



# MAURITIUS

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## OPENING STATEMENT

By

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Permanent Representative of the Republic  
of Mauritius to the United Nations  
Vice-President of the Economic and Social Council**

**At the  
12<sup>th</sup> Session of the Committee for Development Policy**

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New York**

*Please Check Against Delivery*

**Chairman of the Committee for Development Policy,  
Under-Secretary-General of the UNDESA,  
Distinguished Members of the CDP,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is a pleasure for me to address you at the opening of the CDP. Welcome to New York, especially the new members who are joining this Committee. You represent the brains trust for ECOSOC and the UN Member States look to this Committee as a reservoir of ideas and turn to the CDP for advice and recommendations. Historically the CDP has brought together very eminent individuals and I am glad this tradition continues. As you all know, our processes are strongly driven by political considerations and your ability to provide expert advice, representing the various dimensions of development, in a neutral and balanced way, is of great value to our deliberations.

Over the years, especially since the World Summit in 2005, ECOSOC has seen very significant and positive transformation. This is my second year in the Bureau and I can see, even in these two years, the higher levels of interest in the work of ECOSOC. Sometimes ECOSOC is viewed in terms of its substantive session which is held for four weeks in summer. But ECOSOC is more. It is an entire system of subsidiary bodies, including the functional commissions which mostly meet in the beginning of the year. It is also linked to the work of the General Assembly later in the fall. Your advice thus impacts on all these three tiers of intergovernmental discussions on economic, social, environmental and related issues.

The crown jewels of the substantive meeting of ECOSOC is during the high level segment. The Annual Ministerial Meeting and the Development Cooperation Forum, have moved from strength to strength since 2005. These connect very well to the broader discussions on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Development Cooperation Forum. This year we will focus on gender equality and empowerment (AMR) and in understanding trends in development cooperation, particularly on aid quantity and quality (DCF).

Your work especially this year, as reflected in the agenda, will have a special significance for ECOSOC. Gender equality and empowerment is at the heart of the realization of the MDGs. ECOSOC will link the outcome of the Commission on the Status of Women to the MDG Summit. We need your advice on how we can move a more or less flat trajectory of progress into a virtuous cycle of change. What are the practical things we can do and how can we capture these in the outcome of both ECOSOC and the MDG Summit?

Women play a central role in development and in protecting livelihoods. Thus, empowering women and closing the gender gaps are priorities if we wish to find workable solutions to today's challenges. Yet, gender dimensions are absent in much of economic and social policy decision-making. So, how can we ensure addressing gender inequality becomes a greater priority? More importantly, what concrete actions are needed to accelerate progress in empowering women worldwide? How can we overcome the hurdles that have hampered making sufficient progress in the recent past? I look forward to your answers to these questions and to your advice on the actions we should consider to effectively advance gender equality and women's empowerment.

I am also pleased to see that the Committee will be contributing to our discussions at the Development Cooperation Forum. As you know, the main focus of the DCF this year is on the promotion of greater coherence among various development partners and policies. Climate change financing will be a critical topic this year as efforts are underway to make on one of the concrete outcomes of the Copenhagen Conference: mobilizing more resources for developing countries to finance actions towards climate change mitigation and adaptation. Your views on how this should be embedded in the broader development cooperation architecture and how we can escape further fragmentation of existing funding mechanisms will be very timely. These policies are being shaped now and may be defining for decades to come. We cannot afford to get this wrong.

The Council is also looking forward to your independent views on the key issues at stake in the upcoming Five-year High Level Review of the Implementation of the Mauritius Plan of Action for the sustainable development of SIDS, in September of this year and the 4<sup>th</sup> UN Conference on LDCs in 2011.

The LDCs and the SIDS are by their nature highly vulnerable to shocks from the global economy. The question is whether, as an international community, we provide enough support to help them build resilience to cope better with shocks and achieve more sustainable development. The Small Island Developing States are especially vulnerable to environmental shocks, particularly those induced by climate change. How can the international community reflect the required flexibility of these largely poor countries, in meeting the twin blows of economic and ecological uncertainties? Your recommendations in this regard will be most valuable.

I would like to conclude by reflecting on ways in which the interface between the Council and your work can be strengthened. Currently we have interaction through the respective bureaux, you hold an open briefing in New York and CDP members brief ECOSOC during the substantive session. But I

would like to see much more. We need a stronger reflection of your analytical work to complement the analysis captured in the reports from the Secretariat. We need your stronger presence in the policy process when member states grapple with many conceptual issues and most important we need your forward looking advice on new and emerging issues. Your guidance on many of the upstream issues will help the Council, indeed the UN, to be able to respond meaningfully to the multiple problems that confront us.

I thank you for your engagement and I look forward to your report and recommendations. I wish you all success at the 12<sup>th</sup> session of the Committee for Development Policy.

Finally Mr. Chairman, I should like to seize this opportunity to thank you and commend you on behalf of the Bureau of the ECOSOC and the Council on the excellent and valuable work that you have accomplished during your tenure as Chairman of the CDP. I wish you well.

Thank you.