

**Informal Summary  
High-Level Segment  
of the Economic and Social Council in 2007**

**General debate on the theme of the Annual Ministerial Review: “Strengthening efforts to eradicate poverty and hunger, including through the global partnership for development”**

**Palais des Nations, Geneva, 4 July 2007**

**Key Messages**

- **Majority of countries welcomed the new functions of ECOSOC, namely the Annual Ministerial Review (AMR) and the Development Cooperation Forum (DCF), and the national voluntary presentations were much appreciated.**
- **Many countries welcomed the focus of the AMR on implementation.**
- **The general progress in poverty eradication was noted. At the same time, concern was expressed that the progress was uneven and in some parts of the world, in particular in the least developed countries and in sub-Saharan Africa as well as in the Asia Pacific region, the progress has been limited.**
- **Many countries stressed that global partnership was the right path for development and the international community, recipient and donor countries alike, should work together. In this regard, the development of benchmarks and indicators for MDG 8 was called for.**
- **Most countries stressed the need for a long-term, broad and comprehensive approach, including all sectors, to eradicate poverty and the importance of making conscious effort towards linking growth and poverty, or towards making growth “pro-poor”, was generally recognized.**
- **Many countries highlighted that the adverse effects of climate change posed a threat to development strategies and urged countries to work on the post-Kyoto multilateral regime.**

During the general debate on the theme of the Annual Ministerial Review, fifty-one delegations made statements. In addition, one observer, four UN system organizations, three international organizations and 10 non-governmental organizations also participated in the debate.

Majority of the countries welcomed the new functions of ECOSOC, namely the Annual Ministerial Review (AMR) and the Development Cooperation Forum (DCF). In particular, many of them expressed their appreciation for the national voluntary presentations, which had taken place the previous day and commended the six countries (Bangladesh, Barbados, Cape Verde, Cambodia, Ethiopia and Ghana) for their presentations. **Pakistan, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, and the United Kingdom** encouraged the developed countries to make presentations in the future AMR.

Many countries welcomed the reports submitted by the Secretary-General to this session. **Pakistan, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China**, welcomed AMR's focus on implementation as this had been the Achilles Heel of the development agenda. In reviewing the implementation, many countries noted the general progress in poverty eradication, but pointed out that the progress was uneven and in some parts of the world, in particular in the least developed countries and in sub-Saharan Africa, the progress has been limited. **New Zealand, on behalf of CANZ**, noted that the Asia Pacific region also remained a particularly poor region. **Pakistan, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China**, expressed the concern that about 40 per cent of developing countries were considered off-track to achieve MDG 1. He noted that as presentations of the previous day demonstrated, developing countries were making their efforts to implement their part of the commitments to devise national development strategies, to improve governance and to create a macroeconomic climate conducive for growth, trade and investment. A number of countries also reaffirmed that the primary responsibility for development lied with countries themselves and reported their efforts in formulating national development strategies through a participatory process. At the same time, many countries called for the international community to honor its commitments to implement MDGs and IADGs.

Many countries stressed that global partnership was the right path for development and the international community, recipient and donor countries alike, should work together. **The Netherlands** reported that the country had prepared two public progress reports on its own efforts to help achieve the MDGs. It had also continued to contribute 0.8 per cent of its GNI as Official Development Assistance (ODA). **Portugal, on behalf of the European Union (EU)**, stressed the Group's commitment to support developing countries' efforts, including through the reduction of trade barriers and increases in ODA in a coherent way as underlined in the Monterrey Consensus. More specifically, a number of developed countries expressed their full commitment to reach the target of 0.7% of GNI or even higher for ODA by 2015, or increase their ODA. The **EU** and **Russia** underlined that any assistance must be tailored to the specific needs of the respective recipient countries. **Republic of Korea** expressed hope that the 2008 Follow-Up International Conference on Financing for Development would provide further momentum to reinvigorate efforts to achieve the target of financial commitments. The **EU** reported on some of its initiatives, including in areas, such as HIV/AIDS, education for all, agriculture in Africa and malnutrition in the Sahel region. **Japan** informed the Council that Japan will host the G8 summit and convene the Fourth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD IV) in 2008.

Some speakers raised the issue of predictability of development assistance, noting the unevenness of aid flows. It was further pointed out by many that increases in assistance were mainly in the form of debt relief and that net ODA had in fact declined. Many countries, therefore, called for new and additional resources. In this regard, **Pakistan, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China**, noted that specific benchmarks and targets had not been devised for MDG 8 (global partnership for development), and called on UNDESA, UNCTAD, UNDP together with IMF, the World Bank and WTO to elaborate such benchmarks/indicators in order to facilitate the monitoring of MDG 8. In addition, he highlighted the importance of transfer of technology and called for a fuller analysis on

the constraints imposed by TRIPS and other technology restraining regimes to be conducted by UNCTAD and UNDESA. Some speakers stated that systemic issues of global governance required greater attention and called for concrete measures for the improvement of voice and representation of developing countries in international financial institutions. It was further stated that the required reform of the IMF should ensure financial sustainability and access to financial assets.

Some countries stressed the importance of South-South and triangular cooperation and sharing of experience and expertise. They noted that, considering their higher level of capacity, research and technology, the South-South cooperation could include joint research and technology transfer. **Indonesia** noted that in follow up to the 2005 Jakarta Declaration on the MDGs, Indonesia has been working with other Asia-Pacific countries to develop a regional roadmap aimed at helping countries which have been falling behind in achievement of MDGs in the region.

**Portugal, on behalf of the EU**, reaffirmed the strong commitment of the Group to the MDGs. Most countries stressed that a long-term, broad and comprehensive approach, including all sectors, was needed to eradicate poverty. There was also a general recognition of the importance of making conscious effort towards linking growth and poverty, or towards making growth “pro-poor”. Many countries recognized the importance of socio-economic factors in eradicating poverty, including addressing equity. In this regard, some countries highlighted the importance of a fair distribution of income. Some speakers also pointed out the importance of investing in infrastructure. **Mexico** and **Indonesia** reported on their efforts to promote better nutrition and education as well as to provide better access to credit for vulnerable groups to address inequality. Some countries highlighted the need for further empowerment of women, while others stressed the importance of empowering the youth and the elderly. Many countries underlined the importance of good governance and the fight against corruption. Some countries stressed the importance of peace and political stability.

The representative of **the United States of America (US)** called upon the international community to create a culture of opportunities for all. He emphasized that key elements to achieve sustainable development were promoting inclusive democratic systems, ensuring individual personal ownership of development strategies; fighting corruption; enhancing attractiveness for public and private investment as well as liberalization of trade through the removal of trade barriers in order to achieve the necessary breakthrough for the Doha Round of trade negotiations.

A number of countries highlighted that the successful completion of the Doha Round of trade negotiations was essential, while some expressed doubts on the benefits to developing countries even if the Round was concluded successfully. **Kazakhstan** stressed that landlocked developing countries needed to be integrated into the global trading system. In this regard, **Paraguay** expressed its concern on the proliferation of rules and instruments created by regional trade agreement, which could pose barriers and potentially undermine the Doha Round.

Many countries highlighted the role of the Paris Declaration on aid harmonization and aid effectiveness. In this regard, the **EU** reported that the Ministers of the EU Member States have considered the application of a voluntary Code of Conduct on Division of Labour in Development Policy and that there was an understanding that increased complementarities and a better division of labor among donors would strengthen the ownership of action by partner countries. The chairperson of the Committee for Development Policy (CDP) reported on the proposal of the Committee that the fulfillment of the commitments made with regard to the Paris Declaration could be monitored through the DCF.

Many countries highlighted that the adverse effects of climate change posed a threat to development strategies and urged countries to work on the post-Kyoto multilateral regime. They also called for immediate global action on climate change as well as related concerns, such as land degradation, desertification and agricultural productivity.

On a related matter, **France** noted that it was promoting a new form of international governance, including through the promotion of the establishment of a United Nations environment organization.

**New Zealand, on behalf of CANZ** stated that there was a looming crisis in food importing countries, in particular in sub-Saharan Africa. He pointed out that rapid urbanization and resultant stresses on health, water and sanitation as well as the current increase in commodity prices are posing pressure on the poor household and the governments' efforts in ensuring affordable food. He stated that there was a compelling need to improve collaboration and effectiveness of the key multilateral food and agriculture agencies in support of nationally led strategies for food security. Some countries stressed the importance of the agricultural sector and the negative impact of its neglect could have on the efforts to eradicate poverty. Many countries also stressed the importance of rural development. On the other hand, some speakers addressed the problem of rapid urbanization and its debilitating effects on development.

A number of countries underlined that productive employment and decent work for all were essential for the success of efforts towards eradicating poverty. Strategies in that area should aim at promoting job creation and growth in those sectors where poverty is much more visible. Some countries noted that FDI can play a vital role in job creation. **Switzerland** stressed that those investments have to be in line with the Monterrey Consensus, urging investors to also consider social and environmental impacts of their activities. Furthermore, domestic resources should be mobilized for development.

A number of countries noted that new innovative sources of finance, such as microfinance, were very helpful towards the effort for poverty eradication. This is especially crucial for setting up small and medium enterprises by people from rural areas and for women. **Madagascar** emphasized the need for public-private alliances and the role that they have to play in achieving the MDGs. It reported on the launch of the Public-Private Alliance Foundation, a non-profit organization to assist in realization of

the objectives of the UN Public-Private Alliance for Rural Development, for which Madagascar and the Dominican Republic were pilot countries.

Many countries stressed the role of education in strengthening the efforts towards eradicating poverty. The **EU**, in particular, expressed its concern that at the current rate of progress, at least 75 countries, mainly in sub-Saharan Africa, will not achieve universal primary education by 2015 as contained in MDG 2. The essential role of life-long learning and adult education was also pointed out by some.

A number of countries emphasized the need for improved health systems for developing countries. It was recognized that comprehensive HIV/AIDS prevention programmes, treatment, care and support were of paramount importance for eradication of poverty. Some countries underlined the equal urgency to fight other infectious diseases, such as malaria and tuberculosis. With regard to infectious diseases, a number of countries expressed their intention to participate or increase contribution to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis. Other countries also pointed out the issue of ageing and its impacts on poverty eradication efforts.

A number of countries also highlighted that middle-income countries needed further support, pointing out that these countries account for around 40 per cent of people living on two dollars a day. With their higher capacity, these countries have also decided to aim for goals beyond MDGs.

Some countries called for stronger role of the UN system. Norway welcomed the work of the High-level Panel on System-wide Coherence. As part of its efforts to contribute to greater coherence, **Albania** had offered to be among the first countries to implement the One UN pilot project, leading to a more effective and efficient delivery of programmes and projects.

The **Philippines** noted the role of the civil society in monitoring and exercising effective checks on government officials in order to minimize the bureaucratic controls exercised by this sector. He further pointed out the role of the private sector as a creator of jobs and livelihood and stated that the Government is responsible for a business-friendly environment. **Israel** informed the Council that a core component its development activities was the formation of international partnerships with like-minded governments and members of civil society in a number of areas.

As demonstrated by the number of countries which made statements, there was high enthusiasm expressed to the Annual Ministerial Review. With national presentations preceding and the thematic debate on a similar topic also having taken place, the general debate on the theme of the AMR was much focused and many countries presented their own experiences in the implementation efforts towards achieving the MDGs and IADGs, in particular MDGs 1 and 8, the theme of this year's AMR. The session of the general debate has shown its potential to become rich source of information.