



THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

22 November 2006

Dear Mr. Derviş,

Congratulations to you and your fellow panellists on the High-level Panel on United Nations System-wide Coherence for the excellent report you have produced. As you know, the process leading to the implementation of the Panel's recommendations will include informal consultations by Member States during the remainder of 2006, as well as negotiations, formal consideration and decision-making by the relevant intergovernmental bodies, my successor and the Executive Heads of the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes starting in 2007. Your own personal role and leadership will be essential in this process.

In the meantime, I would like to move forward with a few of the recommendations focusing in particular on the call to establish five "pilot" countries where the "One United Nations" approach will be tested. I am pleased to note that this recommendation builds on the reform agenda set for the United Nations system by the General Assembly in the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Reviews of 2001 and 2004. In particular, the report acknowledges progress in areas including programme coherence in response to national priorities, strengthened United Nations Country Team leadership, streamlined administrative support, and joint programming linked to more effective funding mechanisms. In addition, the Joint Office initiative, with Cape Verde as the first pilot, has served as an example of a "One United Nations" operation incorporating many of the elements outlined in the report.

All of this work led by the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) provides an excellent base to expand to the five "pilot" countries the enhanced concepts of one leader, one programme, one budgetary framework, and one office, supported by Millennium Development Goals strategy support funds, as recommended by the report. In this regard, I would like to ask you, as Chairman of the UNDG, to lead an effort with the Executive Heads of the UNDG to move forward with the "One United Nations" initiative based on the interest expressed by Programme Countries to participate, and the development of appropriate selection criteria.

Mr. Kemal Derviş  
Chairman  
United Nations Development Group  
New York

I am pleased to note that Viet Nam has already requested to become one of the pilot countries based on the excellent work that the Government and the United Nations Country Team have undertaken to advance these concepts.

I would also urge that you and your UNDG colleagues accelerate your efforts to establish the appropriate accountability framework and oversight mechanisms to ensure system-wide ownership of the Resident Coordinator system. It would also be important for the United Nations Development Programme to begin its own internal work to establish the appropriate “firewalls” and codes of conduct, as well as take other steps recommended in the Panel report that are critical to underpin a strengthened Resident Coordinator system.

Moreover, I would suggest that together with your UNDG colleagues you begin to reflect about the detailed structure and functions of the Development Policy and Operations Group, which will take some time to establish.

I would like to thank you again for your contributions to the Panel and wish you and your colleagues all the success in carrying forward these critical items which, together with the other recommendations in the report, will hopefully result in a more coherent United Nations system which “delivers as one” in the field. I am certain that you will be able to count on the cooperation of the senior leadership of the United Nations system who expressed support for the report and its recommendations during the recent Chief Executives Board retreat.

I would appreciate it if you could keep me informed of the progress as you and your colleagues move forward with this agenda.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Annan', with a stylized, cursive script.

Kofi A. Annan