

**Informal Summary of the General Debate  
of the Coordination Segment of the Economic and Social Council**

**“The role of the UN system in promoting full and productive employment and decent work for all and Integrated” and “Coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the major UN conferences and summits”**

**Palais des Nations, Geneva, 9 July 2007**

**I. The role of the UN system in promoting full and productive employment and decent work for all**

**Key messages:**

- **The development of a toolkit was welcomed and a regular update on its implementation was requested**
- **Efforts of UN system organizations to cooperate in mainstreaming employment and decent work in the UN system were welcomed**
- **The importance and potential of regional initiatives as well as the importance of the global partnership in promoting employment was highlighted**
- **Countries reported on national initiatives taken to mainstream employment and decent work**

Delegations welcomed the Secretary-General’s report and commended the United Nations for its work in follow-up to the 2006 Ministerial Declaration. **Chile** said that it agreed with the report’s conclusion. The ILO toolkit and efforts to mainstream employment in the UN system’s work were welcomed. **Indonesia, Kenya and Colombia** said that they hoped that Member States will be updated regularly on the implementation of the toolkit.

Noting that ILO cannot mainstream employment and decent work by itself in the whole UN system, **Indonesia** said that the funds, programmes and agencies, regional commissions and international financial institutions should continue to mainstream full employment and decent work in their respective work. Against this background, **Switzerland** welcomed the strengthened cooperation between agencies to mainstream employment. **Kazakhstan** welcomed the launch of a two-year cycle on employment in the Commission on Social Development. **Switzerland** noted that ILO needed to improve its internal and external governance and focus its efforts on basic concerns: reinforced tripartisan and collective negotiation rights, policy, social protection and dialogue in the context of globalisation.

Several delegations highlighted the importance and potential of regional initiatives in the promotion of employment. **Kenya** emphasised that NEPAD and regional approaches provided an opportunity to develop strategic policy initiatives. **Portugal, on behalf of the European Union (EU)**, noted that the EU had refocused its Lisbon Strategy, which aims at fostering economic performance, on three major areas: investing

in knowledge and innovation; making Europe a more attractive place to work and invest; and creating more and better jobs. **Kazakhstan** supported the recommendation of the Secretary-General to strengthen the cooperation among the regional commissions and with other regional actors, focusing on employment and decent work.

Speakers stressed the importance of employment in national development efforts and in reaching the MDGs and called for mainstreaming of employment into national development strategies. **Pakistan, on behalf of G77 and China**, pointed out that employment and decent work hinge upon macroeconomic environment and called for coherent and integrated policies at national and international levels. **Portugal, on behalf of the EU**, emphasised that decent work can only be achieved when a range of economic, social and environmental policies designed to work coherently towards the same compatible goals. The **United States** noted that rapid economic growth alone would not create sufficient jobs and that governments needed to provide support to small and medium-sized enterprises and promote free trade and good governance. **UNESCO** stressed that education is a prerequisite to the right to work and underscored in particular the importance of vocational training. **Cuba** said that economic growth had only helped to prosper the rich and increased the gap between developed and developing countries and stated that policies based on human solidarity were needed.

Several countries reported on their national efforts to promote employment. **Chile** reported that it had been building a national development model based on equality, progress and social justice. **Kazakhstan** said that, with a growing economy, the government has been increasing social spending. Furthermore, **Kazakhstan** informed the Council that it had signed a Decent Work Country Programme for 2007-2009” with the ILO in 2006, and enacted a new labour code, effective from 1 June 2007, which aimed at considerably enhancing social guarantees for women in labour relations. **Brazil** signed a Memorandum of Understanding with ILO, which focused on four priorities: job creation, capacity-building, strengthening tripartite social dialogue, combating child labour. **Malawi** established a social protection technical committee at national level with senior official representation and is also developing its labour laws. **Malawi** further stated that it was developing the private sector through training in small-scale business management skills and micro-financing small businesses and in the rural areas. The social economic policy of **Belarus** is focused on the wellbeing of the whole labour force. **Iraq** said that with the ongoing violence, resources had to be devoted to security, with negative implications for the economic and political sectors, including employment.

With regard to an enabling international environment, **Pakistan, on behalf of G77 and China**, said that the developing countries had demonstrated dedication to implement their part of the commitments- to devise national development strategies, improve governance, and create a macro-economic climate conducive for growth, trade and investment. He continued to say that unfortunately their development partners had not demonstrated a similar readiness in implementing their part of the commitments whether in development assistance or financing, trade, technology and other areas of cooperation. He also emphasized that the United Nations system, particularly its funds, programmes and specialised agencies, as well as the financial institutions should keep

their part of the commitment and increase support to the efforts of the developing countries.

The **United States** said that assertion of the G77 that developing countries had fully lived up to their part of the commitment of the global partnership and that developed countries had not did not correspond to the facts and could not be backed up by data. He went on to say that citizen in his country had made efforts and real sacrifices and to have these treated as nothing by the G77 was frankly offensive.

**Pakistan, on behalf of G77 and China**, also proposed an increase in funding for the UN operational activities. **El Salvador** added that multilateral and bilateral aid to international development organisations should support the joint programmes of these organisations. **Portugal** informed the Council that it had offered to host the first ILO Forum on Decent Work for a Fair Globalisation in November 2007 in Lisbon. **Belarus** stated that the UN system's, including ILO's assistance should be unconditional and non discriminatory and should take into account the needs of individual countries. **Kenya** called upon the international donor community to provide support to African countries to harness the great potential of hydro-electric energy, essential to development efforts, in particular for the establishment of enterprises.

**Pakistan** called for enhanced support for capacity-building of developing countries in human resources development to enable developing countries to better exploit the potential of their young population. **Colombia** and **El Salvador** emphasised that capacity-building can help promote gender equality and support of young people in entering the labour market.

## **II. Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the major UN conferences and summits**

### **Key messages:**

- **The importance of an early adoption of a multi-year programme of work for the Annual Ministerial Review was stressed**
- **The need to revisit the format of the coordination segment was highlighted**
- **The need to improve the interaction of the Council with the international financial and trade institutions was emphasized**

**Pakistan, on behalf of G77 and China**, said that the newly launched Development Cooperation Forum (DCF) and the Annual Ministerial Review (AMR) under the strengthened ECOSOC should, *inter alia*, evolve to be a framework to assess the impact of policies of the UN agencies, funds and programmes, on economic growth and employment generation in developing countries. This mechanism should also serve to enhance the effectiveness and coherence of international development cooperation and its responsiveness to national development plans and strategies. The DCF should also promote exchange of information on best practices among the UN system entities and develop innovative approaches to development challenges. It should encourage UN

agencies to identify country specific employment policy options for consideration by member States, the Group noted.

**Portugal, on behalf of the EU**, said that it was looking forward to the discussion on the adaptation of work of ECOSOC. The EU emphasised to the adoption of multi-year programme of work for the AMR which should be attractive for Ministers and relevant for the follow-up of the Millennium Development Goals. The EU said that it was particularly interested in the strengthening of the dialogue with the wider United Nations system, and in that regard welcomed the increasingly interactive nature of the meetings during the high-level segment as well as the integration of all stakeholders into the work of the DCF. The EU also said that with regard to the strengthened collaboration between the larger UN family, it looked towards the Chief Executive Board for Coordination (CEB) as the foundation for this dialogue and invited them to further consider the integrated follow-up of conferences at their meeting. Noting that the AMR is now tasked with an overall mandate that includes the review of conference outcomes, the EU said that it may now be time to consider how to maximize the impact of the coordination segment, and that it sees value in that link between the high-level segment and the coordination segment being based on the theme of the AMR, as proposed in the report of the Secretary-General. The EU also recognised that the functional commissions had undertaken a review of the working methods and should revisit this on, as needed. The EU said that while it was keen to have the functional commissions' work to be in line with that of the Council, it was concerned that adding new themes might overburden their already busy schedules, and suggested more flexible arrangements. The EU noted that further efforts are required to improve the contribution of the regional commissions to the coordination segment. The EU welcomed that the WSIS follow-up was firmly on track.

The **United States** said that it did not agree that the goals and targets could only be achieved if they were pursued together and that they could also be pursued without the coordination by the United Nations. On the "One UN" Pilot projects the United States said that implementation should be monitored closely. With regard to the high-level meeting of ECOSOC with the Bretton Woods institutions, the World Trade Organization and UNCTAD, the United States agreed with the finding that the meetings were not productive, but rather than having more meetings as indicated in the report, he called for either reforming the meetings or eliminating them.

**Russia** said that it considered the conclusions and recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General would form a sufficient basis for work of the Council during its substantive session and the 62<sup>nd</sup> session of the General Assembly. The new functions will require adjustments in the coordination segment, whose main function in Russia's view is to translate the Ministerial Declaration into concrete follow-up action by the UN system. Russia proposed that the item on integrated follow-up be considered under the coordination segment and that all interested bodies, including the financial institutions could be included in this work. Russia also expressed its support for pragmatic and realistic reform in the humanitarian and environmental area. Russia did not agree with the report of the High-level Panel on System-wide Coherence that there was

not enough coherence in the UN system and noted that the “One UN” concept had not yet shown its effectiveness.