

**INTER-AGENCY STANDING COMMITTEE WORKING GROUP**  
**14 June 1994**

SITUATION IN THE NEWLY INDEPENDENT STATES INFORMAL NOTE

1. The disintegration of the former Soviet Union from late 1991 has created major disruptions and economic breakdown in parts of Central Asia and the Caucasus region. The social upheavals which have followed Independence, coupled with ethnic tensions, have resulted in major armed conflicts, social dislocations, massive population displacement and precipitous declines in the living standards of large numbers of people.
2. In response to deteriorating conditions in **Tajikistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia**, United Nations Inter-Agency Missions visited the four countries during February and March 1994. Following these Missions, two UN Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeals were launched. The first, on 6 April 1994, requested US\$ 37.8 million for Tajikistan (1 April 1994 to 31 December 1994). The second, launched on 29 April 1994, called for US \$100.3 million for Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia (1 April 1994 to 31 March 1995). This second Appeal has recently been revised upwards to US\$ 114.6 million to cover programmes for Abkhazia. These revised and new projects have arisen as a result of Agreements by Georgia, Abkhazia, the Russian Federation and UNHCR, which have created conditions for the voluntary return of displaced persons and refugees to **Abkhazia**.
3. During the Missions, it was agreed, in view of the magnitude of needs and anticipated bi-lateral interventions, that in all four countries only the worst-affected populations should be targeted for UN humanitarian assistance, and that this assistance should be limited to activities which addressed their most urgent needs.
4. Informal discussions with donors, UN Agencies, NGOs and respective Governments continued throughout the preparation and launching of the two Appeals. During these discussions, donors expressed the need for strengthened coordination, including the establishment of well-defined, comprehensive strategies, for the provision of humanitarian aid.
5. DHA, with efforts of DHA/UN Resident Coordinators, the UN agencies/programmes and NGOs, has developed a strategy for implementation of the programmes outlined in the Appeals. Further refinements to this strategy will be made on the basis of continuing discussions with humanitarian partners. The § strategy document

produced is, hence, part of a longer term process; the ultimate aim being to make maximum use of human and financial resources to meet urgent needs, and at the same time, establish the continuum between relief and development. Another objective, is to give the donor community a clear idea of how its voluntary contributions could be most effectively utilized, given the fact that all resources would not be available "up front", therefore requiring a prioritizing of activity implementation.

6. In support of this process, three formal consultations were organized by DHA following the launching of the Appeals: Consultation "1" (in Geneva, DHA and UN Resident Coordinators from the four countries with UN Agencies/Programmes and NGOs), Consultation "2" (in-country, UN Resident Coordinators with senior representatives of the respective governments - including representation from local offices of UN Agencies, NGOs and diplomatic community), Consultation "3" (in Geneva, DHA with UN Agencies/Programmes, NGOs and major Donors). In addition, informal meetings were held By DHA with major donors in Geneva and New York, leading up to Consultation "3"

In the first two consultations and in the informal meetings, implementation of the humanitarian programmes addressed in the appeals, as well as priorities and major constraints were discussed.

7. Through the above mechanisms, it was agreed that the priority populations and interventions for the four countries, as outlined in the two UN Appeals, remain valid. However, the limited availability of financial resources, as well as implementation capacity, have led to further refinement of UN interventions within the framework of the Appeals. This refinement includes operational arrangements, bringing together the expertise of UN Agencies, International NGOs and Organizations, respective Government and national entities, and a tentative priority schedule for the implementation and funding of activities contained in the Appeals. Three phases of implementation (and requirement for funding to be in place) are given in the strategy Phase I (immediate implementation/procurement), Phase II (implementation by the 3rd Quarter of 1994) and Phase III (implementation no later than 1st Quarter of 1995).
8. Given the differences between the four countries and individual concerns, priorities do differ somewhat and are expressed in the strategies for each country. However, the overall strategy emphasizes that supplemental food remains a priority across the region, as well as logistics. In view of the lead time required to deliver food to each of the countries, and difficulties in distribution during winter months, there is a critical need to ensure that sufficient food and other commodities are secured and pre-positioned prior to the onset of winter.

9. The strategy paper was presented at the Donor Consultation (Consultation "3") held on 27 May 1994 in Geneva. It was recognized that this was the first inter-agency attempt to develop such an implementation strategy in the context of Consolidated Appeals. It was noted to be an extremely constructive approach and welcomed by donors. The strategy will be updated and modified as necessary as implementation progresses.
10. The prospect for use of this approach for United Nations Inter-Agency Humanitarian Programmes, should be discussed and evaluated.