

3 February 2003

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I call to order the 2nd meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Integrated and Coordinated Implementation of and Follow-up to the Outcomes of the Major United Nations Conferences and Summits in the Economic and Social Fields.

Distinguished delegates, you are invited to resume consideration of the work programme, including the issue of periodicity and duration of the meetings of the working group, for which you have before you the paper circulated by the secretariat outlining elements for the work programme and agenda of the working group.

Last week, you elected Ambassador Effah-Apenteng of Ghana and Ambassador de Ruyt of Belgium as vice-chairmen of the working group. I count on their personal support and engagement in guiding the work of the group during the four months ahead of us.

This week, we are really getting down to work. By Friday, we should agree on the work programme of our Working Group, namely, the main issues it will address and the main focus of each of our sessions. An early agreement on our work programme will help in several ways including in managing our limited time effectively, getting a preliminary idea on the scope of our current exercise, and a first picture of what ground our final outcome will cover. We also need to consider how the group will work - should we, for instance, have more informal consultations and brainstorming sessions rather than formal meetings, have we set aside enough days for the Working Group, what kind of documentation do we expect from the Secretariat and when?

I outlined to you last Monday the key areas where I believe the working group should make advances. I also shared with you a very preliminary list of issues that it could address, to support our discussion and reflection. I hope that, in the two-three days ahead, we can have a rich exchange of views on your own expectations for this Working Group. The Secretariat is here with us and I will call on Mr. Khan to illuminate for us some of the challenges in relation to the broad themes we have identified in the non-paper circulated to you two weeks ago.

After having heard the more formal statements of delegations today, we could have very informal brainstorming sessions tomorrow and Wednesday. I would suggest that it is extremely important to enable as rich and informal a debate as possible in order to exchange views and ideas and to clarify and fine-tune our work programme. The Vice-Chairmen and I will listen carefully to all ideas and suggestions. If you agree, we will then come up with a revised work programme based

on your suggestions, which you would review subsequently. By the end of the week we would have a clear road map of our work ahead.

Now, I open the floor for your statements. First on my list of speakers is....

At the end of the meeting:

I would like to thank all the distinguished delegates who shared with us today their positions, views and ideas on this very important and very complex issue. This has been a very productive debate and I believe that although the topic is broad and comprehensive, a common ground for our agreement can be reached. As I understood from your statements and interventions, more time should be spent on this issue. Although the time is limited, I believe that a common ground can be reached. At the end of the meeting, I would like to thank all the distinguished delegates who shared with us today their positions, views and ideas on this very important and very complex issue. This has been a very productive debate and I believe that although the topic is broad and comprehensive, a common ground for our agreement can be reached. As I understood from your statements and interventions, more time should be spent on this issue. Although the time is limited, I believe that a common ground can be reached.