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COMMITTEE FOR THE REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION

**Report of the seventh session of the Committee for the Review
of the Implementation of the Convention,
held in Istanbul from 3 to 14 November 2008**

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I. Opening of the session

A. Welcoming ceremony

1. On 3 November 2008, the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Environment and Forestry of Turkey, Mr. Hasan Z. Sarikaya, opened the seventh session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC 7) and the first special session of the Committee on Science and Technology (CST S-1) and delivered a statement on behalf of the President of Turkey, Mr. Abdullah Gül, and the Prime Minister of Turkey, Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan.
2. The Minister of Environment and Forestry of Turkey, Mr. Veysel Eroğlu, addressed the meeting.
3. Statements were made by the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and the Managing Director of the Global Mechanism (GM).
4. A statement was made by Mr. Jose Luis Herranz, Director-General of the Ministry of Rural, Marine and Natural Environment of Spain, on behalf of Ms. Elena Espinosa, President of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification.
5. Statements were made by the Chairperson of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC), Mr. Israel Torres (Panama), and the Chairperson of the Committee on Science and Technology (CST), Mr. William D. Dar (Philippines).

B. General statements

6. Statements were made by the representatives of Antigua and Barbuda (on behalf of the Group of 77 and China), France (on behalf of the European Union) and Ukraine (on behalf of the Eastern European States group).
7. A statement was also made by the representative of Juventude Ecológica Angolana, on behalf of civil society organizations (CSOs).

C. Regional consultations of affected country Parties of the Convention's regional implementation annexes

8. Regional consultations of affected country Parties of the Convention's regional implementation annexes I to V took place on 3 and 4 November 2008.

II. Organizational matters

A. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

9. At its first meeting on 7 November 2008, the Committee, following the statement by the Chairperson, adopted the provisional agenda as contained in document ICCD/CRIC(7)/1.
 1. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work.

2. Appointment of a rapporteur of the Committee.
 3. The 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention:
 - (a) Consideration of the report on the implementation of the 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention;
 - (b) Consideration of the work plans of the Convention bodies:¹
 - (i) The multi-year work plan for the secretariat and the joint work programme of the secretariat and the Global Mechanism;
 - (ii) The multi-year work plan for the Global Mechanism;
 - (iii) The two-year work programme for the Committee on Science and Technology;
 - (iv) The two-year work programme for the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention;
 - (c) Indicators and monitoring of the 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention;
 - (d) Consideration of the input from the Committee on Science and Technology at its first special session.
 4. Improving the procedures for communication of information as well as the quality and format of reports to be submitted to the Conference of the Parties: Consideration of draft reporting guidelines as referred to in decision 8/COP.8.
 5. Additional procedures or institutional mechanisms to assist the Conference of the Parties in regularly reviewing the implementation of the Convention: Consideration of the format for future meetings of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention.
 6. Adoption of the comprehensive report of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention to the Conference of the Parties, including conclusions and recommendations.
10. At the same meeting, following the statements by the representatives of the United States and Algeria, the Committee approved its organization of work as contained in Annex II to document ICCD/CRIC(7)/1, as orally revised.

¹ Parties should note that the terminology is modified below to correspond with that used in decision 3/COP.8.

B. Appointment of a Rapporteur of the Committee

11. The Committee appointed the Vice-chairperson, Mr. Hussein Nasrallah (Lebanon) as Rapporteur of the Committee for its seventh session.

C. Attendance

12. The representatives of the following 145 Parties to the UNCCD attended CRIC 7:

Afghanistan	Dominica	Lebanon
Algeria	Dominican Republic	Lesotho
Angola	Ecuador	Liberia
Antigua and Barbuda	Egypt	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya
Argentina	El Salvador	Madagascar
Armenia	Equatorial Guinea	Malawi
Austria	Eritrea	Mali
Azerbaijan	Ethiopia	Marshall Islands
Bangladesh	European Community	Mauritania
Belarus	Fiji	Mauritius
Belgium	Finland	Mexico
Benin	France	Micronesia (Federated States of)
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Gabon	Mongolia
Botswana	Gambia	Montenegro
Brazil	Georgia	Morocco
Bulgaria	Germany	Mozambique
Burkina Faso	Ghana	Myanmar
Burundi	Greece	Namibia
Cambodia	Grenada	Nauru
Canada	Guatemala	Nepal
Cape Verde	Guinea	Netherlands
Central African Republic	Guinea-Bissau	Niger
Chad	Haiti	Nigeria
Chile	Honduras	Norway
China	Hungary	Pakistan
Colombia	India	Panama
Comoros	Indonesia	Peru
Congo	Iran (Islamic Republic of)	Philippines
Cook Islands	Israel	Poland
Costa Rica	Italy	Portugal
Côte d'Ivoire	Jamaica	Qatar
Croatia	Japan	Republic of Korea
Cuba	Jordan	Saint Lucia
Czech Republic	Kenya	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
Democratic People's Republic of Korea	Kiribati	Samoa
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Kyrgyzstan	Sao Tome and Principe
	Lao People's Democratic Republic	

Saudi Arabia	Swaziland	Ukraine
Senegal	Sweden	United Republic of Tanzania
Serbia	Switzerland	United States of America
Seychelles	Syrian Arab Republic	Uruguay
Sierra Leone	Tajikistan	Uzbekistan
Slovakia	Thailand	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)
Slovenia	Timor-Leste	Viet Nam
Solomon Islands	Togo	Yemen
South Africa	Trinidad and Tobago	Zambia
Spain	Tunisia	Zimbabwe
Sri Lanka	Turkey	
Sudan	Tuvalu	
Suriname	Uganda	

13. The session was also attended by observers from one country and one organization.

14. The following United Nations organizations, offices and specialized agencies were represented:

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)
United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
United Nations University (UNU)
World Bank
World Meteorological Organization (WMO)

15. Fourteen intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) and 49 CSOs, including non-governmental organizations (NGOs), were also represented.

D. Documentation

16. The documents submitted for the consideration of the CRIC are listed in annex III.

III. Conclusions and recommendations

17. The conclusions and recommendations listed in this report are a summary compilation of the ideas, suggestions and proposals offered by various delegations during CRIC 7 to further the implementation of the Convention and the 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention (The Strategy). This report identifies potential action that could be undertaken by Parties and other stakeholders, including the Convention's institutions and subsidiary bodies, after consideration and appropriate decisions by the Conference of the Parties (COP), in conformity with the provisions of the Convention.

A. Programmatic framework: The work programmes of the Convention's institutions and subsidiary bodies

1. General recommendations

18. Parties confirm the importance of The Strategy as a tool to effectively respond to new challenges and opportunities in the global context. They recognize the linkages between sustainable land management and food security, and adaptation to and mitigation of climate change and water management; as well as the relevance of the Convention to addressing emerging challenges such as preventing forced migration.

19. Some Parties underline that the focus of the UNCCD remains on drylands, targeting combating desertification and land degradation, while noting that land degradation and soil conservation in ecosystems other than arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid are related to and influence processes in drylands and therefore cannot be ignored. There are also some Parties that believe that the degree of attention paid to non-dryland areas in the UNCCD process should be minimized, and that when making reference to soil and land degradation both should be modified by the term drylands.

20. Parties confirm the importance of enhancing political awareness of and attention on the UNCCD, including in the context of enhancing synergies in the implementation of the Rio conventions. They emphasize the importance of a comprehensive communication strategy to The Strategy and of capacity building for planning, implementation, monitoring and assessment.

21. Parties underline the central role of national, subregional and regional action programmes (NAPs, RAPs and SRAPs) and the equivalent strategic documents used by countries as the main frameworks for the implementation of the Convention and The Strategy, while emphasizing the need to integrate them into overarching development plans such as poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSPs). They call for both financial and technical support for the alignment of the action programmes with the objectives of The Strategy, and for better responsiveness by Convention institutions and bodies to the needs relating to the implementation of the NAPs to be reflected in the respective work plans of the Convention institutions.

22. Some Parties express concern over the availability of resources for the implementation of The Strategy at the national, subregional and regional levels; as well as for carrying out the work plans and programmes of the subsidiary bodies of the COP, the GM and the secretariat. Some Parties highlight the importance of launching intergovernmental exchanges on how to approach the achievement of strategic objective 4, and request the secretariat to initiate action together with the GM on this matter. Such exchanges can be organized on the sidelines of the 17th session of the Commission on Sustainable Development.

23. Some Parties express their satisfaction regarding the results-based management (RBM) approach of the UNCCD in general and welcome the multi-year work plans as a basis for operationalizing the roles of the Convention's institutions and bodies in promoting The Strategy. They consider, however, that optimal delivery of the tasks of the Convention's institutions and bodies will require further streamlining and integration of the work plans and programmes, and

request improved coordination in this regard. Furthermore, some Parties express concern over the feasibility and applicability of these plans and programmes.

24. Full integration among the work plans and programmes of the Convention's institutions should be achieved in order to enhance synergies and complementarities between institutions and avoid any overlap. An inclusive framework of action should be presented with a view to offering a more comprehensive picture of the services that these institutions and bodies could offer to Parties in assuming their main responsibility for implementation of The Strategy.

25. Parties also note the need for further development of the RBM methodology, with particular attention to selecting and defining performance indicators, including the data sources to be used for the verification of these indicators. In general, quantitative performance indicators and baselines are requested to be included in the documentation provided for the ninth session of the COP (COP 9) to enable Parties to better monitor the progress made in implementing work plans and programmes.

26. In addition to the review of the performance indicators, Parties request a review of the expected accomplishments contained in the work plans and programmes. The purpose of these reviews is to address Parties' concerns raised at CRIC 7, which would generate a better basis for Parties to understand the respective roles and focus areas of the subsidiary bodies, the secretariat and the GM, in the achievement of the operational objectives contained in The Strategy.

27. Parties encourage the secretariat to continue and finalize its work towards a results-based budgeting approach, and to submit to COP 9 a realistic work programme that contains detailed information on budgetary needs, as well as an indication of whether the financing sought is for the core budget or the supplementary fund.

28. Some Parties note that the RBM approach, as well as the operational objectives of The Strategy, are for all stakeholders of the UNCCD, including Parties as well as the subsidiary bodies, the secretariat and the GM. More clarity is called for on the roles of the various participants in the operationalization and implementation of The Strategy. Particularly under operational objective 2, on policy frameworks, Parties may assume part of the role presented by the Convention bodies, the secretariat and the GM in their respective work plans. Indicators should be tailored to suit the various stakeholders, while ensuring comparability of information, bearing in mind that those indicators that relate to the Parties' role in implementation and expected accomplishments must be included in the reporting guidelines, taking into account the specific circumstances and capacities of developing countries.

29. Parties call for the use of more precise phrases and terms, as well as more concrete, tangible and measurable outcomes in the work plans and programmes.

2. The Committee on Science and Technology

30. Parties note with appreciation the work carried out by the CST in developing its work plan and programme.

31. Parties note the importance of promoting the participation of scientific experts in the work of the CST, bearing in mind geographical balance. They highlight the importance of synergies among the Rio conventions, the promotion of joint activities among the experts of each convention and the participation of civil society.

32. Some Parties express concern about the financial resources available and the methodology for the achievement of the expected accomplishments in the CST work plans. They suggest including the regional and national activities of the CST under regional cooperation frameworks, including regional coordination mechanisms.

33. Harmonization of the work programmes of the CST and the secretariat should be achieved in order to distribute tasks properly between the two institutions according to their respective roles, taking into account the fact that the secretariat provides technical support to the CST, while the CST is assigned to advise the COP.

34. Parties underline the significance of raising awareness on aspects relating to science and technology in the context of the UNCCD, including the promotion of scientific publications and the dissemination of knowledge on technologies relating to UNCCD implementation, and emphasize the importance of training to increase the capacities of Parties.

35. Some Parties call for the inclusion of the activities of the Thematic Programme Networks, as well as early warning activities, in the CST work plan. In this context, they recommend an increase in the role of research institutions and scientific centres, as well as clear criteria for their selection.

36. Regional approaches should be adequately addressed in the work of the CST, including inter alia by supporting regional initiatives for science and technology.

3. The Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention

37. Parties find the specific outcome area identified in the 2008–2009 work programme and the related outcomes to be adequate and relevant to the core responsibilities of the CRIC as outlined in The Strategy and relevant decisions of the COP.

38. Parties welcome the cooperation between the two subsidiary bodies of the COP and commend the level of interaction achieved, with particular regard to the inputs produced by the CST as they relate to reporting guidelines and impact indicators. Nevertheless, they express concern about the workload of the two bodies, particularly that of the CST, and the limited time available for the CST to deliver its programme. They recommend that timely guidance be given by the Bureaux of the two bodies in order to submit realistic options for indicators for the consideration of COP 9.

39. Some Parties invite the Executive Secretary, in consultation with the Bureaux of the COP and the CRIC, to prepare a preliminary draft work plan for 2010–2013 for COP 9. This preliminary work plan should be drafted in accordance with the recommendations contained in the present report, and adjusted to correspond with the new terms of reference and mandate of the CRIC, which will be adopted at COP 9.

40. Some Parties agree that the CRIC Bureau is an important agent for achieving milestones between sessions, and consequently recommend that its alternating members should provide procedural and substantive advice and avail themselves of the necessary expertise and secretariat services in order to move the agenda and the review process forward. Some other Parties, however, note that the enhanced role of the CRIC Bureau requires timely submission of documentation to the members of the Bureau, to enable regional consultations on the issues at hand.

4. The Global Mechanism

41. Parties welcome the forthcoming assessment of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) of the United Nations, in accordance with decision 3/COP.8, and call on the GM and the Executive Secretary to raise adequate resources for this assessment.

42. Some Parties commend the GM on the organization, structure of, and level of detail in its work plan.

43. Some other Parties consider that the performance indicators defined for the GM could be taken into account in the reporting guidelines for national reporting.

44. Some Parties welcome the support provided by the GM so far, while some others express concern about the level of resources mobilized to support the implementation of the Convention, as well as over the transparency and accountability of the GM.

45. With regard to future efforts of the GM to mobilize resources, Parties particularly emphasize the opportunities provided by the private sector, foundations and CSOs.

46. Some Parties note that the main tools of GM support, namely the integrated financial strategies, might need to be adapted to the features of different countries, and they call for further analysis in this regard with a view to putting in place more appropriate funding arrangements.

47. Some Parties highlight the importance of presenting the fieldwork carried out by the GM in a more concrete manner in the work plan and programme of work.

48. Some Parties consider the GM not to be a multilateral actor expected to participate in policy dialogue, and that in this regard it should not seek to increase programmatic support to sustainable land management or to be involved in a variety of sectoral or thematic issues. Such support should instead be undertaken by Parties and if assistance is provided, this should come from the multilateral organizations that participate in policy dialogue with Parties. Some other Parties recognize the interlinkages between the policy environment and resource mobilization, especially with respect to mainstreaming PRSPs and NAPs into macro-level policies. These Parties call for increased complementarity of the roles of the GM and the secretariat through joint action at the national, regional and global levels.

49. Some Parties call for better geographical balance in the support provided to affected countries, including in the context of the organizational setting of the institution, while others request in a more general manner increased consistency and transparency in the selection of

beneficiary countries by the GM. In principle, regional programmes of the GM should cover all the regional implementation annexes of the UNCCD, and the GM should outline a clear programme for reaching out to all affected Parties according to their needs.

50. Parties invite the GM to provide annually more detailed information on its support, such as the amounts mobilized/raised from beneficiary countries and donors and from activities supported, quantifying the different kinds of funding including innovative financing disaggregated by foundations, NGOs and the private sector. Parties request the GM to develop indicators that reflect the amount of funding that the GM seeks to mobilize, or of co-financing to be attained through support to countries in preparing project applications or implementation, and that better assess the specific input of GM action. The majority of GM indicators should be quantitative.

51. Parties underline that the focus of the GM under The Strategy is on operational objective 5 concerning financing and technology transfer, and note that its activities to support operational objectives 1 and 2 should also be geared towards this task, avoiding overlap with the work of the secretariat.

52. Some Parties note that there is still too much overlap between the GM and the secretariat in areas where the GM should work in a supportive capacity.

5. The secretariat

53. Some Parties welcome and appreciate the new structure of the secretariat and understand that it needs to be completed by the forthcoming institutionalization of the regional coordination mechanisms together with improved cooperation with the GM. Some other Parties express concerns about the new structure of the secretariat and recommend its review at COP 9.

54. Parties recommend that the secretariat focus its work on its main functions as outlined in the Convention and The Strategy; seek to optimize the relevance and effectiveness of its actions; and concentrate on its comparative advantage vis-à-vis other stakeholders.

55. Parties note that continuous and strengthened involvement and participation of Parties, regarding political as well as financial support, is necessary for carrying out the secretariat's work plan under RBM, and requests all Parties, in particular developed country Parties, to enhance their efforts to this end.

56. Some Parties welcome the strengthening of the secretariat's policy support to knowledge management and scientific collaboration, as well as its enhanced advocacy and awareness raising for the Convention. In this regard, they look forward to the idea of developing a comprehensive UNCCD communication strategy being presented for consideration at COP 9. However, some other Parties question the need for separate units for policy and advocacy and for awareness raising, and note that perhaps a single unit could perform both functions.

57. Parties also recognize that the present programme responds to the call in The Strategy for institutional and methodological reforms and recommend that in the work programme for the coming biennium there is more focus on the service rendered to Parties, in particular as it relates

to the assistance that they might need with the alignment of their action programmes with The Strategy, in the monitoring and assessment of the implementation of The Strategy and the Convention for the next reporting cycle.

58. Parties note that communication between the secretariat and individual Parties as well as subregions and regions is essential and should be appropriately addressed in the new structure of the secretariat.

59. Some Parties express their concern over effective facilitation of regional coordination, in the light of the modification of the facilitation units of the secretariat, and that the work plan does not identify region-specific expectations. These Parties recommend the strengthening of regional coordination mechanisms, the implementation of The Strategy, and a general increase in attention to the needs of Parties at the regional, subregional and national levels. In addition, some affected country Parties request capacity building in line with the National Capacity Needs Self-Assessment reports.

60. Parties underline the need for adequate resources to support activities at the regional, subregional and national levels, and recommend that COP 9 take action in this regard. As an obvious means of covering some of the resource needs, they recommend that the secretariat and the GM continue the joining of their forces in delivering their services, according to their respective mandates.

61. Parties consider that the secretariat can and should play a more proactive role in the mobilization of resources for the performance of its functions. In this context, the secretariat should reflect in its work plan the mobilization of resources for supporting the efforts of affected country Parties to strengthen dialogue and consultation at the subregional and/or regional and interregional levels, which was highlighted in The Strategy as part of the secretariat's work programme.

62. Some Parties commend the secretariat on its efforts to highlight aspects of land and soil in the context of global negotiations on adaptation to and mitigation of the impact of climate change, while some other Parties underline that the focus of the Convention remains combating desertification in dryland areas.

63. Parties recommend that the secretariat continue to strengthen its attention on facilitating the involvement of civil society in the implementation of the Convention, including, among other means, through the maintenance of the post of programme officer for civil society participation as well as continuous dialogue with civil society. They invite the secretariat to include indicators concerning civil society participation in the national report guidelines. They also encourage the secretariat to enhance its approaches to and policy guidance on strengthening the role of the private sector at all levels of the implementation of the Convention.

64. With regard to the methodological approach of the secretariat's work plan, further detailing of the catalytic role of the secretariat is called for in order to reflect this role in the performance indicators. Setting measurable targets in the work plan is also requested.

65. Parties note that it would be preferable to focus the expected accomplishments or performance indicators of the secretariat on the secretariat's preparations for the COP, rather than on the decisions of the COP.

66. Parties consider that the performance indicators defined for the secretariat should be taken into account in the reporting guidelines for national reporting.

67. Some Parties note that there is still too much overlap between the secretariat and the GM in areas where the secretariat works in a supportive capacity.

6. Secretariat / Global Mechanism joint work programme

68. Parties commend the efforts made by the two institutions to develop the joint work programme (JWP), while noting some overlaps with their respective two-year work programmes. They also recognize that there are areas not covered in the JWP in which additional joint outcomes would be beneficial.

69. Parties note that there is still room for clarifying the allocation and execution of tasks between the secretariat and the GM, and request the two entities to further reduce duplication in their respective work programmes while awaiting the findings of the JIU report on the assessment of the GM. Parties invite the secretariat and the GM to include further details on the concrete steps taken, as well as planned, to implement the JWP in the submission to COP 9.

70. Parties recommend enhancing the alignment of the implementation of the NAPs, SRAPs and RAPs, and request joint financial and technical support from the secretariat and the GM, depending on their respective mandates, to undertake the necessary activities.

71. The secretariat and the GM have different mandates and the JWP should therefore focus on the areas of mutual responsibility and action where joint delivery would be of benefit to Parties.

72. Some Parties note the importance as well as complexity of the JWP, and emphasize the need for thorough consideration of the JWP at COP 9.

B. Reporting process: Methodological elements of the communication of information

1. General recommendations

73. Parties commend the secretariat's work on reporting and appreciated the valuable assistance provided by members of the inter-agency task force (IATF).

74. There is general agreement on the proposed reporting principles as they relate to the content of reporting, its format and the reporting process. The secretariat is requested to produce new reporting guidelines for consideration at the appropriate preparatory processes leading to COP 9 as prescribed by decision 8/COP.8, taking the approach outlined in the reporting principles.

75. Parties underline the need for the information coming out of the reports to be presented and analysed at the appropriate preparatory processes leading to intersessional sessions of the CRIC.

76. Parties share the view that the new reporting should be based on simple, quantitative and measurable indicators. Performance indicators should be used to measure progress against the operational objectives of The Strategy, while impact indicators should be used to measure progress against the strategic objectives contained in country, subregional and regional profiles.

77. Information systems should be established and/or improved at the national, subregional, regional and global levels in order to support the enhanced reporting system. At the national level, information that supports the preparation of reports under different multilateral environmental agreements should be developed and/or maintained and/or integrated into existing relevant databases. In order to avoid duplication of work, existing information systems at the national level should be surveyed, especially those set up within the framework of international projects/assistance. Furthermore, the secretariat should use criteria to classify the information provided in the reports and set up an information system for the efficient handling of the classified information. Some Parties regard the establishment/improvement of these information systems as a pre-requisite for successful reporting and welcome the proposal to include in those systems information that may service the other Rio conventions. Some Parties consider that institutional networking would be enhanced through such systems.

78. Parties agree that a global assessment of capacity needs is necessary in order to ascertain the level of assistance needed and to support the work of the CST in this regard. This assessment should take into account findings from other capacity assessments that have so far been undertaken, such as the National Capacity Self Assessments (NCSAs), in order to avoid duplication. Any capacity-building measure should be seen as a process rather than a project, that is, capacity building for improving monitoring and assessment is a long-term undertaking that should take into consideration emerging issues as they arise.

79. Parties call for taking advantage of the existing expertise and information at the regional and subregional levels in the field of capacity building.

80. Some Parties stress the need for increased capacity-building measures, including, above all, the predictable and timely availability of financial resources relating to the newly proposed reporting obligations of the Parties. This is particularly important for establishing and/or strengthening the monitoring and assessment systems to be considered by COP 9 aimed at implementing an indicator-based system. Reference was made to the considerably larger amount of capacity building-related funding available for reporting under the other two Rio conventions, which has so far been provided by the Global Environment Facility (GEF). A call was made for the GEF to provide similar amounts to the UNCCD Parties.

81. The secretariat should develop a common framework for the definition and selection of best practices for consideration by Parties. Many Parties stress the need to include in the reports a section on success stories, and one on best practices with an emphasis on the lessons learned both from activities that were successful and those that were less successful. Some Parties propose that these best practices should be detailed in annexes in order not to overload the

reports, and a standard format should be developed for their presentation with the aim of increasing readability.

82. Parties recommend that proposals on the scope of the review, and the frequency of submission of reports by all reporting entities as well as appropriate intervals between reporting cycles be linked with the proposed terms of reference and operational modalities of the CRIC, and reflected in the 2010–2011 work programme and the 2010–2013 work plan of the CRIC. Due account in these considerations should be taken of decision 3/COP.8, which states that the CRIC should be restructured around a simplified and effective reporting process based on information which is comparable across regions and over time. A common and coherent format for future CRIC meetings and reporting guidelines, as well as a mutual agenda, should be adopted.

83. There is a need to streamline the decisions relating to reporting by adopting a new decision at COP 9, which would supersede those previously adopted by the COP on this matter. This also includes the discontinuation of the alternation system of reporting (African Parties not reporting at the same time as other Parties). There is a view that all Parties should submit their reports at the same time.

84. The secretariat is requested to communicate to the Parties the timetable of activities to be carried out before COP 9 in this respect. The secretariat is also encouraged to conduct a pilot phase with a selected number of countries to test the proposed reporting guidelines.

85. Some Parties note that, in order to change the trend for land degradation, Parties should follow an integrated approach based on basin-wide management when allocating funds for sustainable land use.

2. Specific recommendations relating to the reporting entities

a) Affected country Parties

86. Alignment of action programmes with The Strategy would facilitate implementation, monitoring and application of the new reporting guidelines to their full effect. Some Parties are concerned that the alignment process for the action programmes will postpone implementation of The Strategy and urge the secretariat and the GM, as a matter of priority, to provide clear guidance and technical assistance to affected country Parties in this regard. Clear linkages between the revised action programmes and the indicators for reporting should be established. NAPs should set targets, set out baseline information, identify indicators and a timeframe, specify the range of activities envisaged to reach such targets, and identify indicators to measure progress with achieving these targets. Parties stress, however, that significant efforts on their part will have to be invested in this exercise, for which capacity building and additional funding will be required. Some Parties underline that consistency of reporting with relevant national planning processes will need to be emphasized.

87. Financial reporting should be based on a standard financial reporting format to be agreed by the Parties. Commonly agreed financial reporting systems should be used by affected

country Parties and their development partners. Emphasis in reporting should be put on financial matters and also on an analysis of the impact of the activities undertaken.

88. The new reporting format should provide an opportunity for affected country Parties to highlight the opportunities and constraints they face in implementing the Convention and The Strategy, whether they are of a physical, financial, social, political, institutional or of any other nature.

89. The establishment/improvement of national environmental information systems would be a central asset in sustaining the new reporting of affected country Parties, and capacity building and technological support provided by the international community will be required. Some Parties emphasize the need for a comprehensive approach to capacity building that addresses not only technological issues but also other issues, including the training of stakeholders involved at the national level, given the wealth of information that will be required under the new reporting system. Sufficient time and resources for capacity building, also in relation to the new reporting format and guidelines, should be ensured and the required support prioritized.

90. Some Parties believe it would be useful to name the relevant stakeholders that should be integrated into the reporting process and to specify which stakeholders should be involved in the consultative processes relating to the reporting, including decentralized administrative bodies and CSOs.

b) Developed country Parties

91. Reporting by developed country Parties should focus on providing information on the extent to which the Convention has been mainstreamed into countries' development cooperation strategies, the contribution to the achievement of the scope, strategies and objectives of the Convention and the actions undertaken to respond to the relevant requests of the COP. Ways and means need to be found to tackle the problem of measuring the financial allocations to combat desertification compared to those in other related fields and the possible problem of double counting of financial support.

92. Financial reporting should be based on a standard financial reporting format, so that information on assistance provided by developed country Parties can be compared with that reported by developing affected country Parties.

93. Emphasis in reporting should be put on financial matters but also on analysis of the impact of activities undertaken. One section of the new reporting format for developed country Parties should be dedicated to a qualitative and, as far as possible, quantitative assessment of this impact.

94. The use of Rio markers in the financial reporting is considered to be one possible way of quantifying and analysing the information. Parties support the ongoing discussion about the possible improvements to be gained from using Rio markers and call on the secretariat to consider the outcome of these discussions.

c) The Global Environment Facility

95. There is a need to ensure coherence between the reporting guidelines for the GEF and the Memorandum of Understanding concluded between the GEF and the COP.

d) The secretariat

96. The secretariat should structure its reports using the same indicator-based approach as that applied by Parties and ensure that the RBM indicators considered and adopted for the work programme of the secretariat feed into the overall indicators identified by Parties for The Strategy.

97. Some Parties believe that the national reports should be submitted to the secretariat in time for the Executive Secretary to take account of their data and proposals when preparing the documentation for CRIC meetings.

e) The Global Mechanism

98. Reporting by the GM should include an assessment of the extent to which the Convention and the implementation of action programmes have been supported by the GM; an assessment of the GM's quantitative and qualitative contribution to the achievement of the scope, strategies and objectives of the Convention, with specific reference to the operational objectives set out in The Strategy; information on actions taken to respond to the reviews of policies, operational modalities and activities of the GM; and reporting on global funding trends and financial flows to specific regions and countries supported by the GM, as well as on the other relevant requests of the COP; and provide joint reporting with the secretariat on the implementation of the JWP. Emphasis in reporting should be put on financial matters but also on an analysis of the impact of activities undertaken.

99. The GM should structure its reports using the same indicator-based approach as that applied by Parties and ensure that the RBM indicators considered and adopted for the work programme of the GM feed into the overall indicators identified by Parties for The Strategy. Particular emphasis should be placed on provision of information by the GM on its measurable achievements in response to operational objective 5 of The Strategy, as well as on its support for the achievement of operational objectives 1 and 2. The performance indicators used for this purpose should be in line with the indicators to be set for country Parties.

100. Some Parties believe that the national reports should be submitted to the secretariat in time to allow the GM to take account of their data and proposals when preparing the documentation for CRIC sessions.

f) Reports on the implementation of subregional and regional action programmes

101. SRAPs and RAPs should be aligned with The Strategy, as required by decision 3/COP.8. Clear linkages between revisions of SRAPs and RAPs and the identification of indicators should be established. Clear guidelines on how to achieve this need to be provided to Parties by the secretariat in collaboration with the GM.

102. In addition to the core (common) set of indicators to be considered by the COP, SRAPs and RAPs should be able to use their own subregion- or region-specific indicators and data to properly reflect their specificity. Some Parties suggest that a process should be established through which the Parties of a subregion or region can harmonize available information at the national level in order to prepare SRAPs/RAPs as appropriate in the context of the forthcoming regional mechanisms.

103. While subregional profiles are considered to be relevant and useful, some Parties have reservations about the establishment of regional profiles, as some regions are so diverse that a regional profile might prove difficult to establish. The establishment of regional information systems, on the other hand, could be viewed as useful. Some Parties, however, consider it necessary to clarify their purpose, management and content.

104. Some Parties emphasize the need for all Parties involved in a SRAP to be included in the preparation of their respective subregional reports.

105. Financial reporting by subregional and regional entities should be based on a standard financial reporting format, as is proposed for the reports of affected country Parties. Accompanying measures, such as capacity building and the improvement of coordination and information-sharing systems, could be considered together with the mobilization of the resources necessary for their implementation.

3. Performance indicators for the review of The Strategy

106. Parties request the secretariat not to alter the outcome areas or operational objectives contained in The Strategy since this would reopen negotiations on The Strategy itself. The secretariat is requested to focus on the consolidation of performance indicators with a view to identifying a minimum set.

107. Harmonization of the various indicator sets used by The Strategy is also requested. Impact and performance indicators as well as those performance indicators used by institutions implementing an RBM system need to be established with the aim of having a coherent indicator system for the UNCCD.

108. The Parties agree on the following:

(a) The set of performance indicators should initially be limited, with flexibility to expand them where necessary and as the monitoring process evolves;

(b) Performance indicators need to be measurable, implementable and clear to the stakeholders using them;

(c) Special emphasis should be given to indicators dealing with financial issues. These need to be quantitative and to assist the CRIC in assessing investment flows.

109. In the interest of coherence, some Parties emphasize that the development of an indicator system should go hand in hand with the realignment of action programmes so that countries can use the same indicators for implementing The Strategy/Convention as for reporting.

110. Apart from developing the minimum set of performance indicators, a methodology is needed to guide Parties in the use of the indicators. The secretariat is requested to take this into consideration when working on the consolidation of performance indicators.

111. Additionally, a glossary is requested that would clarify the terminology and definition of indicators, so that Parties have a common understanding of the process and the implementation of indicators.

112. The CST is requested to provide advice on performance indicators, in particular with regard to operational objective 3, in addition to its work on fine-tuning strategic objectives 1, 2 and 3.

113. Subregional and regional expertise needs to be taken into consideration to the extent possible in the consolidation of performance and impact indicators. Some Parties stress that a lot of work is already under way with regard to indicators, which should be flowing into this exercise.

4. Impact indicators for the review of the implementation of the Convention

114. Parties express great appreciation to the CST for its substantive contribution to the CRIC process. They reinforce the need to concentrate efforts on the identification of existing relevant indicators and data at the country level as part of the process for establishing the minimum set of indicators for measuring the impacts of the implementation of The Strategy.

115. Regarding the characteristics of the indicators, Parties reinforce the need to take into consideration some key aspects such as their measurability, reliability, simplicity and cost-effectiveness. In addition, Parties note the need for the indicators to have specific units of measurement. Parties also highlight the issue of the applicability of the set of indicators at all levels and recommend the CST to take into consideration the various existing initiatives in different regions for the selection of the minimum set of indicators. Parties consider it imperative to identify qualitative indicators and quantitative indicators and to differentiate between them. The indicators should be as detailed as is realistic and relevant to the region in question. However, differentiation in the detail of the indicators according to regional conditions should still allow the provision of implementation results in a format that is understandable to and comparable for all regions.

116. Parties emphasize the importance of capacity-building activities to support Parties in using the minimum set of indicators as regards the collection of data, monitoring and evaluation. Parties call for the establishment of a procedural manual and highlight the need to establish baseline data. Parties further recognize the need for a concerted effort to enhance the human, financial and technological resources necessary to access, collect, analyse and decipher existing and new information.

117. In connection with the process for the selection of the minimum set of indicators to be made available and presented through the CST process at COP 9, Parties highlight the need to establish a precise calendar of activities as well as the respective responsibilities in this process. In this regard, Parties request the CST Bureau to coordinate the process and further request the secretariat and the GM to assist and support the CST Bureau in undertaking these tasks.

118. Parties express the need for the national focal points and the science correspondents to speed up the process for the selection of the minimum set of indicators during the first semester of 2009 in order to allow Parties to make a concrete decision at COP 9.

C. Review process: Conducting a global review of the implementation of The Strategy and the Convention

1. General recommendations

119. Parties recognize that, according to decision 7/COP.8, the terms of reference of the CRIC should be considered and revised as necessary at COP 9, bearing in mind The Strategy and role of the CRIC as specified in the relevant decisions of the eighth session of the COP and the outcomes of CRIC 7 and the eighth session of the CRIC.

120. Nevertheless, The Strategy has already outlined the CRIC's core functions as follows: (a) determining and disseminating best practices on implementation of the Convention; (b) reviewing implementation of The Strategy; (c) reviewing Parties' contributions to the implementation of the Convention; and (d) assessing and monitoring CRIC performance and effectiveness.

121. Parties also recognize that The Strategy has called for a synchronization of the meetings of the CRIC and the CST, with a view to ensuring continuity and providing timely policy advice to the COP in accordance with The Strategy.

122. In this regard, Parties recommend that the secretariat prepare a revised version of the document on the proposed format for future sessions of the CRIC, as well as a document on the revised terms of reference of the CRIC, as requested by decisions 3/COP.8 and 9/COP.8, taking into consideration the conclusions and recommendations of CRIC 7.

2. Review across regions and over time, and inputs from the Convention's institutions and subsidiary bodies

123. Parties recognize that The Strategy has fixed a crucial milestone in the new review system, whereby it provides that the simplified and effective new reporting process should be based on information that is comparable across regions and over time.

124. Parties recommend that the current alternation in reporting be ended, and that all regions report to the COP at the same time from the next reporting cycle in 2010. A number of specific arrangements and support measures will be required for affected country Parties, particularly the least developed among them, to facilitate timely initiation of this process under the new reporting and review system to be adopted at COP 9.

125. Recalling the overall mandate of the CRIC, to review the implementation of The Strategy, Parties also recommend that the work programmes of the Convention's institutions and bodies should be submitted to the CRIC for consideration and advice, while action on budgetary matters should be taken by the COP.

126. Some Parties support the proposal that the Convention's institutions (the secretariat and the GM) and subsidiary bodies should also report to intersessional sessions of the CRIC, to enable simultaneous analyses of the efforts undertaken by all UNCCD stakeholders and to orient their action as appropriate. Some other Parties prefer that the Convention's institutions and bodies report only to the CRIC sessions held during the COP.

127. With regard to the GEF, while recalling that the report of the GEF is currently submitted to sessional sessions of the CRIC in accordance with decision 1/COP.5, and the present institutional arrangements between the GEF and the COP, it is suggested that the GEF should be invited to submit a report on its support to the implementation of the Convention to the intersessional sessions of the CRIC. GEF reports addressing broader policy issues could then be submitted to the CRIC sessions taking place during the COP.

128. Parties recognize the role that the CST would have in providing a preliminary analysis of country profiles and impact indicators and assisting the CRIC in the review of the implementation of the Convention. In this regard, some Parties express the need to hold intersessional sessions of the CST every four years, back-to-back or in parallel with intersessional sessions of the CRIC. This would enable the CRIC to take better advantage of the information already provided and the analysis performed at the level of the CST, and increase the cost-effectiveness of both processes. However, attention should be paid to the fact that CRIC sessions should be attended by policymakers, while CST sessions are geared more towards science and technology experts.

129. There is a need for stronger involvement of civil society in the proceedings of the CRIC and a need for CSOs to be involved in the review of the implementation of the Convention and The Strategy, through a specific segment at the intersessional sessions of the CRIC. However, while agreeing on this, some delegations draw attention to the intergovernmental nature of the UNCCD process. It is proposed that a broader concept of CSOs be adopted to include, for instance, local authorities. Some Parties propose going further by giving civil society the opportunity to get involved in the debates held under other segments, particularly those on exchanges of information on best practices.

130. Some Parties underline the need for clear terms of reference for the involvement of CSOs in the proceedings of the CRIC. This should include consideration of the timing of the CSO segment during the CRIC sessions.

3. Frequency and type of review

131. Parties generally welcome the option by which the review of the implementation of The Strategy through performance indicators would be carried out every two years, and the review of the implementation of the Convention through desertification, land degradation and drought (DLDD) profiles and impact indicators would be carried out every four years.

The possibility of splitting the review of impact indicators and DLDD profiles into two subsets over one four-year reporting period was also mentioned.

132. The need for a review of the format of the intersessional sessions of the CRIC is emphasized in order to concentrate more on analysis rather than the presentation of information, which should be delegated to regional meetings in preparation for intersessional sessions. Parties in general agree on the five segments proposed for the intersessional sessions of the CRIC, including CST meetings.

133. With regard to the various proposals on the nature of CRIC deliberations, their interactivity and related adjustments in the duration of the sessions, some Parties propose that the CRIC session should concentrate on a smaller number of key, politically important topics such as climate change mitigation and adaptation, and food security, as well as key elements of The Strategy in order to better prepare for COP deliberations and decision-making. Other Parties recall the added value of exchanges of views on lessons learned and best practices. Still other Parties believe that interactive sessions at the CRIC should not jeopardize or impinge on the intergovernmental nature of the review process and should not reduce the time needed for Parties' deliberations. It is recalled that the CRIC should address the main constraints on Parties in the implementation of the Convention and The Strategy.

134. With regard to the duration of the meetings of the CRIC, Parties direct that the cost-effectiveness of CRIC meetings should be ensured and recommend convening intersessional sessions of the CRIC of a duration ranging from five to 10 working days, in accordance with the nature of the review (review of operational objectives and/or strategic objectives), as well as the convening of joint sessions with the CST.

135. Parties emphasize the need to have regional meetings in preparation for intersessional sessions of the CRIC, as a means to increase the efficiency of CRIC deliberations and the effectiveness of its conclusions and targeted recommendations.

IV. Conclusion of the session

A. Adoption of the report of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention, including conclusions and recommendations

136. At its 10th meeting on 14 November 2008, the Committee considered the draft report on its seventh session and authorized the Rapporteur to complete it with the assistance of the secretariat.

B. Closure of the session

137. Also at the same meeting, statements were made by the Executive Secretary and by the representative of Turkey, on behalf of the host country. The Chairman made some concluding remarks and declared the seventh session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention closed.

Annex I

Global interactive dialogue session on UNCCD strategic orientations

1. At the behest of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), a panel discussion of the Global Interactive Dialogue (GID) on UNCCD strategic orientations was organized during the seventh session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC 7) in Istanbul, Turkey. Environmental, economic and sociological experts took on the important task of communicating to policymakers and decision-makers how they have connected and could better connect with the continuing problem of desertification, land degradation and drought (DLDD). This report highlights the salient issues of the GID.
2. The GID focused on enhancing investment in land management, shared responsibilities and partnership building in the context of the 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of The Strategy. The GID built on the High-level Policy Dialogue (HLPD) on the Strategic Orientations of the UNCCD, which was convened by the UNCCD secretariat in Bonn, Germany, on 27 May 2008.
3. The GID sought to motivate Parties to exchange views on issues linked to the implementation of The Strategy. The report of the HLPD was tabled during CRIC 7 (ICCD/CRIC(7)/INF.4). Through the GID, Parties provided further input on the way forward, and the preferred options and priority areas for the implementation of The Strategy, including mainstreaming the national action plans (NAPs) and their contribution to overall poverty eradication.
4. Mr. Modou Diange Fada of Senegal chaired the GID and Mr. Philbert Brown of Jamaica acted as moderator. The Strategy presented new opportunities and the potential for developing cooperation frameworks on DLDD issues. The GID session should facilitate an exchange of views among the Parties on their expectations of the CRIC and on the incentive mechanisms.
5. The GID panel consisted of six presenters: Mr. Godert van Lynden of World Soil Information; Mr. Sem Shikongo of Namibia; Mr. Luca Montanarella of the European Commission; Ms. Mika Castro Lucic of the University of Chile; Ms. Cristina Manzano of the International Federation of Agricultural Producers; and Mr. Christophe Crepin of the World Bank.
6. Mr. Godert van Lynden talked on the Global Assessment of Land Productivity (GLADA), an innovative initiative that uses biomass change as a proxy indicator for land productivity. Mr. Sem Shikongo outlined how the results-based management approach can ensure successful implementation of The Strategy. In presenting the initiative for change to the delegates, Mr. Shikongo frankly noted that if you do what you've always done, you'll get what you've always got. He advocated that countries should put The Strategy at the top of their national priorities.
7. Mr. Luca Montanarella discussed losses of terrestrial carbon resulting from desertification, thus putting climate change at the centre of the GID. Soil organic carbon and its

potential to reverse desertification and land degradation was the keystone of the presentation. Soils are the largest carbon reservoir of the terrestrial carbon cycle, and a highly significant source of or sink for greenhouse gases, depending on land use management. As desertification progresses, there are large losses of terrestrial carbon to the atmosphere, which substantially contributes to greenhouse gas emissions globally. The subsequent loss of biodiversity compounds the carbon emission dilemma, which in turn exacerbates desertification – and the cycle continues if unchecked.

8. Ms. Mika Castro Lucic of the University of Chile discussed the role of the UNCCD in recognizing indigenous peoples' rights in the fight against hunger, poverty and environmental degradation. The UNCCD provides the best instrument for recognizing indigenous rights to fight against hunger, poverty and environmental degradation. It is therefore imperative that indigenous perspectives are integrated into the implementation of the Convention and support is given to policies that strengthen the right to adequate food and food sovereignty.

9. Ms. Cristina Manzano of the International Federation of Agricultural Producers outlined ways of enhancing food security under The Strategy, noting that farmers must be better integrated into the UNCCD. Mr. Christophe Crepin of the World Bank elaborated on the importance of cooperation frameworks for achieving the successful implementation of The Strategy, noting their role in improving resource mobilization, but acknowledging the financing gap and stressing the need for efficiency and partnerships.

10. Among other issues the GID notes that the implementation of The Strategy should be harmonized with top national priorities and have full country ownership, with a view to delivering outcomes rather than process-orientated results in order to make a difference on the ground and demonstrate the national gains (socio-economic and environmental) which make the greatest contribution to global environmental benefits.

11. The Strategy should clearly aim to fill particular niches where no other partners are active and to add value to the advancement of policies and the implementation of the Convention, contributing to reversing famine and food insecurity, reducing poverty and economic underdevelopment, halting forced human migration and refugee flows, and stopping ethnic, political and environmental conflicts, which have led to massive internal migrations – forcing whole villages to flee their farms to already overcrowded cities.

12. The Strategy should bring state-of-the-art methods and innovative ideas and mechanisms at all levels. Projects and interventions should be undertaken in a participatory fashion, involving stakeholder partnerships with governments, civil society and the private sector. The panel, however, noted the apparent lack of political will by developed countries to provide resources, and stressed that the GEF and all Parties have a role to play in mobilizing resources.

13. Parties concurred with the panel's observation that there is a general lack of financial resources, and proposed that the World Bank should fund the NAPs to incorporate environmental concerns and the alleviation of poverty into their projects. Parties encouraged the mobilization of additional resources, particularly for arid areas, and suggested that legislation should be developed that prioritizes arid areas.

14. Parties noted the links between the Rio conventions and recommended that further attention to sustainable land and water management was paid. Hunger in affected developing countries is not the result of high international food prices but a consequence of local-level conditions, such as arable land degradation, desertification and climate change-related frequent and severe droughts, that result in low agricultural productivity and related rural poverty. Available evidence indicates that the geography of poverty, impoverishment, food insecurity and malnutrition often coincides with that of desertification, land degradation and climate change-related drought. Thus, Parties proposed the building of partnerships to combat poverty, achieve food security and work with indigenous peoples. Parties further proposed mapping social and political changes using the same time series used to map biophysical variables in the GLADA study, with the objective of correlating the changes to determine the drivers of changes in land productivity.

Annex II

Presentation of the terms of reference and programme of work of the Joint Inspection Unit on the assessment of the Global Mechanism

I. Background

1. In accordance with the programme of work of the seventh session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC 7), a panel discussion on the terms of reference and programme of work of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) on the assessment of the Global Mechanism (GM) took place at the third meeting of the CRIC on 10 November 2008.
2. The panel discussion was preceded by a number of consultations, on which this annex briefly reports.

II. Deliberations of the Bureau of the Conference of the Parties

A. Observations

3. The matter of the assessment of the GM by the JIU was first addressed by the Bureau of the Conference of the Parties (COP) at its meeting on 2 November 2008.
4. The Bureau was informed of the action taken in pursuance of paragraph 27 of decision 3/COP.8. This included an update on the various interactions that took place between JIU inspectors and the Managing Director of the GM on the proposed terms of reference of the assessment, as well as an overview of the extensive exchanges between the President of the JIU and the President of COP on the procedures, terms of reference and estimated cost of the review.
5. The Bureau was also informed about a communication sent by the Managing Director of the GM to the President of the COP, which underlined the fact that decision 3/COP.8 does not address the budgetary implications of the JIU review and that the GM was not in a position to contribute financially to or to cover any of the costs incurred by the JIU review. The Bureau was further informed that the COP Presidency had addressed a communication to both the GM and the secretariat seeking their views on how to meet the estimated costs of the review, which were initially estimated at USD 367,966.
6. The Bureau of the COP reiterated that the decision to carry out an assessment of the GM was taken at the eighth session of the COP (COP 8) and that the focus should now be on how best to respond to that decision to enable Parties to take an informed final decision at the ninth session of the COP. The Bureau acknowledged the need to ensure the full and timely implementation of the COP decision.

B. Recommendations

7. The Bureau underlined the importance of securing timely implementation of the review of the GM in the light of the new orientations set by the 10-year strategic plan and framework to

enhance the implementation of the Convention as well as the evolving international conjuncture, including the endorsement of the GEF as a financial mechanism of the Convention.

8. The Bureau also underlined the need to explore ways and means of reducing the estimated cost of the review, including through the extensive use of modern information technology.

9. It was decided to conduct informal consultations with the JIU inspectors in Istanbul, with a view to further exploring options in that regard.

III. Regional consultations of affected country Parties of the Convention's regional implementation annexes

10. At the request of the President of the COP, the issue of the GM review was included on the agenda of the regional consultations that took place on 3–4 November 2008.

11. At these consultations, the representative of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) secretariat updated participants on the status of the review, including the various exchanges between the President of the JIU and the President of the COP, as well as the COP Bureau consultation on the issue. The Managing director of the GM also addressed the meetings on this agenda item.

IV. Other meetings

A. Briefing of delegations by the JIU

12. At the request of the JIU inspectors, an informal briefing of delegations was organized by the JIU inspectors on 7 November. The inspectors briefed delegations on the rules and procedures of the JIU and made a presentation on the intended approach, scope and terms of reference as well as the proposed budget of the review. The JIU inspectors answered questions from delegations on the above-mentioned aspects.

B. Informal consultation with the President of the COP

13. The informal consultation with the JIU inspectors was organized by the President of the COP on 7 November with the assistance of the Vice-president from the United States. Representatives of the UNCCD secretariat and the GM were also present.

C. Recommendations

14. The inspectors expressed their willingness to envisage a reduction in the estimated costs of the review in order to facilitate the early implementation of this COP decision. The inspectors reported that reductions could be envisaged from different budget headings (salary reimbursements, contingency, etc.) with the exception of travel.

15. The inspectors underlined that a proposal for such reductions was made subject to the endorsement of the JIU.

V. Presentation of the JIU review at CRIC 7

16. An introductory statement was made by the JIU inspectors. The JIU inspectors underlined that substantive work on their report should begin in November in order to secure its submission to the next session of the COP.

17. A number of Parties expressed their views in this regard.¹ While reiterating their support for the proposed assessment of the GM by the JIU, Parties expressed concerns regarding the estimated cost of the review and asked for a reduction in the latter.

18. The JIU representative assured Parties that the views of Parties on the GM assessment would be duly considered, and that a proposal would be made with a view to reducing costs.

19. During the closing plenary, which took place on 14 November 2008, the representative of Spain, on behalf of the President of COP 8, informed the Committee that the President of the JIU had addressed a communication to the President of the COP, referring to the agreement reached with the GM on the requested assessment of the latter, including the funding of the review at a revised cost of USD 219,000, and the conclusion of a service management agreement with a view to proceeding with the implementation of the assessment.

¹ Statements were made by the representatives of Chad (on behalf of the African Group), Myanmar (on behalf of the Asian Group), Chile (on behalf of the Latin American and Caribbean Group), Turkey (on behalf of the Northern Mediterranean Group), France (on behalf of the European Union), Antigua and Barbuda (on behalf of the G-77 and China), the United States, Ukraine, Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria, South Africa, Saudi Arabia, Morocco, Gambia, Swaziland, China and Thailand.

Annex III

**Documents before the Committee for the Review of the Implementation
of the Convention at its seventh session**

<u>Document symbol</u>	<u>Title or description</u>
ICCD/CRIC(7)/1	Provisional agenda and annotations. Note by the secretariat
ICCD/CRIC(7)/2	The 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention. Note by the secretariat
ICCD/CRIC(7)/2/Add.1	The 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention. Note by the secretariat. Addendum. Consideration of the draft multi-year work plan for the secretariat (2008–2011)
ICCD/CRIC(7)/2/Add.2	The 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention. Note by the secretariat. Addendum. Consideration of the costed draft two-year work programme for the secretariat (2008–2009)
ICCD/CRIC(7)/2/Add.3	The 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention. Note by the Global Mechanism. Addendum. Consideration of the draft multi-year work plan for the Global Mechanism (2008–2011)
ICCD/CRIC(7)/2/Add.4	The 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention. Note by the Global Mechanism. Addendum. Consideration of the costed draft two-year work programme for the Global Mechanism (2008–2009)
ICCD/CRIC(7)/2/Add.5	The 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention. Note by the secretariat. Addendum. Consideration of the draft joint work programme of the secretariat and the Global Mechanism (2008–2009)
ICCD/CRIC(7)/2/Add.6	The 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention. Note by the secretariat. Addendum. Consideration of the costed draft two-year work programme of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (2008–2009)

<u>Document symbol</u>	<u>Title or description</u>
ICCD/CRIC(7)/2/Add.7	The 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention. Note by the secretariat. Addendum. Indicators and monitoring of the 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention
ICCD/CRIC(7)/3	Consideration of draft reporting guidelines as referred to in decision 8/COP.8. Note by the secretariat
ICCD/CRIC(7)/3/Add.1	Consideration of draft reporting guidelines as referred to in decision 8/COP.8. Note by the secretariat. Addendum. Principles for reporting by affected country Parties
ICCD/CRIC(7)/3/Add.2	Consideration of draft reporting guidelines as referred to in decision 8/COP.8. Note by the secretariat. Addendum. Principles for reporting by developed country Parties
ICCD/CRIC(7)/3/Add.3	Consideration of draft reporting guidelines as referred to in decision 8/COP.8. Note by the secretariat. Addendum. Principles for reporting by United Nations and other intergovernmental organizations and relevant international financial institutions and mechanisms
ICCD/CRIC(7)/3/Add.4	Consideration of draft reporting guidelines as referred to in decision 8/COP.8. Note by the secretariat. Addendum. Principles for reporting by the Global Environment Facility
ICCD/CRIC(7)/3/Add.5	Consideration of draft reporting guidelines as referred to in decision 8/COP.8. Note by the secretariat. Addendum. Principles for reporting by the secretariat
ICCD/CRIC(7)/3/Add.6	Consideration of draft reporting guidelines as referred to in decision 8/COP.8. Note by the secretariat. Addendum. Principles for reporting by the Global Mechanism
ICCD/CRIC(7)/3/Add.7	Consideration of draft reporting guidelines as referred to in decision 8/COP.8. Note by the secretariat. Addendum. Principles for reporting on implementation of subregional and regional action programmes
ICCD/CRIC(7)/4	Consideration of the format for future meetings of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention. Note by the secretariat
ICCD/CRIC(7)/INF.1	Information for participants
ICCD/CRIC(7)/INF.2	List of participants

<u>Document symbol</u>	<u>Title or description</u>
ICCD/CRIC(7)/INF.3	Status of ratification of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification. Note by the secretariat
ICCD/CRIC(7)/INF.4	Outcome of the High-Level Policy Dialogue on the Strategic Orientations of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, held in Bonn, Germany, 27 May 2008. Note by the secretariat
ICCD/CRIC(7)/INF.5	Assessment of the Global Mechanism. Terms of reference proposed by the Joint Inspection Unit
ICCD/CRIC(7)/INF.6	Mechanism to facilitate the regional coordination of the implementation of the Convention. Note by the secretariat
ICCD/CST(S-1)/4/Add.1	The 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention – Committee on Science and Technology. Note by the secretariat. Addendum. Consideration of the draft multi-year work plan for the Committee on Science and Technology (2008–2011)
ICCD/CST(S-1)/4/Add.2	The 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention – Committee on Science and Technology. Note by the secretariat. Addendum. Consideration of the costed draft two-year work programme for the Committee on Science and Technology (2008–2009)
ICCD/CST(S-1)/5/Add.1	Report of the Committee on Science and Technology on its first special session, held in Istanbul from 3 to 6 November 2008. Addendum. Advice from the Committee on Science and Technology to the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention on how best to measure progress on strategic objectives 1, 2 and 3 of the 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention
