

15 July 2005

**President's Summary of the High-Level Segment of the
Substantive Session of ECOSOC 2005**

“Achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, as well as implementing the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits: progress made, challenges and opportunities”

29 June to 1 July 2005

I. Introduction

1. The deliberations on the theme of this year's High Level Segment “Achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, as well as implementing the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits: progress made, challenges and opportunities” made an important contribution to the process leading up to the high level plenary meeting of the General Assembly to be held in September this year. While expressing their appreciation for the Secretary-General's Report on the theme of the segment (E/2005/56), the Council members noted that the internationally agreed development goals as highlighted in the various United Nations conferences and summits reflect the inherent connections between the social, economic and environmental dimensions of a comprehensive international development agenda. They also underlined the need for promoting an integrated and coordinated implementation of the outcomes.

2. “*Voices against poverty*” was added as a special feature to this year's High-Level segment. Professor Joseph Stiglitz, Nobel Laureate in Economics, 2001, Mr. Juan Somavia, Director General of ILO and Mr. António Guterres, High Commissioner for Refugees addressed the Council on issues that could help move forward the implementation of the international development agenda.

3. *Professor Stiglitz* recommended three changes to international governance that could make a contribution towards achieving the MDGs. The first step would be to honour the promise made to put development at the centre of the Doha round of trade negotiations. The second proposal was to address global financial instability through global reserve reform. Such a reform would need to address the root causes of debt, international macroeconomic imbalances and market failures in the current international financial system. Today, with the high degree of economic volatility, developing countries have to put aside substantial resources. These could be employed to make headway in the achievement of the MDGs if the instabilities were addressed, for instance through the establishment of a “global greenback system”. The third proposal suggested compensating developing countries for forests and biodiversity, as in the case of the EU system for trade in carbon services, which could be a way to provide an economic incentive to protect environmental resources while and at the time generating innovative sources of development finance.

4. *Mr. Somavia* highlighted that people were in search of “*a fair chance at a decent job*” as also highlighted by the Report of the Secretary General for the meeting. He noted that the world had witnessed a 31 percent increase in global unemployment over the last decade, with young people being worst affected. Economic growth has not translated into new jobs. He called upon the United Nations and in particular ECOSOC to recognise the “global job crisis” and to make employment a main agenda item in the next ECOSOC session. As a coordinating body, ECOSOC should take the lead in addressing the “global job crisis” which cuts across different issues such as rural development, education, health that are dealt with by different agencies. By coordinating their efforts in the area of job creation, ECOSOC could make a contribution which would make a tangible difference on the ground.

5. **Mr. Guterres**, drew attention to the fact that while much progress has been made towards the MDGs, refugees and other displaced people were falling through the cracks. For instance a recent review of PRSPs and UNDAFs showed that only 10 per cent of PRSPs reflect the needs of refugees, 1/3 include returnees in the country of origin, and less than half mention people suffering from internal displacement. He also stressed that while many of the poorest people live in countries just emerging from conflict, the issue of conflict and development has been given little attention. Finally, he said that each MDG is just as important to actors in the humanitarian arena as it was to development actors.

6. The session on “*Voices against poverty*” was followed by the “*High-Level Policy Dialogue on current developments in the world economy and international economic co-operation in the context of achieving the Millennium Development Goals*“, which allowed for an exchange of views between ECOSOC members and the United Nations system, including the Bretton Woods Institutions, UNCTAD as well as the World Trade Organization.

7. Speaking of the *World Economic Situation and Prospects 2005*, **Mr. Jose Antonio Ocampo**, Under Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, pointed out that the anticipated growth of the world economy for 2004-2006 is not only the strongest for the past few years but is unusually widespread among developing countries and economies in transition. Even with a deceleration, developing countries as a group are expected to grow at a rate approaching 6 per cent in 2005-2006, while the economies in transition will remain above 5 per cent. Growth in Africa is expected to be higher in 2005-2006 than in 2004. This higher economic growth in many developing countries is partially attributable to the improvements in economic policies within these countries themselves. In addition, domestic demand is playing a more important role because of these countries’ more stable economic and, in some cases, political conditions. However, the outcome is also a result of an international economic environment that, for most developing countries, is more favourable than any since the 1970s. Conditions for many developing countries have also improved in international financial markets. Financial flows to developing countries are increasing, their costs are low by historical standards and non-debt-creating flows, notably FDI, are assuming greater importance. For countries without access to international financial markets, ODA has reversed its decline and commitments by several donors suggest further increases in the years ahead. Similarly, there has been some further progress towards reducing the debt burden of some of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC). Despite these improvements, however, the net transfer of financial resources from developing countries continues to increase –from over \$270 billion in 2003 to a record of over \$350 billion in 2004. While this net transfer overwhelmingly reflects a buildup of foreign exchange reserves by a number of countries with trade surpluses rather than the capital outflows and debt service payments that characterized the 1980s and some of the 1990s; nevertheless, this extensive accumulation of reserves raises the question of whether the international financial system could be reformed in such a way that the countries concerned would not feel the need to use these resources in a way that yields few tangible developmental benefits beyond the “self-insurance” from future financial crises. Mr.Ocampo also cautioned the Council that contrary to expectations, oil prices continue to rise, and could have a critical bearing on the growth of the world economy. Moreover, macroeconomic imbalances, in particular the US trade deficit, posed risks to the global economy; and there was need for more concrete international economic coordination specifically aimed at rectifying such imbalances.

8. **Dr. Supachai Panitchpakdi**, Director-General of WTO stated that international trade can be a powerful and effective driver for poverty alleviation and economic well-being. But, its efficacy depends upon a large number of factors. Prime among them was a successful conclusion of the Doha round of trade negotiations. Last year, substantial progress had been made in some of the most difficult and controversial areas. Among the advances made, Members agreed to launch negotiations on trade facilitation but not to negotiate on three other new issues which did not carry the support of the full membership. Members also significantly bridged gaps in the agriculture negotiations - including a historic agreement to eliminate export subsidies by a date to be agreed. He stressed that only if solid advances were made at the Sixth WTO Ministerial Conference to be held

in Hong Kong this December, negotiations on the Doha Development Agenda could be concluded realistically by 2006. He also pointed out that it was encouraging to note that developed countries, however, were not waiting for the Doha round to be completed in order to improve market access opportunities for developing countries. In 2003 almost two-thirds of developing country exports entered developed country markets duty free. Similarly, almost three-quarters of exports originating from LDCs enter developed country markets duty-free.

9. **Mr. Carlos Fortin**, Acting Secretary General of UNCTAD stressed that development strategies aimed at speeding up investment and growth, generate employment and in the process reduce inequality and eradicate poverty were crucial. Macroeconomic balance and prudent fiscal and monetary policies are a necessary but not a sufficient condition. African countries have already by and large achieved it. What are needed now are growth- and investment-oriented policies. Market forces and the private sector must be the privileged agents of the strategies but they must be supported by an active, effective, efficient and honest public sector. Policies are needed to foster industry;-- not the old fashioned industrial policies of picking winners but what Professor Stiglitz has called a modern industrial policy, a market-friendly but decisive set of policy interventions aimed at addressing market failures in the allocation of resources and steering investment and accumulation in desired directions. However, if national governments are to assume control of their own development destinies, it follows that they should be able to use a range of policy instruments to devise and put in effect their chosen development strategies. This is the question of policy space. The call for consideration of the issue of policy space does not equate to demanding a license to renege on international economic commitments freely entered into. What it means is that when setting the agenda for future economic negotiations, when implementing existing disciplines and commitments and when interpreting rules, the question of the impact on the policy space of developing countries should be kept in mind.

10. **Mr. Jean-Louis Sarbib**, Senior Vice President of the World Bank concurred that the outlook on the global economy looks more promising than for some years and that their gains were widespread--all developing regions grew faster in 2004 than their average over the last decade. Moreover, financial flows to developing countries during the last year reached levels not seen since the onset of the financial crises of the late 1990s. Foreign direct investment (FDI) totaled \$165.5 billion, up by \$13.7 billion in 2004. However, the same countries continue to be magnets for this type of long-term investment. Also, while conditions for achieving better economic performance in Sub-Saharan Africa are improving unfortunately, progress toward the MDGs has been slower and more uneven across regions than originally thought, with Sub-Saharan Africa falling far short. He stressed that business as usual will therefore not do. It will bring incremental improvements in this sector or that project, but it will not push us forward with the giant strides that we will need to get as many countries to that profound milestone of 2015. During the next 10 years, the international community must include scaled-up, proven approaches in health and education, as well as strengthen economic reforms, and improve governance and accountability. Mr. Sarbib stressed that achieving the MDGs will depend above all on developing countries' ability to achieve stronger public sector performance in delivering services. The challenge was essentially political. Evidence showed that aid works best where policies and governance are good. While some donors suggest that a viable strategy in weak states is to bypass the public sector altogether, Mr. Sarbib pointed out that no OECD country had ever achieved universal health or basic education coverage with mainly private systems--in fact, most were heavily public.

11. **Mr. Reinhard Munzberg**, *Special Representative of the International Monetary Fund to the United Nations* stated that the International Monetary and Financial Committee noted at its last meeting that widening imbalances across regions and the continued rise in oil prices and oil market volatility have increased risks. He pointed out that there were substantial gaps in growth performance between the regions of the world. The U.S. current account deficit has increased significantly in recent years while emerging Asian economies continued to run large surpluses. Addressing global imbalances and restoring and sustaining balanced growth to the world economy require vigorous collaborative efforts. Also, effective poverty reduction needs high and sustainable growth. Developing countries needed to intensify their reform efforts, including through further development of their own poverty reduction strategies. This also requires well-targeted structural reforms to

boost competitiveness and productive investment. Poor countries need to find ways to harness the benefits of foreign direct investment and private sector activity. They can lay the foundation by strengthening institutions and governance and by establishing predictable legal and regulatory frameworks. Developed countries on their part, needed to scale up their aid to low-income countries, as pledged in the Monterrey Consensus.

12. Finally, at the High Level Policy Dialogue of the 2005 High Level Segment of ECOSOC, participants were unanimous in expressing their support for the comprehensive United Nations development agenda. However, while expressing their support, most pointed out that the challenge at present was not a lack of strategies and objectives in implementing the agenda, rather, a scarcity in the means of implementation and the political will to fulfill the commitments made over the past decade or more. Participants recognized that while there have been positive strides in improving the lives of millions across the globe, progress was slow, uneven, and in some instances, the accomplishments of the past in the development arena, had eroded. Globalization had favoured a few nations leaving many behind. As a result, there was a renewed and strong call for multilateral cooperation by most delegations.

II. Implementing an international development agenda

13. In this ECOSOC session, delegations recognized the unique opportunity presented to the international community this year to build momentum in the implementation of the development agenda. A large number of speakers participated during the general debate and in other events during the high level segment. The essence of those is captured in the ensuing paragraphs.

14. It was generally recognized that *development is primarily the responsibility of developing countries* themselves. Developing countries need to intensify their reform efforts, including through further development of their own poverty reduction strategies and well-targeted structural reforms to boost competitiveness and productive investment. Speakers also stressed the importance of South-South cooperation as well as triangular cooperation and regional initiatives in the achievement of the development goals. Speakers urged governments to adopt sound macroeconomic, structural and sectoral policies and lay the foundation for harnessing the benefits of foreign direct investment and private sector activity by strengthening institutions and governance and by establishing predictable legal and regulatory frameworks. Delegations stressed that along with *good governance*, there was a need for respect of *human rights, the rule of law and strong democratic processes* based on social justice. Without these, development could not be broad based and all-encompassing.

15. Participants agreed that the *eradication of poverty and hunger* continued to remain an elusive goal for many countries and thus required a twin-track approach: Programmes and policies to support the productive sectors, especially agriculture and rural development, combined with programmes to enhance immediate and direct access to food for the most needy. National governments in developing countries retain primary responsibility for reducing hunger and poverty in their countries assisted by international donors, organizations of the civil society and other stakeholders. This implied that harmonization between donors and recipients and coordination among donors was crucial to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of resources mobilized for hunger and poverty reduction. Speakers stressed that developing countries, especially those in Africa, needed assistance in the forms of ODA, debt relief, domestic resources as well as technical assistance and capacity-building in order to create or strengthen institutions and policies capable of responding to their citizens' needs and to attract private investment, which was a pre-requisite for sustainable growth. The creation of a fair and conducive international trade environment, especially on agriculture, is essential for national growth and poverty reduction. The critical need for employment generation was underlined for the success of poverty reduction strategies. To that end, the cross-border movement of people and its links to poverty reduction, also demands attention.

16. It was emphasized that reducing poverty and hunger is a precondition for the majority of the remaining MDGs, but that on the current trajectory, the hunger goal could only be met as early as 2050, well beyond the 2015 deadline. Speakers underscored that hunger had a devastating impact on the lives and livelihoods of people suffering from it: it reduced productivity and working capacity, making people susceptible to disease, preventing children from learning. It thus compromises growth of entire economies. Alleviating hunger is a pre-condition for poverty reduction.

17. In the area of human rights, empowerment of women through protecting their basic human rights was a key concern for many member States. Women's rights, prevention of violence against women and promoting *gender equality* were of vital importance in promoting human rights and development. Member States felt that the empowerment of women was essential to achieving the development goals and urged that a gender perspective be fully mainstreamed in all development policies and programmes and into strategies to achieve the development goals at the national and international level, including the work of the United Nations. To that end, gender equality and women's empowerment was considered important not only as a goal in itself, but also as a means to achieve other goals. CEDAW and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly provided a solid framework for the work towards gender equality and the empowerment of women. Together with Millennium Declaration and MDGs, they constituted the basis for addressing the challenges of gender inequality, including in allocation of resources and improving accountability.

18. While continuing the work to achieve *universal primary education*, a greater emphasis should be placed on the provision of *secondary education*. To ensure inclusion and access especially for the females, there was a need to reduce the cost of secondary education to make it more affordable through the provision of scholarships/bursaries specifically targeting girls in rural communities and marginalized or vulnerable groups. Speakers pointed to the ample research evidence on the high correlation between level of education of women beyond primary schooling and women empowerment, lower fertility, reduced vulnerability to HIV/AIDS and violence, increased participation in the formal as opposed to the informal sector of the job market. They emphasized the need for locating schools closer to homes, ensuring flexibility in the school calendar and hours of schooling, improving the relevance and quality of education, encouraging the participation of girls in science and technology, and making schools more girl-friendly.

19. Delegations also stressed the importance of addressing the *social dimensions of development*. They pointed out that globalization could be made fair and equitable only through addressing its social aspects. In particular investing in people through creating decent job opportunities, enhancing education systems, among others were crucial for poverty eradication and sustainable development. Literacy competencies and skills for youth and adults especially mothers would reduce the high incidence of illiteracy and break the vicious circle of intergenerational illiteracy. Literate parents especially mothers can ensure the early stimulation of learning in the early years of their children, ensure the enrollment of children in primary schools and the completion of their children's education at least at the primary level. In addition, improving the literacy skills and competencies of both youth and adults had a strong correlation with job opportunities and job creation. All of these have a positive impact on socio-economic development and human security. To that end, participants urged the speedy implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit for Social Development held in Copenhagen in 1995.

20. The lack of adequate *health systems* was an area of universal concern. Stronger equitable national health systems were considered central to the challenge of scaling up services and proven, effective health interventions that provide adequate numbers of trained and motivated health workers, the provision of basic drugs, strengthened infrastructure, the elimination of user fees and the ability to monitor and respond to infectious disease outbreaks. In too many countries the health systems needed to address the many challenges are non-existent or are on the point of collapse. Building and strengthening national health system capacities had to be at the centre of national and international efforts. The *lack of adequately trained health workers* in

most developing countries, including through migration to developed countries and the loss to HIV/AIDS, was recognized as a major obstacle to progress, including in the *fight against HIV/AIDS, as well as other communicable diseases*, and was a reason for grave concern. Participants expressed a sense of urgency to address the issue, both internationally and in the affected countries themselves. For Africa alone, it is estimated that one million additional health workers are needed.

21. Stressing the importance of the fight against *HIV/AIDS*, Member States endorsed an integrated approach which would include *prevention, treatment, care, support and research*. Particular attention had to be given to young people and to women in this context. The necessary resources should be provided in this fight, in particular through a full funding of the Global Fund. Participants also supported an integrated approach for the fight against *HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis* and stressed the need to increase the capacities of the partner countries, to increase the resources available and to support access to treatment, research and the development of new prevention instruments.

22. Reproductive health services were considered an integral part of functioning health systems. Speakers stressed that these services must be strengthened in the interest of millions, in particular women and children. Currently, there exist deep inequities in access to reproductive health services between and within countries. Universal access to reproductive health, including family planning, is essential for making progress on MDG 5 (Maternal Health) and required sustainable and predictable financing. It was emphasized that without greater attention and resources to sexual and reproductive health and women's empowerment and gender equality, the health MDGs will not be achieved. In this context, participants stressed the importance of full access to reproductive health by 2015 for achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Improving nutrition, especially of children and infants was one of the key aspects – though often overlooked – for increasing the likelihood of children to survive and thrive. Moreover, achieving goals for poverty eradication, water, sanitation, hygiene, environment and education will also improve health status and expedite development.

23. At the same time *environmental issues* and *sustainable development* needed to be integrated even more closely into national and international poverty reduction strategies. It was important to remember that the major steps in eradicating poverty are still clean water, sufficient nutrition, decent homes and decent work. With national priorities and strategies defined, the challenge remains building sufficient capacity at the national level and access to the necessary resources for effective implementation. To that end, Member States emphasized that the full and speedy implementation of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation was crucial. Climate change, desertification and the erosion of biodiversity also had social consequences. They also called for developing new technologies for increasing the supply of renewable energy. Participants also underscored that it was important to address the issue of slums not only through efforts to upgrade existing settlements, but also to counter the growth of new slums. Speakers pointed out that the levels of urbanization were such that the Millennium Development Goals agreed to in 2000 would impact on only a small percentage of slum dwellers. It was stated that the current *environmental governance structure* was too decentralized and not sufficiently effective. There was a widely shared view that this should be addressed.

24. While stressing that development is primarily the responsibilities of developing countries themselves, participants recognized that *ODA, FDI, debt relief and trade* are crucial for generating resources for pursuing development. In that regard, the full implementation of the Monterrey Consensus was crucial. Developing countries should strengthen efforts to fulfill their part of the Monterrey commitments by creating an enabling environment with good governance and through optimal domestic resource mobilization. In that regard, the importance of private sector development, including a strong financial sector, was stressed. Developed countries on their part, must fulfill their commitments relating to ODA, debt and trade. To that end, Member States welcomed the announcement of timelines set by certain countries by which they will attain the 0.7 % of GNI target for ODA. They also urged developed countries that have not yet done so to make concrete efforts to achieve the target of 0.7 per cent of GNI as ODA to developing countries. Some delegations pointed out that ODA should be delivered in conformity to the recipient countries priorities and specificities without

stringent conditions or complex disbursement procedures. Speakers also noted that debt relief was often counted as ODA as was humanitarian assistance. Although these areas are of great importance they do not necessarily contribute to the long-term sustainable achievement of the MDGs. Countries pointed out that while making efforts on improving the quantity of aid, it was necessary to focus on the quality and effectiveness of aid flow. Aid effectiveness could be increased through budgetary support and sector specific support as identified by recipient countries. To that end, delegations welcomed the progress made at the Paris OECD DAC High Level forum in March and committed to the timely implementation of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness including the agreement by September of monitorable targets for 2010. Furthermore, delegations underscored that while the issue of absorptive capacity should be addressed, it should not be used by donor countries to reduce aid--particularly in vital investment in physical infrastructure and power facilities. At the same time, Member States called for predictable and less volatile aid mechanisms.

25. Participants deliberated on ways to maximize the attractiveness of developing countries for *FDI* as well as in ensuring that FDI was useful for development. FDI was seen as having the potential of building infrastructure and providing basic services for development. It was emphasized that good governance and the rule of law securing predictability and transparency was essential for foreign capital to accrue. The creation of policies and institutions that favoured market-led growth would be particularly useful. However, speakers also underscored that domestic investment and the halting capital flight was just as important. It was pointed out that while aid was important, without economic and social freedom, the rule of law and honest government, international aid had little value. To that end, developing countries should create an enabling environment for the private sector with a sound macro-economic framework, clear definitions of property rights, enforceable contracts, competitive markets and well-designed regulatory policies. This would enable developing nations unlock approximately \$9.4 trillion in potentially usable assets.

26. Many speakers called for the timely and successful conclusion to the negotiation of the Doha trade round so that *trade* may fuel growth to help meet the MDGs. Moreover, they called for efforts to ensure that its outcome helps achieve a multilateral trading system that is truly responsive to development concerns. The importance of a universal, rule-based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable multi-lateral trading system was repeatedly underscored. It was emphasized that efforts should be made to complete expeditiously the Doha round of multilateral trade negotiations to fully realize its development dimension. In this regard, speakers recalled the decision of 1 August 2004 of the General Council of the WTO and called for balanced and parallel progress within and between areas under negotiation, bearing in mind the needs and concerns of developing countries, particularly in the areas of special and differential treatment, agriculture, market access for non-agricultural products and capacity-building.

27. Speakers welcomed the decision of the G8 to cancel the multilateral *debt* of 18 HIPC countries, but stated that additional measures are needed for non-HIPC countries. Some delegations noted the counter-productivity of the cost of debt-servicing outstripping the value of ODA and called for a comprehensive solution to developing countries' debt crisis. Some participants called for efforts that would ensure that all developing countries' debt was sustainable, and would not undermine national efforts to achieve internationally agreed development goals. Furthermore, they emphasized the need to broaden the debt relief programme of the G8 countries beyond 18 heavily indebted poor countries. It was also stressed that debt relief can play a key role in liberating resources that should be directed towards activities consistent with poverty eradication, sustained economic growth and sustainable development and the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration. In this regard, while acknowledging the recent support for 100 % debt cancellation outstanding obligations of HIPC countries to the IMF, World Bank and the African Development Bank, speakers called for further measures to provide comprehensive and durable debt relief to all developing countries, including resolving the debt problems of LDCs, low and middle income developing countries that are not eligible under HIPC. They urged countries to direct those resources freed through debt relief, in particular through debt cancellation and reduction towards the achievement of these goals and call upon

them to continue to improve their domestic policies and economic management, including stable macroeconomic frameworks and transparency and accountability systems of public finance.

28. Many representatives welcomed efforts to develop innovative ideas for mobilizing resources for development and stated that progress should be complemented with simplified procedures for fast access to resources to maximize impact. The launching of an International Finance Facility (IFF) and decision to implement international solidarity levies received widespread support. Countries stressed the need to explore further *innovative sources of financing* for development to generate additional resources.

29. Participants called for *science and technology* to be promoted to pursue sustainable development, including by building developing countries' capacity for science and technology and increasing international assistance in the critical research areas of agriculture, health, and environmental management. They noted that the potential of information and communication technologies had not been fully tapped and that scientific research and technology transfer were crucial for poor countries to improve their healthcare, schools, infrastructures and governance. It was observed that multi-stakeholder alliances and partnerships should be promoted in further exploiting the potential of ICT.

30. Most delegations were of the view that the MDGs cannot be met without taking into consideration the *needs of countries in special situations* such as Least Developed Countries (LDCs), landlocked developing countries (LLDCs) and small island developing states (SIDS), as well as countries in Africa, particularly Sub-Saharan Africa. While the provision of duty and quota-free access was essential for the least developed countries, strategies aimed at enhancing their competitiveness and the diversification of their exports was also required. At the same time, the Brussels, Almaty and Mauritius Plans of Action should be implemented effectively. Highlighting the special needs of LDCs, speakers called for the international community to deliver 0.15 to 0.20 percent of GNI in ODA. Most delegations noted that urgent action was needed to prevent Sub-Saharan Africa from missing all the 2015 goals. They stated that African countries must take ownership and leadership in implementation of the MDGs, and improve macroeconomic management, governance and accountability. To that end, they expressed their unwavering support for NEPAD. They also called for a substantial increase in the volume and quality of external aid to Sub-Saharan Africa and a need to expand capacity to absorb aid by removing bottlenecks in the productive sectors and improving human capital. The monitoring process in Sub-Saharan Africa should be strengthened by improving the statistical capacity of these countries and by enhancing analytical capabilities of the monitoring framework.

31. Speakers highlighted *the role of NGOs and partnerships with civil society* in achieving the comprehensive United Nations Development Agenda. Such organizations can play a crucial role at the local national and international levels to ensure that the lives of millions across the globe are improved. Participants expressed hope that national Governments would strive to nurture such partnerships and networks and that civil society is included both at the time of policy formulation, as well as their implementation

III. The Role of ECOSOC and the UN System

32. Delegations expressed strong support for a central role for ECOSOC in the follow-up to and the implementation of the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social, environmental and related fields and the achievement of the MDGs. It should provide policy guidance to the United Nations system on these issues and be an institutional platform for their integrated analysis and mainstreaming. Some representatives also underlined the need for further strengthening the role of ECOSOC and its functional commissions and related subsidiary bodies in pursuing the United Nations Development Agenda and encouraged the functional commissions to further promote synergies in their work. ECOSOC should continue to support the coordination and harmonization among operational agencies as well as humanitarian agencies. Its role in operational coordination and providing guidance for the UN funds and

programmes, and in promoting dialogue and partnership should be strengthened, and its agenda and work program streamlined.

33. In this respect, delegations stressed the importance of pursuing vigorously the reform of United Nations funds, programs and specialized agencies and to ensure system-wide coherence. Delegations supported the Secretary General's urgent appeal for a more integrated international environmental governance structure, based on existing institutions. With regard to development, some Member States felt that the Council could evolve to a high-level development cooperation forum, where global, regional and national strategies and policies for development cooperation can be reviewed. Furthermore the Council needed to respond to emerging policy challenges and build coherence with other organizations.

34. At the country level, the UN Development Assistance Framework and its Results Matrix should be used as effective tools to assist governments in translating the goals of the UN conferences and summits, as well as the MDGs, into national policies, strategies and programmes and to monitor implementation. The need for strong, concrete support for the system-wide role of the Resident Coordinator in promoting the realization of the development goals in their totality was also emphasized as was the need to ensure that the United Nations, at the country level, operates as a team with a common programme in support of countries' poverty reduction strategies. Enhanced cooperation with IFIs was also important.

35. Speakers also felt the need to strengthen Council's role in the field of post-conflict situations, in particular by ensuring coherence with long-term development objectives. To that end, they stressed that the Council should be more pro-active in post-conflict management and collaborating more closely with the proposed Peacebuilding Commission.

IV. Conclusion

36. Countries acknowledged the interrelation between development, security and human rights. They emphasized increasingly the role of the ECOSOC and its responsibility in building the future. The Council must measure up to its role and assume its responsibility. The ongoing process is an opportunity that must not be missed and the momentum should continue not only up to the high level plenary meeting of the General Assembly to be in September this year but beyond to enable countries achieve their development objectives. To that end, countries agreed that the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration and outcomes of UN conferences and summits would only be achieved if all partners work together in a spirit of shared responsibilities and partnership. What was essential was political will and commitment.

37. The High Level Segment also included eight Roundtables organized around the Millennium Development Goals. The themes included: The eradication of poverty and hunger, Health, Global partnership and financing of the Millennium Development Goals, Building of state capacity to meeting the MDG; Education and literacy; Gender equality and empowerment of women; Environmental sustainability; National strategies to achieve the MDGs. Detailed summaries of the roundtables are available in E/2005/CRP.6. Twelve ministerial breakfasts were also organized. The topics discussed at the breakfasts included: Science, technology and innovation to meet the MDGs, including ICTs; Land and conflict; Microfinance: Building Inclusive Financial Sectors to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals; The Impact of commodities on poverty reduction and sustainable development in the LDCs and other vulnerable economies; Human resources and the MDGs; Working out of poverty; The Role of volunteerism in achieving the MDGs; Forging powerful partnerships; Migration and the MDGs; Synergies between the Brussels Programme of Action and NEPAD in achieving the MDGs; The MDGs as a tool for comprehensive local development in Albania; and The centrality of gender in achieving the MDGs.