



PRESS RELEASE

UN General Assembly unanimously confirms Kemal Dervis as next UNDP Administrator

Former Turkish Finance Minister and World Bank veteran to head largest UN agency in fight against poverty

United Nations, 5 May 2005 —The United Nations General Assembly, representing 191 countries, unanimously confirmed Kemal Dervis, a former finance minister of Turkey and senior World Bank official, as the next Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Mr. Dervis, presently a member of Turkey's parliament, is expected to officially start his four-year term on 15 August 2005.

Mr. Dervis becomes the first person from a country that receives development assistance-- instead of providing it--to be selected to head UNDP, the UN's largest independently funded agency, and a global leader of UN efforts to eradicate extreme poverty and promote democratic governance throughout the developing world. The current incumbent, Mr. Malloch Brown, is a British citizen, and his five predecessors in the job were Americans.

"I am thrilled that the Secretary-General and the General Assembly have placed their confidence in me as the new UNDP Administrator," Mr. Dervis said. "I relish the opportunity to work for an organization which has always stood at the frontlines of the battle against poverty and has been a leader in fighting for the right of all people to live with freedom and dignity. It will be a great privilege and opportunity for me to follow Mark Malloch Brown and to lead this organization as we work to meet the most pressing global need-- the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Peace, security, economic development and freedom are inextricably linked. I will also greatly value the opportunity to contribute to the general strengthening and reform of the UN system proposed by Secretary-General Kofi Annan."

The General Assembly's confirmation of Mr. Dervis came after the UNDP Executive Board reported to the Secretary-General that its 36 members supported the nomination.

As Turkey's Minister for Economic Affairs and the Treasury, Mr. Dervis, 56, implemented a recovery programme that lifted Turkey out of a devastating financial crisis in 2001. His reform policies are credited with ending a prolonged recession and triple-digit inflation, putting Turkey on a path towards sustained growth and building the economic foundation of its eligibility for membership in the European Union.

Before his recruitment as Turkey's finance minister, Mr. Dervis worked at the World Bank for 22 years. While serving as Director of the Central Europe Department, he oversaw the European Union programmes for reconstruction of Bosnia in the mid-1990s, where he emphasized that "the strategy is to help the Bosnians help themselves." As Vice President for Poverty Reduction and Economic Management, he played an instrumental role in developing the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers initiative, aimed at broadening and deepening the reform agenda in the poorest countries with the involvement of civil society in the policy formulation process.

Mr Dervis' ground-breaking work with Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers and his push to put national ownership at the forefront of the development process is particularly relevant to Afghanistan as this country develops its first Interim PRSP through a nationally owned process.

Mr. Dervis's latest book, "A Better Globalization", (Center for Global Development, 2005) was praised by former Mexican President Ernesto Zedillo for its "out-of-the-box ideas" on global governance. Francis Fukuyama, a professor of International Political Economy, Johns Hopkins University, said Mr. Dervis's book offers "one of the most imaginative solutions to the problem of reorganizing the United Nations."

In addition to his native Turkish, Mr. Dervis speaks fluent English, French, and German. He holds a doctorate in economics from Princeton University and Master's and Bachelor's degrees from the London School of Economics.

In announcing the nomination, the Secretary-General said he believed Mr. Dervis would make an excellent UNDP Administrator. "I chose him from an outstanding array of global candidates. He combines a proven practical and intellectual track record in the fields of development and international finance with a passionate commitment to addressing the scourge of poverty and established skills as a manager. I have every confidence he will be able to build on the successful reform effort implemented by Mark Malloch Brown over the past six years, and consolidate UNDP's critical role in helping address global development priorities from the MDGs to crisis prevention and recovery."

The new UNDP Administrator is expected to take office before the start of the annual meeting of the General Assembly in September. With an annual budget of more than US\$3 billion, UNDP has staff on the ground in 166 countries helping people and their governments to meet global and national development goals. The Administrator of UNDP also chairs the UN Development Group, which coordinates the international assistance and reconstruction work of UN agencies.

The incumbent UNDP Administrator, Mr. Malloch Brown, was appointed in January 2005 as the Secretary-General's chief of staff. He agreed at the time to continue to serve as UNDP Administrator until the appointment of a successor.

Mr. Malloch Brown has led UNDP for the past six years, reforming the organization internally, expanding its resource base, and refocusing its efforts towards poverty eradication and democratic governance, including in post-conflict crises. As chair of the UN Development Group, Mr. Malloch Brown has assumed a global leadership role in the campaign to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

Mr. Malloch Brown noted that Mr. Dervis' experience as both an international adviser and as a government minister leading a major economic restructuring of his country, makes him a tremendous asset to the organization. "Kemal Dervis understands what kind of help is needed from the outside to drive change. I think he will be uniquely able to position UNDP's advisory and capacity building services as critical, practical sources of support to countries as they race to meet the MDGs."

When he began his search three months ago, the Secretary-General said he was seeking a leader with first-hand development experience, either in a major development institution or in the government of a developing country. The UNDP Administrator must have strong diplomatic, political and management skills, with the ability to lead a large international organization while mobilizing global support for the MDGs.

Six distinguished candidates were selected as finalists for the post from more than a hundred nominations received from UN member states and others. After interviews with a specially constituted panel, three finalists then met with the Secretary-General and Deputy Secretary-General Louise Fréchette. The Secretary-General made his decision based on these interviews. Aside from Mr. Dervis, the other five short-listed candidates were Fawzi Al Sultan, Kuwait; Baroness Valerie Amos, United Kingdom; Kaoru Ishikawa, Japan; Hilde Frafjord Johnson, Norway and Ad Melkert, Netherlands.

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