme managers [HSP/GC/21/2/Add.8]; and the report of the Committee of Permanent Representatives on its activities during the intersessional period (2005-2007) [HSP/GC/21/2/Add.9].

On 26 July, the Economic and Social Council took note of the Governing Council's report on its twenty-first session (**decision 2007/250**).

### **UN Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation**

On 20 April, the UN-Habitat Governing Council adopted a two-part resolution dealing with the

United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation [res. 21/10]. In part I of the resolution, the Council requested the Executive Director to continue to strengthen the Foundation so as to accelerate the provision of finance for the mobilization of seed capital, domestic and other financial resources for shelter and related infrastructure, with priority given to the needs of low-income households. The Executive Director was also asked to establish a trust fund within the Foundation to support the introduction of experimental reimbursable seeding operations and other innovative financial mechanisms for a four-year experimental period (2007-2011), and submit to the Committee of Permanent Representatives proposed operational procedures for those experimental activities, taking into consideration the relevant elements of the draft operational procedures and guidelines set out in a note by the Executive Director [HSP/GC/21/5/Add.3]. The Council decided that consideration of the note was subject to review of the final evaluation by the Council in 2011 of the experimental activities and an analysis of required risk assessments, including resource implications of the proposed mechanisms and other measures tested during the experimental period. Further extension of the implementation of other aspects of the financial regulations and rules would be subject to consideration by the Council in 2011. The Council appealed to all Governments to contribute to the Foundation to broaden its funding base and increase substantially its non-earmarked financial resources. In part II of the resolution, the Council outlined elements of the proposed experimental activities and asked the Executive Director to build on those elements for the purpose of implementing the trust fund. She was also asked to report to the Council on the implementation of the resolution in 2009.

### *Board of Auditors report*

An April note by the UN-Habitat secretariat [HSP/GC/21/INF] contained the report of the UN Board of Auditors, which included the financial report and audited financial statements of the Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation for the biennium ended 31 December 2005 [A/61/5/Add.8]. Total allocations and expenditures for the Foundation amounted to \$77 million and \$66 million, respectively, leaving an unexpended allocation of \$11 million. For UN-Habitat, total income of \$228.48 million exceeded the total expenditure of \$169.28 million before prior period adjustment. The increase of \$121.53 million (114 per cent) compared to the prior biennium was due mainly to a 159 per cent increase in contributions from Governments and private donors. Total expenditures increased by \$74.51 million (79 per cent), compared with \$94.78 million in the 2002-2003 biennium.

The Board made recommendations related to, among other issues, the use of UN system accounting standards; the presentation and disclosure of financial statements; write-off losses of cash, receivables and property; programme, property and human resources management; and the Integrated Management Information System.

### Committee of Permanent Representatives

The Committee of Permanent Representatives, the intersectoral body of the UN-Habitat Governing Council, held four regular meetings in 2007 (21 February, 13 June, 27 September and 6 December) and one extraordinary meeting (28 March). The Committee reactivated four working groups to review follow-up action on the resolutions and decisions adopted at the twenty-first (2007) session of the Governing Council (see p. 1086). It also discussed strengthening the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation; the UN-Habitat financial situation; strategic UN-Habitat activities within the context of UN reform; the possibility of having the Habitat Agenda and sustainable urbanization included on the agenda of the high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council; progress on the Medium-term Strategic and Institutional Plan for the period 2008-2013; and preparations for the fourth (2008) session of the World Urban Forum.

### UN-Habitat activities

In 2007, UN-Habitat continued to strengthen its capacity and implement the key components of its work programme in line with the resolutions of the Governing Council and the goals of the UN system and the international community.

UN-Habitat operated 137 technical cooperation programmes and projects in 63 countries around the world. Its operational work was coordinated from four regional offices, located in Fukuoka, Japan, covering the Asia-Pacific region; Warsaw, Poland, covering eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States; Nairobi, Kenya, for Africa and the Arab States; and Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, for Latin America and the Caribbean. Operational activities remained focused on supporting Governments in the formulation of policies and strategies to create and strengthen a self-reliant management capacity at both national and local levels. Technical and managerial expertise was provided for the assessment of human settlements development constraints and opportunities; identification and analysis of policy options; the design and implementation of housing and urban development projects; and the mobilization of national resources

and external support for improving human settlements conditions. The national capacity-building process involved central Governments and community-based institutions and NGOs, universities and research institutions, as well as local governments and municipalities. The strengthening of local and national capacities in human settlements management was emphasized. In accordance with the UN-Habitat work programme, operational activities focused on promoting shelter for all; improving urban governance; reducing urban poverty; improving the living environment; and managing post-disaster reconstruction.

In 2007, the Global Land Tool Network (GLTN), an emerging international network hosted by UN-Habitat that aimed to take a more holistic approach to land issues, expanded from 24 global partners to 30, representing organizations with a global mandate. GLTN produced a land tool inventory of Latin America and Asia; documented ongoing land tool development and pro-poor practices; and backed up the African land policy framework and the development of land indicators for security of tenure. It initiated the development of the global Land Administration Domain Model and showed how basic rights, taxes and gender concerns could be incorporated into land policy.

Active participation in the wider UN humanitarian system enabled UN-Habitat to develop its normative work through increased human and financial resources. The Programme used its sustainable relief and reconstruction framework to: evaluate its field experience in generating lessons learned; develop new concepts for land and property rights, and sustainable reconstruction methods; and integrate disaster risk reduction into future disaster response within the organization and in support of the UN humanitarian community. The new framework and accompanying policy was endorsed by Member States in December.

In 2007, UN-Habitat published the *Framework for Promoting Pro-Poor Water and Sanitation Governance in Urban Programmes and Projects*. It also published the *Manual on the rights-based approach to water and sanitation*; the *Innovative Policies for the Urban Informal Economy* report; and a water and sanitation guide entitled *Local Actions for Sustainable Development*. The Programme's biennial flagship publication, *The Global Report on Human Settlements*, highlighted urban safety and security. It showed that, apart from crime and violence, a lack of secure tenure and vulnerability to natural disasters affected poor people far more than the rich, and that resilience was highly correlated to income both within and between nations. In addition to its publications, UN-Habitat adopted Internet-based distance learning to complement the current synchronous training approach.

UN-Habitat, in collaboration with other UN and multilateral agencies, developed the Lake Victoria Local Economic Development Initiative with the aim of revitalizing local economies in the Lake Victoria region. It worked to promote high-volume, high-capacity public transport infrastructure investment as a hedge against the overuse of private automobiles to meet future transport demands in developing countries, particularly within the East Africa region. A programme of work with the UNEP Global Environment Facility was developed to implement bus-rapid transport in Nairobi; Kampala, Uganda; and Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. In April, UN-Habitat launched the Business Partnership for Sustainable Urbanization (BPSU), a strategic alliance of businesses and other partners working towards sustainable urbanization. The first BPSU Stakeholders Meeting was held in Nairobi (13-14 April). In May, the International Urban Training Centre was officially launched in the Province of Gangwon, Republic of Korea, to build the capacity of cities and towns nationally and in the Asia and Pacific region in support of the goal of sustainable urbanization.

Under UN-Habitat's Slum Upgrading Facility pilot projects, private-sector banks agreed to give long-term financing for low-income women's housing cooperatives in the United Republic of Tanzania and Kenya. China provided technical assistance to establish local construction firms in the city of Yangzhou to help build low-cost, mid-rise residential blocks, which would enable the poor to remain on prime land near the central business district. In September, UN-Habitat announced plans to open a new office in Beijing, in order to expand its Water for Asian Cities Programme. The office would provide water and sanitation training for mayors from China and other parts of Asia and Africa.

#### **Report to Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.**

In response to recommendations made by the fifth (2006) session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues [YUN 2006, p. 935], UN-Habitat issued a March report [E/C.19/2007/3/Add.13] on its activities related to the rights and needs of indigenous peoples. In cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Forum secretariat, the International Organization for Migration and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, UN-Habitat organized the International Expert Group Meeting on Urban Indigenous People and Migration (Santiago, Chile, 27-29 March). Global UN-Habitat programmes and activities focusing on poverty alleviation in the context of the MDGs directly impacted indigenous peoples' livelihoods. Its activities in the field of disaster mitigation, post-conflict issues and safety in the context of human settlements were related mostly to housing and living conditions of indigenous peoples. Other activities, including those related to the economic and social empowerment of indigenous peoples, urban economic development and finance, and rural-urban linkages, were contributing to the five main objectives [YUN 2005, p. 879] of the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People (2005-2014), proclaimed by the General Assembly in resolution 59/174 [YUN 2004, p. 799]. As part of the proposed new focus of UN-Habitat, which was defined by the Medium-term Strategic Plan 2008-2013 (see p. 1086), the Programme's work would centre around five thematic focus areas, including participatory urban planning, management and governance, with the strategic intent of strengthening the performance of national Governments, local authorities and other stakeholders to enable the development of liveable, productive and inclusive cities.