

**LAUNCH OF THE  
CEB INTERAGENCY CLUSTER  
ON TRADE AND PRODUCTIVE CAPACITY**

20 April 2008

**Talking points for the Secretary-General of UNCTAD**

Mr. Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations,  
Distinguished colleagues of the members of the Cluster,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The development assistance of the UN system is undergoing an important transformation. The reforms undertaken in recent years and months to achieve greater coherence across the system and strengthen the UN's ability to "deliver as one" at the country level are reshaping the way we plan and implement our assistance.

These reforms were prompted by the need to scale up and improve the effectiveness of our assistance as we pass the midpoint towards the target year for the achievement of the MDGs – the overarching goals of the UN's development assistance. But they were also prompted by the increasing priority placed by member States on the need for greater coherence and coordination among the UN entities.

The implementation of the "Delivering as One" process started in eight pilot countries last year. It brought about greater central coordination of UN

Development Assistance at the country-level, and widened the scope for cooperation among agencies. The assessment of these pilot experiences is starting now, but it is already clear that they are having a major influence on many other countries where new UN assistance plans are being prepared. The interagency programmes and joint funds being established in these eight countries show the way forward, and demonstrate that the concept of system-wide coherence is being translated into operational terms at the field level. The results are encouraging.

It was in this context that last year, an interagency cluster of organizations working on trade and trade-related issues was set up with a view to acting jointly in the One UN pilot countries. The first meeting was convened at UNCTAD headquarters exactly one year ago, on 20 April 2007. UNIDO, FAO, ITC, UNDP, WTO and all the UN Regional Commissions are part of this Cluster on Trade and Productive Capacity. In October 2007, the CEB session that you chaired, Mr. Secretary-General, endorsed this new Cluster, which is now part of the interagency machinery.

Mr. Secretary-General,

The Cluster has an open-ended and flexible membership and is intended to be action-oriented and pragmatic. One of the primary instruments for achieving the objectives of enhanced coordination and coherence is the Enhanced Integrated Framework, whose action plans will be incorporated into the UN country assistance plans for the LDCs.

Now that it has one full year of work under its belt, the Cluster can take stock of what it has achieved and define what the next steps should be.

In taking stock, let me highlight four concrete achievements that go beyond our original expectations: First, *joint assistance programmes* are or will soon be under way in four of the eight pilot countries: Rwanda, Mozambique, Cape Verde and Viet Nam. Last week, the Cluster organized an interagency mission to Albania to draft a joint programme on trade and productive capacity in consultation with the Government. Joint Cluster programmes are being prepared in Tanzania, Pakistan and Uruguay. Second, *an interagency training programme on trade and productive capacity issues for UN Resident Coordinators and their staff* will be launched at a pilot workshop at the UN System Staff College in Turin next month. Third, a UN systemwide *Interagency Resource Guide on Trade Capacity-building* has been compiled under the coordination of UNIDO. And fourth, member agencies are interacting far more regularly, and on almost a daily basis.

The next steps are equally important: in the first place, we must better inform our member States, particularly donor countries, about the joint programmes ready to be implemented with the contributions already provided, or pledged, to the One UN budgets. Secondly, we have to inform colleagues at headquarters and in the field about the role and purpose of the Cluster. Thirdly, and most importantly, the Cluster should launch joint initiatives in countries beyond the eight pilots, identifying what assistance is needed on trade and productive capacity and how that assistance can be part of the new UN development assistance plans to be launched this year and next.

On behalf of the Cluster, I would like to thank you, Mr. Secretary-General, for your support of this initiative. We will of course provide you with regular progress reports, particularly at CEB meetings. I would also like to express my sincere thanks to all the Cluster members for their strong commitment to this effort. I am confident that this commitment will bear fruit.

Thank you.