



Draft Closing Statement ECOSOC Vice President

H.E. Mr. Desra Percaya, Permanent Representative of Indonesia to the United Nations

Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Preparatory Meeting

Montevideo, Uruguay

27 April 2012

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to use this opportunity to express again our special thanks to the Government of Uruguay for their gracious hospitality. This meeting also would not have been possible without the committed efforts of our colleagues at the International Labor Organization, as well as the Executive Secretary and her staff at the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean.

Our candid discussions today have produced a number of ideas. In July, the Government of Uruguay will present a summary report of the meeting highlights to Ministers as part of the 2012 Annual Ministerial Review of ECOSOC in New York.

I'll keep my comments brief, as the day is late and so much has already been said. While I will not attempt to capture every aspect of our discussions, allow me to share some of the main messages that I have been able to capture from our discussions and which I will take back to New York with me.

- Inequality is still one problem that affects the region. Even though inequality has been reduced between some populations, there are still significant gaps that

would need to be closed in order to achieve equitable development. This is especially problematic for traditionally disadvantaged groups including women, the youth, and the poor.

- There have been encouraging developments in addressing the inequality problem. Many countries of the region have increased their social spending significantly in recent years.
- Yet, caution needs to be taken in drawing conclusions about how effective social protection has been in addressing inequality. Evidence suggests that there is still much ground for further progress in the design of social protection programmes.
- The economic crisis affected the countries of the region in differing degrees. Nevertheless, in all countries, youth were the population most vulnerable to job dismissal and to declining quality of employment. This could have negative effects in the way in which young people perceive democratic institutions.
- Better education and training programmes could help improve the quality of employment. Public policies are needed that encourage youth to complete their education and job training and thus to improve their employability. However, it is also a priority to improve the working conditions of youth who are currently employed.
- Increased coverage and efficiency of social protection, as well as access to social dialogue, are indispensable for fostering inclusive economic growth.

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We will prepare a summary of the discussions taking place here, highlighting some of the main policy recommendations that have emerged.

This summary, together with summaries of the other four regional meetings, will feed into the Ministerial Declaration to be adopted at the High Level Segment of the Economic and Social Council in July.

Labor market considerations are also relevant to next year's Annual Ministerial Review, which will have science, technology, and innovation as its main theme.

In particular, we will examine the links between technology, innovation, and industrial sectors and its implications in areas including employment creation and sustainable development.

Distinguished guests,

ECOSOC's Annual Ministerial Review was established to advance a simple, yet powerful idea — that knowledge and experiences shared candidly and transparently are indispensable to successful, sustainable development. Today's Regional Meeting will contribute to this sharing of knowledge and to the design of strategies for ensuring sustained, inclusive growth and job creation.

Muchas gracias.