

International Conference for the Great Lakes region

4th meeting of the National Coordinators

Nairobi, 14-15 July 2004

Draft Summary of discussions and recommendations (Revision 1)

1. The 4th meeting of the National Coordinators took place in Nairobi, on 14-15 July 2004. Its objectives were to:
 - Have an update on: the National Preparatory process of each core country; the preparations towards the specialised meetings of the IC/GLR, namely the Women's meeting, the Youth specialized conference and the regional meeting of regional NGOs; the financial support from the Group of Friends of the Great Lakes region;
 - Debate the question of enlargement/membership of the IC/GLR;
 - Determine the role of the different categories of players/stakeholders of the IC/GLR, including observers;
 - Review and revise the timetable of the process;
 - Discuss procedural matters with regards to the structure of the meetings of the process;

2. In addition to the Conference UN/AU Secretariat, the meeting was attended by:
 - The National Coordinators (NCs) of the 7 core countries of the Conference and their deputies;
 - The UN SRSG for Burundi and the UN Deputy SRSG for DRC;
 - The UN Resident Coordinators for DRC, Rwanda and Uganda;
 - Representatives from UNDP – Kenya and UNDP - Tanzania;
 - The Regional Representative of UNECA and a Representative of the Regional Office of UNOCHA
 - The Regional Representative of UNIFEM;
 - A Representative from Nepad's Headquarters;
 - The Special Representative of the European Union for the Great Lakes region;
 - The Co-chairs for the Group of Friends

The summarised outcomes of the discussions and recommendations are as follows:

On the current state of preparation at national level:

3 - All the core countries gave an update of their national preparatory process. Efforts were made by all countries to include every segment of society in their respective National Preparatory Committees, with some countries still at an early stage in their national consultations.

Structural and functional obstacles were highlighted which hinder the progress of their respective preparatory processes. They include lack of office space and equipment.

4 - The previous lack of funds, due to several reasons, was also stressed to explain the delays in the national preparatory processes. Removing this obstacle was deemed essential for the progress on substance in the preparatory process to meet the deadline of the 1st regional preparatory meeting scheduled for early September 2004.

On the question of membership:

5 - Following intensive consultations in the last few weeks, Burundi, DRC, Kenya, Tanzania and Zambia have accepted to include Angola and the Republic of Congo as full members of the core group, provided that this would not further delay the preparatory process, would not modify the geographical definition of the Great Lakes region and would not open the door to other new members. However, it was suggested that more consultations were needed aiming at reaching a consensus on this issue by the end of July 2004.

On the role of the different categories of players/stakeholders of the IC/GLR:

Co-opted member

6 - As far as the status of *co-opted member* is concerned, it was reiterated that all the neighbours of at least one of the current 7 core countries qualified. The co-opted countries that qualify as co-opted will be contacted again to remind them of their status. The co-opted members should be invited to all the regional preparatory meetings, as well as to the Summits. They can participate to all the plenary and closed-door sessions but not to the decision-making process. However, they can adhere to specific multilateral agreements stemming from the Conference.

Group of Friends

7 - It was decided that the Group of Friends would be given the special status of *Partners*, with the right to participate to all the plenary sessions, preparatory meetings, summits, as well as to the closed-door sessions when invited by the core members. However, they will not take part in the decision making process.

African sub-regional organisations

8 - African Sub-regional organisations covering part or all of the Great Lakes region were deemed essential actors in the Conference process. They are a constitutive part of the region and will have a critical role in the outcomes of the Conference and in the implementation phase. A formal status was given to them, that of *partners*. However, there was consensus on recognising them in the framework of the Conference as simply *African Sub-regional organisations*.

Observers

9 - The status of *observer* is subject to a formal request by a State, a national, regional or international organisation or non-governmental organisation, or by an individual to the core countries, who will then decide to accept or reject the application. A deadline will be given for the submission of requests and for the response to applications and a list will be drawn prior to the 1st Summit.

10 - The observers can participate in the Regional Preparatory Committees, as well as in Summits and attend all the plenary sessions, but not the closed-door sessions. They can take the floor collectively or individually, if allowed by the chair. However, for the first Preparatory Committee meeting, refer to paragraph 23. Observers can distribute their documents to the participants and have access to the general information documents on the Conference, but not to the working documents. They will not take part in the decision making process.

Role of the Lead UN agencies

11 - The role of the four lead agencies for the four thematic groups of the Conference, namely the OSRSG/GLR for Peace and Security ; UNDP for Democracy and Good Governance ; UNECA for Economic Development and Regional Integration ; UNOCHA for Humanitarian and Social issues was discussed. It was agreed that these lead agencies for the four themes would play the role of *facilitator/resource persons* for their respective theme during the whole process, including in the plenary and workshops of the Regional Preparatory Committee meetings. In addition other UN agencies such as UNIFEM, UNEP, HABITAT and UNAIDS, whose mandate cuts across the 4 themes, will be invited to make specific inputs to the sessions of the Regional Preparatory Committee meetings.

On the timetable:

12 - Due to time constraints, the timetable was revised as follows:

<p>14-15 July 2004: 4th meeting of National Coordinators in Nairobi 1-3 September 2004: Women's meeting in Kigali 6-10 September 2004: 1st Regional Preparatory Committee meeting in Bujumbura 12-17 September 2004: Youth specialized meeting in Kampala 11-15 October 2004: 2nd Regional Preparatory Committee meeting in Kinshasa 1-5 November 2004: 3rd Regional Preparatory Committee meeting in Kampala 16-17 November 2004: Pre-Summit meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs in Dar Es-Salaam 18 November 2004: Arrival of the Heads of State in Dar Es Salaam 19-20 November 2004: First Summit of Heads of State in Dar Es-Salaam 10-12 December 2004: Follow-up meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs in Kigali November 2004 – May 2005: Series of meetings of the regional inter-ministerial standing committees June 2005: Second Summit of Heads of State in Nairobi</p>

On the specialized meetings:

13 - The Secretariat made presentations on the planned **women's meeting**, the **youth specialized conference** and the **regional meeting of regional NGOs**. There was general agreement that these meetings should be organised ahead of the first or second Regional Preparatory Committee meetings to ensure that their outcomes feed into the preparatory process.

On the Regional Meeting of Regional NGOs

14 - A number of participants felt that while they were in agreement with the holding of the **regional meeting of regional NGOs**, that meeting should be as inclusive as possible and not be solely limited to NGOs as the title seems to suggest. In this regard, the Mwalimu Nyerere Foundation which has been tasked to facilitate that meeting, should in close consultations with the Secretariat and the NCs, draw up the list of participants to that meeting to ensure proper representation but also expertise. In addition, the agenda of that meeting should focus on the four themes of the Conference and the discussions should lead to concrete recommendations for consideration by the Regional Preparatory Committee meeting. If funds permit, some representation from the participants of the regional meeting of regional NGOs could attend the Regional Preparatory Committee meeting and present the thrust of the discussions.

On the women's meeting:

15 - In preparation for the regional women's meeting, which will be held in Kigali in September, a first brainstorming session was held in February 2004. The main aim of this brainstorming session was to set a framework for organising the women's meeting and establish criteria for determining the meeting participants, taking into account the principle of ownership and partnership. All participants from the core countries, including regional organizations, UN agencies and UNIFEM will provide technical support. A technical meeting was also organised during which experts made their contributions on the four themes of the Conference. A meeting was also held for women in faith-based organizations

16 - At the regional meeting, it is hoped to involve the First Lady of the host country. In addition women should be encouraged to participate in the meetings of their respective NPCs, in the ministerial meetings and at the Heads of State summits. It is also highly recommended that Ministers in charge of Gender officially participate to the summit.

On the Youth specialized meeting:

17 - A brief presentation of the Youth specialized meeting to take place in Kampala from 12 to 17 September 2004 was made, in which the meeting's structure, format and justification was detailed. The concept paper of the Youth specialised meeting was made available to all the National Coordinators, who were called upon to ensure that their respective national youth meetings take place in the framework of the concept paper in order for them to come up with a common regional position of the youth on the four themes of the IC/GLR.

On the update of the financial support from the Group of Friends:

18 - The National Coordinators expressed satisfaction towards the GOF on the positive developments as far as efforts to make fund available were concerned. However, more flexibility was urged in disbursements to allow the completion of the substantive documents for the four themes by 15 August 2004. The Group of Friends and the UNDP country offices reassured them that parts of the funds were immediately available and that everything was being done to facilitate the prompt funding of the respective activities.

19 - A debate followed from which these conclusions can be drawn:

- Appeals were made to the respective governments to make more efforts in assisting the set up of the Secretariat of the various NPCs. However, there was also need for the National Coordinators to demonstrate imagination and creativity and make use of existing structures as much as possible.

As far as disbursements were concerned, there is need for regular consultations between the National Coordinators, the UNDP country offices and the Group of Friends to facilitate funding of their activities taking into account the realities on the ground.

20 - UNDP was praised for its multi-functional assistance and its commitment. There was a strong request for more technical assistance from UNDP on substance.

21 - The Group of Friends Co-Chairs and UNDP conducted further bilateral consultations with the National Coordinators of all the core countries and reached a common understanding on the way forward. They indicated that Japan might fund Women and Youth activities at national level in some countries. The NCs were encouraged to get in contact with the Japanese embassy in their respective countries.

On procedural matters pertaining to the structure and process of the meetings:

22 - A consensus emerged on the proposals presented on procedural matters by the AU/UN joint Secretariat in the annotated agenda of this meeting, especially on the Regional Preparatory Committee meetings. The Secretariat will nevertheless prepare and circulate a document based on the additional suggestions made during the debate. The agreed upon procedures can be amended if deemed necessary after the 1st Regional Preparatory Committee meeting.

23 - As for the participation to that 1st Regional Preparatory Committee meeting, because of its specificity, it was agreed that it would be open only to: the NPCs, one regional representative of Women, of the Youth and of Civil Society; the Co-opted members; the Group of Friends; the European Union; the African sub-regional organisations; it was agreed that the observers will not be allowed to participate. In addition it was stressed that the composition of the NPCs delegation should be gender balanced.

Concluding remarks

24 - This 4th meeting of the National Coordinators effectively ends the cycle of meetings of the National Coordinators in the preparatory process of the IC/GLR. The International Conference now enters the phase of the Regional Preparatory Committees, leading to the 1st Summit, scheduled to be held in Dar Es-Salaam from 16 to 20 November 2004.

25 - The 4th meeting tackled essential pending issues, such as the question of membership and the status of other participants, details of available funds, the timetable, as well as procedural matters. It also gave invaluable updates on the state of preparation of each National Preparatory Committee and on the specialised meetings that will feed into the Conference. The National Coordinators will reconvene next as heads of their National Preparatory Committees' delegation during the 1st Regional Preparatory Committee meeting, scheduled for September in Bujumbura, which aims to be a brainstorming session on the core substance of the Conference.

26 - The participants expressed their special appreciation to the Special Envoy of the African Union for the Great Lakes region, Mr. Keli Walubita, who, after very ably serving the process on behalf of the African Union for more than a year, has moved to other official duties, this time for his country Zambia. They also wish to thank the Group of Friends and their co-Chairs for their effort in providing the necessary funds for a successful comprehensive preparatory process.

Annex 1: List of Participants