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**HEADLINE:** Vietnam chosen as pilot country for UN reforms

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**BODY:**

Vietnam has been chosen as a pilot country for United Nations reforms that aim to streamline its agencies under one roof with a single leader, plan and budget, a senior UN official said Friday.

The "One UN Initiative" championed by outgoing Secretary General Kofi Annan would help the world body "respond to the needs of the 21st century," said Kemal Dervis, the visiting head of the UN Development Group.

"The United Nations family has to combine the diversity of skills and mandates present in its agencies to realise our tremendous potential as partners in development," said Dervis, who also heads the UN Development Programme.

Of the 25 UN agencies working in development, 11 are present in Vietnam, housed in 10 different locations, and six of them will take part in the first phase of the project set to be implemented by late next year.

"We are not talking about merging agencies, we're not talking about creating a single agency," said Dervis.

"What we are talking about is having a better cooperation mechanism, less duplication, so that... we can be more efficient, and (have) management procedures that are more quickly responsive to a country's needs."

Up to six more nations were expected to be named as pilot countries for the initiative before the end of the year, UN officials said.

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