

7 July 2008

**2008 ECOSOC Substantive Session
Coordination Segment**

**Opening of the coordination segment on the theme:
“The role of the United Nations system in implementing the Ministerial Declaration
of the high-level segment of the 2007 substantive session of the Economic and Social
Council”**

**New York, 7 July 2008
3:00-3:30 pm**

**Introductory remarks by
H.E. Mr. Antonio Pedro Monteiro Lima
Vice-President of ECOSOC**

Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to open the 2008 coordination segment.

I would like to thank the Secretariat for providing us with two very useful and analytical reports on: (a) “The role of the United Nations system in implementing the Ministerial Declaration of the high-level segment of the 2007 substantive session of the Economic and Social Council”; and (b) on “The role of the Economic and Social Council in the integrated and coordinated implementation of the outcomes of and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits, in light of General Assembly resolutions 50/227, 52/12B 57/270 B, 60/265, and 61/16”, which also includes “The status of the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)”.

First, I would like to say a few words on the theme of this year’s coordination segment. The 2007 Ministerial Declaration – on “Strengthening the efforts to eradicate poverty and hunger, including through the global partnership for development” – represents an important step forward towards the implementation of the UN development agenda in general and MDG1 in particular. The Declaration underscores that achieving the goal of reducing poverty and hunger is a complex challenge that needs to be addressed from a broader development perspective that encompasses a broad range of policy areas.

In particular, the Declaration calls for urgent action on: rural and agricultural development; employment creation; enterprise development; sustainable development;

science and technology; trade; and financing for development, as key elements of a comprehensive pro-poor development strategy to achieve MDG 1 by 2015.

The UN system has an important role to play in promoting and supporting action in all of these areas. This year's coordination segment gives the Council an opportunity to assess the UN system's current role in all of these areas and to provide guidance on how to strengthen the UN system approach to support the realization of MDG1.

I look forward to the debate on this issue in the next few days.

As I mentioned earlier, the coordination segment will also focus on the role of the Economic and Social Council in the integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits, and on the status of the implementation of the WSIS.

The internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs, have increasingly become the framework for the work of the UN system. In their follow up to different elements of this agenda, the ECOSOC functional commissions have strived to highlight the linkages and synergies between various conferences goals and promote a comprehensive approach to economic and social development. The integrated and coordinated implementation of these goals fostered the idea of a comprehensive UN development agenda. The focus is now on its implementation, which requires promoting greater convergence of efforts to increase synergies and complementarities among the activities of all relevant actors.

The UN system has made important progress in advancing system-wide coordination at the substantive and operational level for the implementation of the UN development agenda. But there is a growing realization that in order to foster the implementation of this agenda, there is a need to develop a more comprehensive policy framework to guide the follow-up activities related to the different elements of this agenda. This, in turn, requires that the policy guidance emanating from the work of the functional commissions is taken into account in the formulation of the UN system programmes and operations supporting the UN development agenda.

The consideration of this agenda item in the coordination segment provides an opportunity for the Council to promote collaboration and synergy in the on-going policy work of its subsidiary bodies. It also provides an opportunity for the Council to identify ways to strengthen the link between the normative and policy work of its functional commissions and the programmatic and operational of the governing bodies of UN system agencies.

The debate on this issue should take place in the broader context of the ECOSOC new functions, namely, the Annual Ministerial Review and the Development Cooperation Forum and be closely linked to these functions. There is a generally shared hope that the Council will address this issue and consider innovative ways to promote implementation.

I now give the floor to Mr. Stelzer who will introduce the Secretary-General's report on the theme of the 2008 coordination segment. Mr. Stelzer, you have the floor.