



GROUP OF FIFTEEN

The Summit Level Group of Developing Countries

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**ONE HUNDRETH MEETING
OF THE PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT OF THE GROUP OF FIFTEEN
Geneva, 21 January 2011**

SUMMARY RECORDS

1. The 100th Meeting of the Personal Representatives (PRs) of the Heads of State and Government of the Group of Fifteen was held on 21 January 2011 in Geneva, under the Chairmanship of Ambassador Kshenuka Senewiratne, the Personal Representative of the President of Sri Lanka to the Group of Fifteen.
2. While welcoming participants, the Chairperson noted with concern the absence of several Personal Representatives in the first meeting of PRs in 2011, and expressed the hope that this situation would not continue during the rest of the year, given the strong recommendations made in this regard by the High Level Task Force on the Review and Revitalization of the Group of Fifteen.

Item 1 – Adoption of the Agenda

3. The meeting adopted its Provisional Agenda, without amendment, as contained in Document **G-15/11/PR100/1**.

Item 2 – Briefing on the status of the two Working Groups

4. The Chairperson recalled that in the course of their last Meeting, PRs established the Working Group on Institutional Mechanisms and the Working Group on Sectoral Cooperation to undertake various tasks assigned to them in the Report of the High Level Task Force on the Reform and Revitalization of the Group of Fifteen. She remarked that the Working Group on Institutional Mechanisms held its 1st Meeting on 6 January 2011 and had submitted its Report contained in Document **G-15/11/WGIM1/2**.

5. While commending the Chairman of the Working Group on Institutional Mechanisms, Chile, for the thorough exercise undertaken by him and his colleagues, the Chairperson highlighted some of the key recommendations of the Working Group as stated below:

- That the Draft Proposed Budget, as revised, should be endorsed by the PRs and transmitted, as envisaged, to the Foreign Ministers for approval.
- The TSF should rely more on distributing its publications electronically, while the amount provided for Publications in the Draft Proposed Budget should be used for the development of the Group's website to enhance its outreach and visibility. As the CHF 3,000 allocated would be inadequate in this regard, the Group should increase the budget for Publication, taking into account the quotations from web developers for the upgrade of the G-15 website.
- That the CHF 10,000 allocated to Temporary Assistance could be added to the provision for Capital Assets and used for the acquisition of five computers, after comparing the quotations for the outright purchase of the computers and quotations for obtaining them on lease.
- To note that the CHF 11,000 allocated to communications would slightly increase to about CHF 12,700, as the TSF is required to pay for new computer software licences to be installed by the service provider.
- The provisions usually made for possible expenses during the budget year, such as those made for Capital Assets and Temporary Assistance that may not be used, could be grouped under Contingency Reserve in future budgets.
- That further improvements should be made on the presentation of future budgets as well as the provision of more detailed information in the Annotations.
- The need to address the issue of the long-term sustainability of the Group's Budget against the background of the increasing reliance on the volatile income from investments as well as the diminishing savings from previous budgets in particular. To this end, it has been recommended to undertake a study on the sustainability of the Group's future budgets in order to make forecasts over the medium term as well as the consideration of a possible upward review of contributions, if necessary.

6. The Chairperson then invited the meeting to take note of the Report and to consider the recommendations of the Working Group on Institutional Mechanisms and in particular, to consider and endorse the Revised Draft Proposed Budget for 2011. In the ensuing discussion, PRs made comments and raised a number of queries on the contents of the revised budget proposals as well as the procedure to be followed for its adoption.

7. With regard to a question on Paragraph 2 of the Budget Note, which mentions high-level meetings of Ministers of different portfolios, it was clarified that the Working Group on Sectoral Cooperation would consider the need to hold these meetings and a final decision would be taken thereafter.

8. With regard to a question on the relative cost of purchasing or hiring computers for the TSF, it was agreed that the comparative costs presented clearly indicated that it was more cost effective to purchase them outright. Furthermore, since the PCs were to

cost less than CHF 5,000, there was no need to transfer the CHF 10,000 from the Temporary Assistance budget head to Capital Assets under which CHF 10,000 has already been earmarked, as recommended by the Working Group on Institutional Mechanisms.

9. On the question of the further development of the G-15 website, the Head of Office of the TSF clarified that quotations had been invited from three firms, which were likely to be received in the first week of February 2011. Expenditure on this would be met from the Publication head, and beefed up, as recommended by the Working Group, with funds from the Contingency reserve, as required.

10. Several participants sought clarification on the procedure to be followed for the approval of the revised 2011 Budget by Foreign Ministers. It was clarified that following its approval by PRs, the budget would be sent to Foreign Ministers' for approval by circulation as agreed at the last meeting of Foreign Ministers. The PRs agreed to the Chairperson's proposal that the Proposed Budget would be considered approved by the Foreign Ministers in the absence of any objection before the next PRs Meeting to be held on 30 March 2011. In case any Foreign Minister had reservations on the revised Budget proposal for 2011, the concerned PR could bring it to the notice of the Chairperson prior to that.

11. The Personal Representative of Zimbabwe observed that the Budget for 2011 had already been long delayed. For the sake of expediency, he suggested that any further reservations could be kept for the next Budget for 2012.

12. While expressing her country's approval of the revised Budget proposals, the delegate of Mexico welcomed the reduction by 15 % in the total budget costs and expressed hope that a similar reduction would be made in the budget for the forthcoming year.

13. Personal Representatives thereafter endorsed the recommendations of the Working Group on Institutional Mechanisms and the revised Budget proposals for the year 2011, along with the recommendations for financing it. The Chairperson reiterated that the foregoing would be transmitted by circulation to the Ministers of Foreign Affairs for consideration and approval, as indicated above.

14. The Chairperson informed the meeting that notwithstanding her consultations, so far, no offer to assume the Chairmanship of the Working Group on Sectoral Cooperation has been forthcoming from member countries. She appealed to member countries, particularly from Africa, to take up this responsibility, as the recommendations of this Working Group will be critical to the success of the efforts to revitalize the Group. The PR of Zimbabwe expressed optimism on the possibility that an African member country could be found to chair the Working Group and encouraged the Chairperson to continue her consultations. On the urging of PRs, the Chairperson agreed to continue her consultations to find a country to chair the Working Group on Sectoral Cooperation, especially from among the African member countries, keeping in mind the principle of

geographical spread of responsibilities, the need for which was also emphasized by the Indonesian representative. Should this fail, she remarked that Sri Lanka would have no choice but to assume the Chairmanship of the Working Group.

Item 3 - Further consideration of the Consultation and Coordination process on key international issues of interest to member countries

15. The Chairperson recalled that at the last PRs meeting, the general view expressed was that G-15 Experts, working in the context of the Working Group on Sectoral Cooperation, would undertake the initial steps in the institutionalization of the process of regular consultation and coordination on key international issues in Geneva. The PRs would subsequently consider the recommendations of the Experts on the selected areas or topics and adopt the required mechanism or procedure to advance the Group's position. The Chairperson added that even while the said Working Group was yet to begin its work, in light of the difficulties encountered in the recent unsuccessful attempt for a joint statement for submission to the Cancun Climate Conference, she deemed it necessary to revisit this arrangement. To this end, she proposed that PRs should give further consideration to the view that, as policy consultation and coordination involves political dialogue, such an important exercise should be dealt with in an open-ended Group of PRs.

16. The Personal Representative of Mexico pointed out that the G-15 had started working on a common position to be submitted to COP-16 very late and that by then, the speaking slots in the Cancun meeting had already been determined. He added that the Group comprised just 17 countries, and that as such, it was not necessary to set up any new open-ended committee of PRs to select issues where a common G-15 position could be attempted. Member countries, he stated, would be open to being called upon by the Chairperson for any discussion in this regard, either in the context of a meeting of the PRs or G-15 Experts. The delegate of Venezuela stated that his country preferred that PRs should first have a discussion on possible issues of common interest, based on the major conferences to be held in the year. He noted that it may not be necessary to introduce a new structure for this effort, since PRs meetings have now been regularized and held more frequently. This view also received some support in the meeting. On his part, the delegate of Algeria also recalled the difficulties encountered recently, which he attributed to the teething problems associated with a new effort to commence a process of issuing joint statements, which some delegations questioned, on the grounds that each international forum had its own peculiar format and processes.

17. After listening to the views expressed, the Chairperson stated that the status quo would remain for now, while the issue would be further considered in the next Meeting of the PRs in which it would figure as one of the main agenda items.

Item 4 - Further consideration of the modality for institutionalizing dialogue with the G-20

18. The Chairperson similarly recalled the difficulties encountered by the Group in its recent attempt at forging consensus on a joint statement to be submitted to the last G-20 Summit in Seoul, Republic of Korea. She recalled that in the end, the Group only succeeded in agreeing to a short letter forwarding the 14th Summit Joint Communiqué, which fell short of the Group's desire to engage in a meaningful dialogue with the G-20. She further informed the Meeting that, so far, no acknowledgement of the letter sent by the Chairman of the G-15 to the G-20 Summit had been received. In this regard, she appealed to the G-15 members who were also members of the G-20 to exert their privileged position to facilitate a response from the latter.

19. The Chairperson invited G-15 members of the ASEAN Group to brief the meeting on how ASEAN has proceeded in its dialogue with the G-20. The delegate of Malaysia agreed to get information in this regard from her capital and to inform PRs at their next meeting. PRs requested Malaysia to circulate the information to all G-15 missions before the forthcoming PR meeting. The Head of the TSF however informed the meeting that from his preliminary findings, the ASEAN was at present only working on the possibility of initiating a structured interaction with the G-20. In this regard, he noted that ASEAN's desire is to ensure that, in addition to Indonesia, which is an ASEAN member country of the G-20 in its own right, the current Chairman and Secretary-General of ASEAN would be invited regularly to G-20 Summits.

20. On this note the meeting was brought to a close.
