



General Assembly

Distr.: General
9 August 2001

Original: English

Fifty-sixth session

Item 33 of the provisional agenda*

Final review and appraisal of the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s

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Note by the Secretary-General**

I. Introduction

1. The United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s was established by the General Assembly in its resolution 46/151 of 18 December 1991. A mechanism for the follow-up, monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the Agenda is contained in section II, paragraphs 42 to 48, of the annex to the resolution. In its resolution 51/32 on the mid-term review of the implementation of the New Agenda, the Assembly decided to conduct the final review and appraisal of the programme in 2002.

2. In its resolution 54/234 on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa, the General Assembly also decided to consider at its fifty-sixth session the modalities for undertaking the final review and appraisal of the New Agenda, taking into account the mid-term review and agreed conclusions 1999/2 of the Economic and Social Council. The Assembly reaffirmed this decision in its resolution 55/216.

3. The final review and appraisal of the New Agenda is an occasion for the General Assembly and the international community to take stock of efforts made by the African countries themselves and the international community at large to foster the development of the continent. It is also an opportunity for the Assembly to deliberate and provide guidelines on future actions and approaches to ensure effective coordination of poverty eradication and sustainable development efforts in Africa.

II. Evaluation of the New Agenda

4. In its 1999/2 agreed conclusions, the Economic and Social Council requested that the Secretary-General commission an independent evaluation of the New Agenda, including its relationship with other initiatives. The Council called for the evaluation to show clearly achievements and shortcomings in overall performance, particularly in regard to identified priority areas and in meeting agreed targets. It also requested that the evaluation make recommendations for future action, including consideration of successor arrangements. In its resolution 54/234, the General Assembly stressed the paramount importance for the final review and appraisal of the New Agenda of an

* A/56/150.

** The footnote requested by the General Assembly in resolution 54/248 was not included in the submission.



independent evaluation that should include a thorough review of existing initiatives on Africa. In its resolution 55/216, the Assembly requested that the independent evaluation of the New Agenda, which should be submitted to it by 31 May 2002, also take into account section VII of the United Nations Millennium Declaration (see General Assembly resolution 55/2).

5. At its forty-sixth session, in June 2001, the Committee for Programme and Coordination requested that the various reports related to the final evaluation of the New Agenda should, *inter alia* present an assessment of all the activities carried out by all partners concerned in the various areas covered by the New Agenda and identify successes, obstacles, failures and lessons learned. The impact and implications of the activities on the development of Africa in the light of the commitments, responsibilities and objectives initially set by the New Agenda should be indicated as well. The Committee also requested that concrete proposals on the successor arrangements to the New Agenda be put forward. Such proposals should include effective coordination measures at the international, regional, subregional and national levels.¹

6. The independent and high-level quality evaluation of the New Agenda and related initiatives, as requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 55/217, the Economic and Social Council and the Committee for Programme and Coordination, has been launched. The Secretary-General has established a panel composed of 12 independent personalities from Africa and the international community to oversee this evaluation. The panel is scheduled to hold its first meeting in September 2001 to review the terms of reference and to agree on the calendar and process of the evaluation, which will be undertaken by a team of four independent experts under its supervision. The panel will also meet in March 2002 to discuss the draft evaluation report before it is finalized and submitted to the Assembly by 31 May 2002.

III. Final review and appraisal of the New Agenda by the General Assembly

7. It may be recalled that in 1984 the Organization of African Unity (OAU) issued a declaration on the critical economic situation in Africa that led to the

convening of the thirteenth special session of the General Assembly, which adopted the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990. That programme was based on Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery 1986-1990, which was derived from the Lagos Plan of Action (A/S-11/14, annex I). Subsequently, the New Agenda was developed on the basis of a memorandum (A/46/280, annex) prepared by the Conference of Ministers of the Economic Commission for Africa and submitted to the Assembly at its forty-sixth session.

8. The recent initiatives taken by African countries to assume and assert ownership of their development, together with their attempt to redefine the terms and conditions of partnership with the international community, led to the adoption of the New African Initiative in July 2001 by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of OAU. In the declaration it adopted on 18 July 2001 during the high-level segment of its session of 2001, the Economic and Social Council called on the United Nations system and the international community to support the New African Initiative and invited the Secretary-General to take the requisite measures to ensure the effective and coordinated response of the United Nations system to the Initiative.

9. In the statement he made at the opening of the high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council on 16 July 2001, the Secretary-General said the United Nations would fully support the New African Initiative and expressed the need to put an end to the multiplicity of initiatives on Africa. This is in line with the long and well-established policy of the United Nations to support African initiatives.

10. In the statement delivered on 17 July 2001 on behalf of the African Group of States during the high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council, it was stressed that the review of the implementation of the New Agenda would provide the international community with the opportunity to assess the performance of African countries and the international support provided to them during the past decade in a comprehensive manner. It would be the occasion where the future course of action for implementing the United Nations Millennium Declaration, including reducing poverty by half by the year 2015 in Africa, could be determined. Furthermore, it was stated that the final review and appraisal would be a comprehensive

undertaking which would determine the future course of action of the international community with regard to African development and, in that context, help to determine the role of the United Nations system in support of Africa.

11. The General Assembly may wish to consider adopting the same modality applied for the mid-term review of the New Agenda and used in the past to carry out the mid-term and the final reviews and appraisals of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990, the predecessor programme to the New Agenda, which involved the establishment by the Assembly of an Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole. At its fifty-sixth session, the Assembly may thus wish to establish an Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole to carry out the final review and appraisal of the New Agenda and submit its report to the Assembly at its fifty-seventh session for its decision.

12. The Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole could hold an organizational session in early June 2002 and a substantive session in September 2002 shortly before the close of the fifty-sixth session. The documents which could assist the General Assembly in the final review and appraisal of the New Agenda could include the report on the independent evaluation to be submitted by 31 May 2002, a note by the Secretary-General providing any views he may have on the evaluation report and reports on or assessments of the implementation of the New Agenda by OAU or its successor, the African Union, and the community of non-governmental organizations.

Notes

¹ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 16 (A/56/16), para. 140.*