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**Statement  
of**

**H.E. Dr. Chem Widhya  
Ambassador, Permanent Representative  
of the Kingdom of Cambodia  
to the United Nations**

**Asian Group Meeting  
Follow Up on Secretary General Report on  
United Nations Management Reform**

**New York  
Thursday, March 09, 2006**

Madame Chair,  
Mr. Secretary General,

- First of all, I would like to congratulate you most warmly, Madame Chair, upon assumption of the Chair of the Asian Group for the current month by your country the State of Kuwait. Second, I would like to thank you for having convened this important meeting today to exchange views with His Excellency the Secretary General following the important Management Report for a stronger Organization worldwide he made two days ago.
- I would like to take this opportunity to extend our deep appreciation to the Secretary General for this document, as United Nations as a whole is indeed in need of comprehensive and in-depth reform in multiple and each other complementing critical areas. Such reform is a prerequisite to allow the organization to perform its functions more effectively and more efficiently while taking into account that the United Nations we know now is a vastly different institution from the one that emerged after the Second World War sixty one years ago. The composition has changed as well as the ratio for demanding changes has dramatically changed, when there is no longer sacred truth.
- For my Delegation and, I believe many others, two days are not enough to give elaborate views on such critical issues such as the Secretariat and Management reform, which indeed represents the neuralgic center of the whole Organization. Allow me, to offer the following general views.
- My Delegation shares the view of the Secretary General in his Summary that stated that the United Nations is no longer a conference-servicing organization located in a few headquarters locations and that it has evolved into a highly diverse global organization scattered around the earth, mostly in difficult areas.
- Bearing this in mind, my Delegation fully support in principle that greater flexibility is needed and should be offered to the Secretary General to handle

- management issues of the Secretariat to ensure that the latter would be able to respond adequately to the evolving needs of the Organization.

Madame Chair,

- Clear parameters should be given to make the recruitment process and financial and budgetary management less cumbersome, which would be tantamount to paralyzing or undermining many operations. Positive experiences by other United Nations funds and programs as well as by other international organizations should be looked at as there is no need to reinvent the wheel.
- Particular attention should also be given to the recruitment efforts of the future United Nations international civil servants. In this particular matter, it is clear that there are two challenges that need to be simultaneously overcome. On one hand, there is the need for the organization to obtain the best available candidates from the job market. For this, the United Nations must compete with businesses, organizations, and institutions and that the Organization's practices and efforts to recruit people should be as closely as possible to those of other organizations, i.e. shorter time period between vacancy's announcement and selection of candidate. On the other, the functions and work of the Organization requires the civil servants to come from different groups or backgrounds. To ensure that the Organization is recruiting a varied group of people, the efforts to improve geographical distribution and gender balance should be further promoted.
- We agree that a more rigorous monitoring of budget and planning process is needed as this should be explicitly linked to results of the tasks of the organization and managerial performance of the involved staff. However, it is equally important to take into account that this more rigorous approach should not lead to a situation where the United Nation operations as the results will be severely handicapped. I agree when the President of the General Assembly said that it is essential that we address the vital issue of management with trust, transparency, and a sense of Common responsibility.
- Further, my Delegation supports the stream-lining initiative of the Organization's reporting system to significantly reduce the reporting span as

well as to have more consolidated report texts that would avoid redundancy, overlapping, and conflicting parts and other gaps.

- My Delegation also takes note of the awareness of the Secretariat to improve its functioning in terms of accountability to the people they serve, in particular also to the Member States.
- Last but not least, allow me to touch one important and sensitive issue, that is the relations between the Secretary General and his/her Deputy, whose proposed enhanced role would be to delegate formal authority and accountability for the management and overall direction of the functions of the Secretariat. While a delegation of power would be needed in view of the increasing load of work on the Secretary General, it remains clear, however, that the Secretary General is and remains in charge of the Secretariat. Therefore, a reduction of reporting lines should not lead to a situation, where the Secretary General would land in the dark. It should be stressed that the Deputy Secretary General should be accountable not only to the Member States, but also to the Secretary General, who endorses the whole responsibility and accountability of the Secretariat to the Organization, the people and the Member States they serve.

Madame Chair,

- Cambodia realizes the fact that the task of improving the work and management of this august organization could be perceived as an evolving process. This process can not afford further delay. It has to move, if the Organization is to regain its vitality and efficiency. My Delegation stands ready to render its full support for those noble endeavors.

Thank You.