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ECOSOC News

Newsletter on the work of the United Nations Economic and Social Council

The 54-member Economic and Social Council serves as the central forum for discussing international economic and social issues, and for formulating policy recommendations addressed to Member States and to the United Nations. It makes or initiates studies and reports; makes recommendations on international economic, social, cultural, educational, health and related matters; and promotes respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms. Subsidiary bodies, commissions and committees of ECOSOC carry out its year-round work. ECOSOC strengthens cooperation within the United Nations system, coordinates the work of the specialized agencies and consults with non-governmental organizations. A substantive session of the Council is convened annually in July, and supplementary formal meetings as well as informal panels on topical issues are held throughout the year.

CONTENTS

ECOSOC 2006 Substantive Session (Special Edition)

A - Overview ...p 2

B - ECOSOC High-level Segment (3 - 5 July 2006)

- Keynote Addresses on the theme “Working out of Poverty” (3 July 2006) ...p 2
- Policy Dialogue on current developments in the world economy and international economic cooperation (3 July 2006) ...p 5
- ECOSOC roundtables on the theme of the High-level Segment (4 -5 July 2006) ...p 6
- General Debate (4 - 5 July 2006) ...p 7

C - Side Events: Informal Ministerial Roundtables on Annual Ministerial Review and Development Cooperation Forum (3 July 2006) ...p 8

D - Dialogue with the Executive Secretaries of the Regional Commissions (6 July 2006)..p 11

E - ECOSOC Coordination Segment (6-10 July 2006) ...p 12

F - ECOSOC Operational Activities Segment (11-13 July 2006) ...p 14

G - ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment (14-19 July 2006) ...p 15

H - ECOSOC General Segment (19-27 July 2006) ...p 17

I - NGO Contributions to the theme of the High-level Segment of ECOSOC ...p 20

The Members of the Bureau of ECOSOC (2006)

President of ECOSOC:

H. E. Ambassador Ali Hachani (Tunisia)

Vice-Presidents of ECOSOC:

H. E. Ambassador Léo Mérorès (Haïti)

H. E. Ambassador Hjálmar W. Hannesson (Iceland)

H. E. Ambassador Mr. Dalius Čekuolis (Lithuania)

H. E. Ambassador Prasad Kariyawasam (Sri Lanka)



Opening of the 2006 Substantive Session of ECOSOC, 3 July 2006, Geneva

ECOSOC 2006 Substantive Session

A - Overview

The **Economic and Social Council** held its 2006 Substantive Session on 3 -28 July 2006 in Geneva.

During its three-day **High-level Segment** which started the session, the issues of full and productive employment and decent work, and its impact on the sustainable development were discussed. A **Ministerial Declaration** was adopted which identified a number of concrete steps for further implementation of the 2005 World Summit to make full and productive employment and decent work a central objective of national and international policies. The Council also held informal discussions on the Annual Ministerial Review and the Development Cooperation Forum, two new functions that the Council will undertake starting 2007.

In the **Coordination Segment**, participants reviewed the current approaches to economic development and how to translate economic growth into effective social development, including the eradication of hunger and poverty. A special event on **Avian Influenza** was also held, which called for proactive actions in forging more coherent responses to emergencies and crises that require a comprehensive and timely response.

The session continued with the **Operational Activities Segment**, which discussed the role of United Nations development cooperation, in particular the issues of funding, the need

for strengthening South-South cooperation programmes and coherent and effective policy recommendations.

Participants discussed the need for implementation of improved humanitarian responses at all levels during the **Humanitarian Affairs Segment**, including issues related to the transition from relief to development, risk reduction strategies in the recovery process, gender-based violence in humanitarian emergencies, and chronically under-funded emergencies.

During the **General Segment**, the Council discussed, inter alia, the implementation of and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits, the ECOSOC Ad Hoc Advisory Groups (Guinea-Bissau, Burundi and Haiti), financing for poverty eradication in LDCs, follow-up to the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), as well as other thematic issues.

For more information, please visit the internet page of the **United Nations News, Press Releases and Meeting Summaries** of the 2006 ECOSOC Substantive Session. (<http://www.un.org/docs/ecosoc/meetings/2006/newsandpress.html>)

B - ECOSOC High-level Segment (3-5 July 2006)

Keynote Addresses on the theme “Working out of Poverty” (3 July 2006)

The High-level Segment began on Monday, 3 July 2006, signaling the start of the

2006 ECOSOC substantive session in Geneva. The event opened with the addresses of the President of the Council and the Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations.

...Continued on page 3

...Continued from page 2

Several dignitaries delivered keynote statements on the theme of “Working out of Poverty.”

In his opening statement, H.E. Mr. Ali Hachani, President of ECOSOC, highlighted the role of ECOSOC in advancing integration and coordination in international economic and social development. He emphasized the importance of partnerships in reducing poverty and ensuring global stability, particularly partnerships between the United Nations system organizations and Member States.



Mr. Mark Malloch Brown, Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations, speaking at the opening of the High-level Segment of ECOSOC.

Mr. Mark Malloch Brown, Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations, discussed development as a central pillar of the United Nations system and the role of ECOSOC as the United Nations principal body for coordinating and advancing development policies. He noted that:

- The Millennium Development Goals present an opportunity for ECOSOC to rally around a concrete set of clear, universally acclaimed and achievable targets;
- As a principal organ, the Economic and Social Council has a chance to play a more pivotal role in the daily lives of ordinary people everywhere;

- The Council must, as the pending General Assembly resolution envisages, seek to become an intergovernmental lobby for the Millennium Development Goals and the other conference goals;
- ECOSOC should be the political and policy-level global forum for tracking progress towards the Millennium Development Goals. A place where ministers commit and are held accountable for action on those commitments.

The Prime Ministers of Pakistan, Norway and Mozambique, the Minister of Labour and Youth Employment of Tunisia, and the Director-General of the International Labour Organization presented a series of keynote statements.

Speakers welcomed the conference as an opportunity to link development policies and employment. They recognized that the **fight against poverty and the promotion of better standards of living** are major challenges facing the world today against the background of the growing imbalance in trade and income distribution. Pointing out that economic growth does not necessarily translate into extended job creation, they addressed the need for coordinated efforts at international level in order to deal with these undesired outcomes of globalisation and to successfully achieve MDGs by 2015.

The participants also reiterated the pivotal role **employment** plays not only in bridging the income gap between the rich and the poor, but also in promoting human rights and security through enhanced social inclusiveness. It was also noted that combating **gender inequality** in job market should be placed on the top of the agenda, given that empowering women and providing equal opportunity is strongly linked to economic empowerment.

Some speakers also underscored the **responsibility of the United Nations**, working as a liaison connecting the international community and developing countries so as to facilitate coordinated efforts and help managing the effective use of resources in this endeavor.

...Continued on page 4

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The following are summaries of the keynote addresses.

H.E. Mr. Shaukat Aziz, Prime Minister of Pakistan, noted the United Nations's vision of ensuring higher standards of living through sustainable development. He cited critical aspects of the current social and economic environment, among them: heightened global integration, renewed focus on security, and growing imbalances in both trade and income distribution. In an effort to develop feasible solutions, he called for overarching reforms to address the challenges and opportunities globalization presents. Peace and stability were highlighted as essential elements for growth and development, as were women's empowerment and entrepreneurial incentives. Mr. Aziz discussed eight elements of the framework for "working out of poverty": homegrown reforms and absorptive capacity, improved investment climate and enhanced private sector action, non-dependency-creating aid, trade improvements, strengthened partnerships with the developed world, higher skill, technology and productivity levels, direct gains for citizens, and greater institutional and governmental leadership.

H.E. Mr. Jens Stoltenberg, Prime Minister of Norway, underscored the successful development of the welfare state in Norway and its implications for other global models. Worker protection, social security and higher taxes have given competitive advantage to the country, and allowed for a successful balance between the state and the market. The gains which Norway has achieved were largely attributed to the efforts made to empower women, provide equal opportunities, and develop better health care. With respect to female employment, Mr. Stoltenberg detailed the intricacies of the systemic changes which have propelled Norway from having one of the lowest to one of the highest rates of female participation in the work force. Among these he noted were improving rules surrounding maternity leave and increasing the number of day care centers and kindergartens. Immunization is the most cost-effective way to reduce child mortality, thus Norway will contribute \$1 billion dollars towards vaccines and immunization through the

year 2015. Commending the United Nations for its work as both a facilitator and an agent for development, Mr. Stoltenberg nevertheless called for reform in order to redirect financial inflows away from bureaucratic costs and towards field-based projects.

H.E. Mrs. Luisa Dias Diogo, Prime Minister of Mozambique, called for a tripartite international agenda, assigning equal weight to development, security and human rights. Partnership among Member States, UN agencies and civil society members is essential for the realization of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In Africa, the agricultural sector accounts for the greatest number of those employed, despite rising unemployment for vulnerable groups such as women and youth. To effectively address the issue of falling income and rising poverty levels, a coordinated effort must be made, whereby gender equality and social inclusiveness are increased. Employment is pivotal in the effort to achieve the internationally agreed-upon MDGs. With respect to progress in this area, Mrs. Diogo identified number of challenges, including, (i) the definition of employment in the context of developing countries, (ii) how data collection on employment links to population censuses and household surveys, (iii) how to define informal sector and the family sector in the context of self-employment.

H.E. Mr. Chadli Laroussi, Minister of Labour and Youth Employment of Tunisia, stated that the current major challenge facing the international community is that of increasing employment to effectively combat poverty. The Millennium Summit developed the framework within which a coordinated effort must take place. If the MDGs are to be successfully achieved by 2015, a realistic long-term strategy must be created which will further expand job creation while enhancing decent productive work. International financial assistance ought to surpass 0.7% of GDP in developed countries. In Tunisia in the past decade, growth was listed at 5% with a reduction of the percentage of the population living in poverty to 4%. Unfettered growth does not

...Continued on page 5

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necessarily translate to lower levels of unemployment. Unemployment is based on the quality of growth, specifically within the knowledge-based and the communications sectors. With the UN acting as the liaison between the international community and the developing world, greater cooperation is to be anticipated among various members of the global economy.

Mr. Juan Somavia, Director-General of the International Labour Organization (ILO), welcomed the conference as an opportunity to link development policies to the decent work agenda. The theme of “working out of poverty” is the key to realizing the MDGs and addressing the global jobs crisis. He cited six areas in which to focus effort:

- First, value work;
- Second, acknowledge the political urgency to act;
- Third, the diversity of work is almost infinite, but all countries have decent work challenges;
- Fourth, we need much better policies to promote local and community development by expanding local markets and capacities;
- Fifth, at the same time, the policy environment must increasingly be attuned to the way in which global markets are changing; and
- Sixth, we need much greater cooperation among international organizations of the multilateral system.

For the ILO to effectively fulfill its role as the world’s “decent work agency” these areas must be carefully examined and appropriate solutions must be devised.

For complete statements, please visit <http://www.un.org/docs/ecosoc/meetings/2006/hls2006/statements.shtml>

Policy Dialogue on current developments in the world economy and international economic cooperation (3 July 2006)

The High-level Policy Dialogue on current developments in the world economy and international economic cooperation was held on 3 July 2006, following the keynote addresses at the opening event of the 2006 ECOSOC substantive session in Geneva.



Mr. José Antonio Ocampo, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations, speaking at the High-Level Policy Dialogue.

Moderated by Mr. José Antonio Ocampo, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations, the discussion provided an opportunity to review current progress and challenges in the global economy and to identify issues that need to be addressed through international economic cooperation. Representatives from the United Nations system, as well as other international economic development institutions, participated as panelists in the discussion, including representatives of United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the United Nations Regional Commissions, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Trade Organization.

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All speakers recognized the irrefutable **improvement in global economy** during the recent years. They drew attention to the positive trend of current economic growth. They also noted that there had been a convergence of growth rates of GDP per capita across the globe, with developing countries generally generating higher rates than developed countries, and that the upswing of the world economy had brought about major improvement in the living standards and the employment situation of millions of people in developing countries.

However, the panelists also stressed that the current improvement gave rise to caution with regard to the possible effect of **global trade imbalance** and rise in volatility in the global economy. The World Economic and Social Survey 2006, provided as the background document for the event, describes a progress of dual divergence in the global economy: growing income gap between the developing and developed countries, paralleled by a process of growth divergence among developing countries. Panelists pointed out that the **improvements have not been uniform** and certain Least Developed Countries (LDCs), particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa, have been lagging behind, having not fully benefited from the liberalization of their trade policies. With regard to the **volatility**, speakers viewed the global economy still vulnerable to risks from outside such as volatile oil prices and the spread of avian influenza.

In order to achieve a more harmonious balance, there must be **macroeconomic policy coordination**. The asymmetries which exist between trade arrangements and monetary/financial arrangements must be corrected; the unregulated nature of the latter creates negative spillover effects which must be corrected through strengthening of international institutions.

Stating the urgent **need for a successful conclusion of the current Doha Development Round**, many speakers emphasized that the trade agreement offers unprecedented opportunity for trade reform, a key to sustaining the current upward economic trend.

Other strategies to promote developing economies were also introduced. Panelists called for a **multilateral consultative mechanism** which aims to analyze global and regional issues for better results. This consensus-building framework provides, through multilateral action, more open space for regional cooperation, and helps developing countries to fully incorporate projects and build ownership. At the national level, it was noted important to diversify production structure in order to bring about robust growth, to promote result-oriented development agenda, and to develop a linkage between trade and development aid so as to achieve proper balance.

For more information, please visit <http://www.un.org/docs/ecosoc/meetings/2006/hls2006/documents/Edited%202006%20Economic%20and%20Social%20Council.pdf>

ECOSOC Roundtables on the theme of the High-level Segment (4- 5 July 2006)

A series of roundtables on the theme of the High-level Segment of ECOSOC were organized on 4-5 July 2006, in collaboration with UN agencies, funds and programmes, United Nations Regional Commissions, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the International Land Coalition (ILC).

Seven Ministerial roundtable breakfasts took place on 4-5 July 2006. The topics discussed at the breakfasts included:

- “Decent Work and International Development Cooperation” (hosted by ILO);
- “Youth Employment for the LDCs” (hosted by UNIDO);
- “Fighting Urban Poverty: Enhancing the Productive Capacity of the Urban Poor” (hosted by UN-HABITAT);
- “Migrant workers remittances in Africa and the LDCs: a new development finance?” (hosted by UN-OHRLS/OSAA);
- “Employment creation and poverty reduction: The role of ICTs” (hosted by ILO and DESA);

...Continued on page 7

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- “Expanding decent rural work opportunities: What role can secure land rights play?” (hosted by the International Land Coalition); and
- “Gender Dimensions of Labour Migration” (hosted by the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women/DESA, IOM and UNFPA).

Simultaneous High-level roundtable dialogues were organized on 5 July 2006. They focused on:

- Creating decent work opportunities with productivity growth;
- Meeting the challenge of employment creation in Africa and the Least Developed Countries;
- Globalization and labour migration; and
- Innovation at work: national strategies to achieve gender equality in employment.

For more information, please visit

<http://www.un.org/docs/ecosoc/meetings/2006/hls2006/roundtables.shtml>

General Debate (4 - 5 July 2006)

The general debate of the High-level Segment for the 2006 Substantive Session of ECOSOC was held on 4 – 5 July 2006 in Geneva. Delegations concurred on the need to create an environment at the national and international levels conducive to generating full and productive employment and decent work for all. At the international level, issues including trade liberalisation, international migration and rights at work were addressed. At the domestic level, key issues such as employment, gender equality, role of the private sector and social dialogue were discussed.

It was underscored that achieving full **employment** and decent work should be at the centre of development policy discussions. Many delegations asserted the need for incorporating the ILO's Decent Work Programmes, Conventions and Pillars into national development policies, stressed that job creation, flexibility, efficiency and worker security should be

simultaneously addressed and that the gap between rich and poor had to be narrowed, and emphasized the dual challenge of creating new and productive jobs and improving the quality of existing jobs.

Participants also agreed that Governments should focus on mainstreaming labour market policies and measures targeted at **improving the quality of the labour force**. In this context, the international community must develop a coherent macroeconomic framework and national Governments should focus on strengthening institutions and capacity building in improving human capital.

The need of ensuring **gender equality** was also stressed. It was emphasized that institutional and legislative framework for the elimination of all forms of gender-based discrimination, as well as for the productive integration of women and youth into the labour force, should receive priority attention in the national agenda so as to promote social mobility and cohesion.

It was also emphasized that **rights at work** should be recognized and means to enhance the level of worker security be actively sought, gaining the right **balance between the flexibility and security**. Economic growth should be complemented by public policies which could create new quality jobs and enhance social inclusion. Most delegations were of the view that Governments have to deploy more efforts to combat the negative effects of the liberalization process particularly when the economy was passing through transition to market economy and labour market reforms become inevitable.

To this end, it was stressed that social consensus has to be achieved through **social dialogue**. One could not talk about decent work without also talking about decent employers, decent legislation and decent rights. Many aspects of employment security, flexible work, quality of work places and others fell within the competence of social partners, and therefore a common agenda and joint responsibility should be created.

...Continue on page 8

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Most delegations expressed concerns regarding **international migration** in the context of globalization. Several speakers specifically argued that migration leads to the loss of skilled workers by developing countries, as people are compelled to seek better jobs in the developed world. Others stated that migration must be seen as a positive factor in development and one delegation further stressed that studies show labour mobility can actually benefit both host countries and countries of origin. Finally, one participant stressed that while migration is generally viewed as beneficial for promoting fair globalization, illegal migration and human trafficking should be fought through prevention, prosecution and protection.

Many delegations stressed that **trade must be liberalised** in order to achieve the full employment and decent work goals and to bridge wage and employment gaps between developed and developing countries. A non-discriminatory, open and equitable multilateral trading system is essential in order to allow developing countries fair access to international markets. Many speakers voiced disappointment regarding the current lack of results at the Doha Round and urged a consensus to be quickly reached.

With regard to the possible role of the private sector, many delegations reiterated that Governments must support the growth of the private sector, particularly **micro enterprises**, and **small- and medium-sized businesses**. Commercial banks should be encouraged to lend to these enterprises, including in the agricultural and fishery sectors which concentrate a high

number of jobs in developing countries. The positive impact of micro-finance programmes on employment was also stressed.

Participants recognized the importance of the **rural sector** in developing economies. It was agreed that strategies aimed to boost employment, productivity and incomes in rural areas should be given a more prominent role. **Productivity growth in both on- and off-farm activities** were mentioned, taking into account the growth of off-farm employment that could stimulate demand so as to create virtuous cycle of productivity and employment growth. Speakers called for a scaling-up of resource flows for rural development in developing countries so that **investment in agricultural innovation** can be stimulated. It was pointed out that the success of employment efforts would depend in a large measure on the extent to which sufficient priority was given to agriculture and rural enterprise development, to the identification of appropriate pro-poor agricultural technologies, and to the reinforcement of rural member-based organizations.

Following the general discussion, the Council adopted a Ministerial Declaration on the theme of the 2006 High-level Segment.

For more information, please visit:

- The informal summary of the General Debate (<http://www.un.org/docs/ecosoc/meetings/2006/hls2006/documents/06%20HLS%20Gen%20Debate%20Summary%20Rev.pdf>); and
- The 2006 Ministerial Declaration (<http://www.un.org/docs/ecosoc/jump2ods.asp?symbol=E/2006/L.8>)

C - Side Events: Informal Ministerial Roundtables on the Annual Ministerial Review and Development Cooperation Forum (3 July 2006)

The 2005 World Summit reaffirmed the fundamental role of the United Nations in the promotion of international cooperation for development. The Economic and Social Council, in particular, as a principal body for

coordination, policy review and policy dialogue and recommendations on issues of economic and social development, has a major role to play in promoting the implementation of the

...Continue on page 9

...Continued from page 8

internationally agreed development goals (IADGs), including the Millennium Development Goals, as well as improving aid effectiveness and impact.

Among the new functions assigned to ECOSOC by the 2005 World Summit is convening of an **Annual Ministerial Review (AMR)** and a biennial **Development Cooperation Forum (DCF)**. The AMR will provide a global forum for systematic review and monitoring of the implementation of the IADGs. The review should draw on the Functional and Regional Commissions of ECOSOC and other international organizations, including the Bretton Woods Institutions, the OECD/DAC, and regional development and integration mechanisms, such as NEPAD.

The DCF is aimed at reviewing trends in international development cooperation, including strategies, policies and financing, promoting greater coherence among the development activities of different development partners and strengthening the link between the normative and operational work of the United Nations. The Forum could play an important role in promoting greater impact of international development cooperation pursued by multilateral institutions, including OECD/DAC, the Bretton Woods institutions and the United Nations, as well as bilateral development agencies and South-South cooperation arrangements.

With the aim of initiating a focused dialogue among ECOSOC members and other interested stakeholders on the preparation for the first AMR and DCF, and as an input to the ongoing consultations of the General Assembly on ECOSOC reform, the Council organized on 3 July 2006 two high-level informal ministerial roundtables on these new functions.

The AMR roundtable was chaired by H.E. Mr. Ali Hachani, President of ECOSOC and moderated by Mr. José Antonio Ocampo, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs. The panellists in the roundtable were: H.E. Mr. Keat Chhon, Minister of Finance and Economy, Cambodia;

H.E. Mr. Mekonnen Manyazewal, State Minister for Finance and Economic Development, Ethiopia; Hon. Clyde Mascoll, Minister of State, Ministry of Finance, Barbados; Mr. Richard Manning, Chair OECD/DAC; Mr. Ian Goldin, Vice President World Bank; Mr. Kim Hak-Su, Executive Secretary of UNESCAP; Mr. Bruce Jenks, Assistant Administrator and Director, Bureau for Resources and Strategic Partnerships, UNDP.

The following key messages emerged from the discussion. A detailed summary of the event is available on the ECOSOC High-level Segment webpage at <http://www.un.org/docs/ecosoc/meetings/2006/hls2006/documents/SummAMRroundtable-Final.pdf>

- The Annual Ministerial Review constitutes an important step in revitalizing the development work of the UN system and an opportunity to fully restore ECOSOC's charter role as a body of policy coordination and coherence.
- There is a need to ensure that the AMR adds value by speeding-up and scaling-up implementation of the internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs.
- The AMR could serve as an important global platform for an exchange of lessons learned and examples of best practices on how to internalize the IADGs, including MDGs, into national development strategies and on making progress in the implementation.
- Through the AMR, the current "hard follow-up processes" of the MDGs should be expanded to encompass the whole range of internationally agreed development goals.
- Duplication should be avoided by building upon existing review mechanisms, in particular those of functional and regional commissions, as well as other international organizations, such as the Bretton Woods institutions and OECD/DAC.
- The AMR is not an event, but a process that involves review, assessment to the

...Continue on page 10

...Continued from page 9

follow-up. A close cooperation in this process with institutions carrying out reviews, in particular functional and regional commissions, are the key.

- A thorough preparation for the AMR is required and it should be started as early as possible.
- A cutting-edge report prepared by DESA, based on the latest and good quality data, will be critical in the success of the AMR. Such a report will demonstrate the added value of the AMR and will attract the attention of ministers as well as high-level civil society and private sector.
- Reviews are not conducted as an end in themselves. The true test for success of the AMR will be whether the AMRs will have a real impact on implementation.

The Development Cooperation Forum roundtable was chaired by H. E. Mr. Dalius Čekuolis, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Lithuania to the United Nations and Vice-President of the Economic and Social Council. The moderator was Mr. Richard Manning, Chair, OECD/DAC. The panellists in the roundtable were: H.E. Ms. Suhair Al-Ali, Minister of Planning and International Cooperation, Jordan; H.E. Ms. Annika Söder, State Secretary for Development Cooperation, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Sweden (Lead Discussant); H.E. Mr. Walter Fust, Ambassador and Director-General, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation; Mr. José Antonio Ocampo, Under-Secretary-General, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs; and Mr. Bruce Jenks, Assistant Administrator, and Director, Bureau for Resources and Strategic Partnerships, United Nations Development Programme.

The inter-active dialogue was organized around four key questions:

1. What are the major **challenges** affecting development cooperation?
2. What innovative **process** could the DCF apply to foster the participation of a wide range of stakeholders?

3. What would be the ideal **outcome** of the first DCF?
4. What could be the **vision** for development cooperation in the year 2015?

Dynamic discussions took place in the roundtable. Some of the key policy messages emerging from the roundtable dialogue are summarized below. The roundtable report is available on the ECOSOC website at <http://www.un.org/docs/ecosoc/meetings/2006/hls2006/outcome.shtml>

The Development Cooperation Forum could:

- Provide the first global platform where all development cooperation actors have an opportunity to engage in a dialogue on key policy issues affecting aid effectiveness and impact.
- Offer a unique opportunity to revitalize the work of the Economic and Social Council. The organization of the DCF (and the Annual Ministerial Review) could be used to modernize the format of future ECOSOC meetings and to reform the High-Level Segment, within the broader objective of revitalizing the work of the Council.
- Aim to result in a policy outcome of global significance. High quality analytical documentation and wide participation of stakeholders need to characterize the preparatory process for the DCF. The Council can facilitate the preparatory process by setting up effective institutional mechanisms to encourage the participation of all relevant stakeholders.
- Build effective collaborative arrangements with organizers of related fora, such as the Africa Partnership Forum, the OECD Global Forum on Development and the World Economic Forum, that influence global and regional policy making in key areas that intersect with international development cooperation.

...Continue on page 11

...Continued from page 10

- As a truly multilateral forum, promote global agreement on the definition and conceptual framework for “aid effectiveness”.
- Promote mutual accountability of both donors and recipient countries for living up to international commitments relating

to harmonization, coherence, up-scaling of resources, national ownership and development impact.

- Contribute to the debate on how to balance aid effectiveness criteria and needs-based considerations in the allocation of development assistance.

D - Dialogues with the Executive Secretaries of the Regional Commissions (6 July 2006)

The Economic and Social Council held a dialogue with the Executive Secretaries of the Regional Commissions on the regional dimension of creating an environment conducive to generating full and productive employment and decent work for all, and its impact on sustainable development. Participants delivered presentations on the sub-themes including:

- Jobless growth;
- Labour market and social protection;
- Labour market changes during the transition;
- Growth and employment for inclusive development in Africa; and
- The challenges and prospects of youth employment.

With regard to the **jobless growth**, the theme was particularly discussed in the context of the Asia and Pacific region. Pointing out the fact that there are still many countries in which employment had not kept pace with development, it was stressed that appropriate development strategies should include:

- The establishment of appropriate monetary and trade fundamentals;
- Improving the functioning of labour markets, skills development;
- Increased focus on labour-intensive sectors;
- Provision of incentives for capital-intensive investments while balancing this with job creation; and
- A role for Government in facilitating the private sector lead in job creation while protecting workers.

Participants also discussed the issue of **labour markets and social protection**, with specific emphasis on Latin America and the Caribbean. It was noted that the problem of the region with regard to employment was the sluggish economic growth that generated weak labour demand and led to deterioration of the main labour market indicators. Low growth had created high levels of unemployment, and there were low productivity and high levels of inequality. The need for a new social covenant to universalise social protection was emphasized in order to fight the current unemployment problem.

The theme on “**how unique labour market changes were in economies in transition**” was introduced to the participants for the Europe region. The difference in transition economies was that long-term and structural unemployment was much larger, and there was a greater geographical variation within countries.

Also addressed was the topic of **growth and employment for inclusive development in Africa**. Under the context of the African region, it was stressed that while there had been obvious economic growth during the past years, the impact had failed to reach the lives of most people, with poverty continuing to persist, and a very slight improvement in the number of people below the poverty line. Diagnosing the reasons as the characteristic of growth in

...Continue on page 12

...Continued from page 11

capital-intensive activities and the lack of trickle-down effect, it was reiterated that measures to promote employment which is central to inclusive development should be contemplated.

The Council also introduced the issue of **youth unemployment: challenges and prospects**, under the context of Western Asia. Taking into account the high number of young people between 15 and 24 comprising 20 per cent of the whole population, the topic is pertinent in the context of Western Asia. The path forward included the creation of an environment for raising productivity and boosting competitiveness, and

assisting in facilitating training and investment in training that was relevant to employment requirements.

During the interaction segment, participants raised issues including:

- Improved cooperation between regional actors in order to link activities and to support country-level activities;
- The effects of globalisation and its social dimension which required efforts that went beyond borders; and
- The need for Governments to ensure that social protection was given the right priority in their policies.

E - ECOSOC Coordination Segment (6 - 10 July 2006)

The 2006 Coordination Segment of ECOSOC was held on 6 -10 July 2006. Under the theme of “Sustained economic growth for social development including eradication of poverty and hunger,” the Council examined the linkages between economic growth and social development and the role of the United Nations system in promoting a better understanding of the linkages between the different dimensions of development.

The segment comprised a number of events including:

- The intergovernmental debate on the theme of the Coordination Segment;
- A panel discussion on “Policy approaches to achieve economic growth, poverty reduction and development: lessons learned, challenges and opportunities,”
- A panel of the Chairpersons of the Functional Commissions and other subsidiary bodies of ECOSOC, and
- A special event on Avian Influenza.

Most participants welcomed the report of the Secretary-General and the analysis and

recommendations contained therein. With regard to **national policies**, countries, both developing and developed, noted that it is now widely recognized that economic growth does not automatically translate into social development and eradication of poverty. The need for an enabling **international environment** was also acknowledged by both developing and developed countries. Delegations stressed that even though national leadership and ownership are crucial, efforts to eradicate poverty are closely linked to the international economic and trading environment.

Stating the importance of pro-poor growth in economic and social development, delegations noted the **centrality of employment** in this endeavor. Other elements necessary to ensure development were also mentioned, such as strengthening democracy, transparency and good governance; initiating dialogues to reach out to the most vulnerable groups and regions; and integrating gender perspectives into all policies.

Many delegations noted the pivotal **role of the United Nations** in implementing, in a coherent manner, a comprehensive development agenda that has emerged from the United

...Continue on page 13

...Continued from page 12

Nations conferences and summits. In particular, successful promotion of the work of ECOSOC as the principal body for coordination and implementation of the international development goal was stressed.

A **panel discussion** on “Policy approaches to achieve economic growth, poverty reduction and development” focused on the ongoing debate on lessons learned by various development partners and the developing countries. While recognizing the importance of economic growth in achieving poverty reduction, the panelists pointed out that investing in human capital, including the extension of primary education, should be given an equal emphasis. Country ownership and leadership in development projects are essential to integrate local knowledge system into policy development that would suite local circumstances. In the short term, trade-off between economic growth and social development might be inevitable. Country leadership should find the right balance between the two goals based on the country-specific context.

Economic growth is not an end in itself but a means to eradicate poverty. With regard to national policies, **education** was particularly addressed. Education usually entails opportunity cost for the poorest household, and policy interventions designed to alleviate this demand-side constraint should be developed. A **bottom-up approach** is needed to ensure that growth is pro-poor. Participants also noted that the challenge on the issue of trade and access of developing countries to the markets was to address the supply side of production constraints and take advantage of the existing markets, rather than to focus solely on the agricultural markets.

The segment also included the Panel discussion of the Chairpersons of the Functional Commissions. The Chairpersons and the representatives of the Commissions focused their interventions on how their respective Commissions are contributing to the implementation of the internationally agreed development goals and to the work of ECOSOC in promoting integrated and coordinated implementation.

Many participants were in agreement that their processes provide a platform for synergic and coordinated implementation and forums for global exchange of views in their respective areas. With regard to the new functions of the Council (Annual Ministerial Review and the Development Cooperation Forum), participants showed strong support and suggested that the themes be agreed upon well in advance so that Member States can contribute to AMR and DCF effectively. In conclusion, it was highlighted that the new functions of ECOSOC could help to bring together the respective expertise of the Functional Commissions and ensure that each of the Functional Commissions contribute to the development agenda as a whole.

It was agreed that the work of the ECOSOC machinery would be improved through:

- Strengthening synergies between the different follow-up processes;
- Applying lessons learnt;
- Coordinating thematic approaches;
- Increasing effectiveness; and
- Aiming to be result-oriented and to avoid duplication and overlap.

A **special event on “Avian Influenza: a global emergency”** (<http://www.un.org/docs/ecosoc/meetings/2006/AvianFlu/index.shtml>) was held as a part of the Council’s renewed effort to be proactive in forging more coherent responses to emergencies and crises that require a comprehensive and timely response. Speakers called for further efforts to put in place effective strategies and help developing countries, especially the poorest ones, prevent the further spread of Avian Flu and prepare for future pandemics.

The resolution adopted at the conclusion of the segment encouraged the UN system to address the social impact of development policies and the role it can play supporting national efforts to ensure that growth contributes to the realization of the development agenda.

For more information, please visit <http://www.un.org/docs/ecosoc/meetings/2006/cs2006/outcome.shtml>

...Continue on page 14

...Continued from page 13

F - ECOSOC Operational Activities Segment (11 - 13 July 2006)

The Economic and Social Council held its operational activities segment from 11 - 13 July 2006. Panel discussions, dialogues and general discussions were organized, providing a forum for discussing the operational activities of the United Nations development cooperation.

In the Interactive Panel on the **“Comprehensive review of trends and perspectives in funding for development cooperation,”** participants discussed:

- The issue of funding development cooperation;
- The need for strengthening South-South cooperation programmes; and
- The need for action to be taken by the organizations of the United Nations system to ensure coherence and effectiveness in their work at the country level to the benefit of recipient countries.

In the context of interactive dialogue following the panelists’ interventions, delegations raised such issues as:

- Implementation of funding commitments;
- Multi-funding frameworks for increasing core resources; and
- How to measure forms of assistance and the contribution made through South-South cooperation, among other things.

The Council held a **“Dialogue with the Executive Heads of the United Nations Funds and Programmes,”** which aimed at providing opportunities to address issues that affect coherence and coordination of the United Nations at the country level. The Executive Heads of the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Children’s Fund and the World Food Programme participated, and shared thoughts on how the United Nations development

programmes can enhance their effectiveness.

During the interactive dialogue, some participants referred to the need for competition among the agencies in order to improve efficiency and effectiveness, and the need for strengthening the authority of the Resident Coordinator that should be accompanied by increased accountability.

The segment continued on with another panel discussion with United Nations country team from Indonesia on the theme of **“the role of United Nations development cooperation in pursuit of employment creation and decent work: results, coherence and system-wide support through the United Nations Development Assistance Framework”**. Speakers first noted that following the tsunami, immediate priorities were to create labour opportunities for displaced persons particularly, and other affected populations, and to generate income through cash-for-work, focusing most on restoration of public facilities.

To cope with the problem of unemployment and underemployment, the United Nations supported the Government in the field of vocational training and making sure that occupational safety standards in industry were being applied. The importance of social cohesion and efforts to enhance social integrity during the time of disaster was also mentioned, with particular emphasis on inter-group dialogue and integration of displaced persons to the process of productive employment.

During the interactive dialogue, participants raised issues regarding activities aimed at promoting entrepreneurship, the role of agriculture in boosting employment, the link between unemployment and peace and security, and the need for greater coherence between sectoral and

...Continue on page 15

...Continued from page 14

macroeconomic policies.

On its third day of the segment, the Council held a **general discussion on the operational activities for development of the UN system, discussing the follow-up to policy recommendations of the General Assembly and the Council, in particular with regard to the implementation of the General Assembly resolution 59/250 on the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review (TCPR).**

During the debate, speakers stressed that more needed to be done in order to achieve significant increases in the effectiveness of development activities at the country level and to build on recent progress on the “one UN” plan at the country level. The fundamental characteristics of the operational activities of the United Nations development system should be, among other things, their universal voluntary and grant nature, their neutrality and multilateralism, which should guide the operational activities of the United Nations system in responding to the development needs of recipient countries in a flexible manner.

The Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review was an important part of a continuous cycle of reform, delegates said. It was a process

from which the United Nations system should constantly learn, and then implement, evaluate and revise its operations with a view to enhancing the effectiveness of aid and the capacity of partners. United Nations operational activities should be re-engineered, retooled, and reinvigorated. They should be supported by adequate funds, as this was essential to meet the huge challenges that humankind faced. Some specialized agencies manifested a growing interest for the implementation of the TCPR, which was a very positive signal indeed as to the possibility to eventually mobilize coherently all competences available within the United Nations system for the benefit of the developing countries.

For more information, please visit:

- The ECOSOC Operational Activities Segment (<http://www.un.org/docs/ecosoc/meetings/2006/oa2006/>);
- The draft resolution: Progress in the implementation of General Assembly resolution 59/250 on the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system-E/2006/L.28 (http://www.un.org/docs/ecosoc/meetings/2006/oa2006/E-2006-L28_edited.pdf)

G - ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment (14 - 19 July 2006)

The Economic and Social Council held its Humanitarian Affairs Segment of the 2006 ECOSOC Substantive session from 14 to 19 July 2006 on the theme, “Strengthening of the coordination of United Nations humanitarian assistance: implementing improved humanitarian response at all levels, including strengthening capacity, with particular attention to recent humanitarian emergencies including severe natural disasters”. Chaired by H.E. Mr. Prasad Kariyawasam, Vice-President of ECOSOC, the Segment comprised several panel discussions as well as general discussions on the theme of the Segment.

Two informal panel discussions were organized prior to the official start of the Segment on the morning of 14 July. During the first panel, which introduced the **transition from relief to development**, the panelists spoke about the recovery and reconstruction experiences in Indonesia, Guatemala, Pakistan and other countries. It was stressed that coordination, collaboration and more efficient support are needed to the countries in transition from relief to development, and predictable multi-year financing should be secured so that the transition evolves in a more productive manner.

...Continue on page 16

...Continued from page 15

In the second panel discussion on **risk reduction strategies in the recovery process**, panelists explained measures of reducing risks and steps taken in recovery efforts following natural disasters. Noting that risk reduction in recovery requires coordinated efforts by all actors, participants urged more effective community participation and Government efforts to incorporate disaster reduction into development policies.

During the opening session, a **general discussion on the humanitarian assistance** took place. Mr. Jan Egeland, the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, in his opening statement, pointed out that despite the positive turnaround of global economy in the recent years, the level of humanitarian funding remained inadequate, whereas the number and scale of humanitarian emergencies in the last year alone had presented significant challenges for the humanitarian community. Mr. Egeland reported on progress made in reforming the humanitarian system including the launch of the Central Emergency Response Fund, the implementation of the cluster leadership approach to improve response capacity and coordination and ongoing efforts to strengthen the humanitarian coordinator system. In the discussion that followed and continued during the whole period of the Humanitarian Affairs Segment, delegations expressed their support for the reform efforts and in some cases, made concrete recommendations for improving particular areas, such as needs assessments.

On 17 July, the Council held a panel discussion on the topic of **gender-based violence in humanitarian emergencies**. Participants were provided with an opportunity to reflect on this growing problem, and identify and discuss legal, judicial, medical and psychological solutions. Speakers noted that gender-based violence was particularly prevalent during humanitarian emergencies when civilian populations were especially vulnerable, and in some cases, used as a weapon of war that was not limited to the physical destruction, but also to affect morals and customs of the country. It was reiterated that it is the responsibility of all States to

put an end to impunity and to prosecute those responsible for sexual and other forms of violence and that it is imperative that countries in conflict or those emerging from conflict reviewed their laws and statutes in order to determine whether they were indeed responsive to present-day realities. During the interactive debate, delegations recalled that solutions were not found just in policy, but also through plans and programmes aimed at empowering women, increasing access to justice, the protection of victims, and the monitoring and collection of data and analyses. They also addressed the need for a multi-sectoral and coordinated response.

A **panel discussion on chronically under-funded emergencies** was also held. Panelists highlighted the existence of “silent emergencies” that suffered from a lack of media and donor attention. It was also noted that the failure to attract adequate international funding to meet even the most basic needs would inevitably lead to a vicious circle of assistance and the continuation of conflict. Some speakers mentioned an approach for a global analysis of needs, through which the consistency and impartiality in allocation of funding for humanitarian aid could be sought after. In the interactive dialogue following the panelists statements, delegations called for a more proactive role by United Nations in raising the profile of such emergencies, in improving needs assessments and analysis of funding gaps, and the need for increased national political will in delivering aid and assistance accountably to its citizens.

At the end of the Segment, ECOSOC adopted, by consensus, a **resolution on strengthening the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations**. In the resolution, the Council encourages Member States to continue their efforts in preparedness and disaster risk reduction, and encourages the international community and relevant United Nations entities, within their respective mandates, to support national efforts in this regard; requests the relevant organizations of the United Nations system to continue to engage systematically with relevant authorities

...Continue on page 17

...Continued from page 16

and organizations at the regional and national levels to support efforts to strengthen humanitarian response capacities at all levels, in particular through preparedness programmes, with a view to improving the overall adequacy of the deployment of resources; stresses that the United Nations system should make efforts to enhance

existing humanitarian capacities, knowledge and institutions; and encourages all States to strengthen their capacity to respond to natural and man-made disasters.

For more information, please visit <http://www.un.org/docs/ecosoc/meetings/2006/Humanitarianaffairs2006.html>

H - ECOSOC General Segment (19 - 27 July 2006)

The Economic and Social Council held its general segment on 19 -27 July. The Council adopted 46 resolutions and 40 decisions. Among them, the Council endorsed eleven resolutions and two decisions in the report of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice; seven resolutions in the report of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs; three resolutions in the report on regional cooperation in the economic, social and related fields; as well as resolutions on improving the United Nations informatics system, mainstreaming a gender perspective in the United Nations system, support to non-self-governing territories by the United Nations and human settlements, and follow-up to the World Summit on the Information Society and review of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development.

Afterwards, the Council also turned its attention to outstanding vacancies in the subsidiary bodies, for which candidatures had been received.

ECOSOC started the general discussion with the issue of the **implementation of and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits**, based on the updated report of the Secretary-General on the role of the Council in this field. The new functions of ECOSOC will provide an important opportunity to advance the integrated and coordinated follow-up of the major UN conferences and summits by providing specific and comprehensive content to the Council's role in coordination, policy review and policy dialogue to center around the implementation of the agreed development goals.

Speakers noted that the outcomes of the United Nations conferences and summits had provided a comprehensive development vision and underscored that efforts from both developed countries and the international community were needed to create enabling conditions for mobilizing resources and conducting coherent and effective policies.

The general discussion continued with issues concerning the review and coordination of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least-Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010. The Council reiterated its deep concern over the insufficient progress achieved in the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010 and stressed the need to address areas of weakness in its implementation. Speakers highlighted, among other things, that **the international community had a clear responsibility to support the efforts of the Least Developed Countries, which constituted the most vulnerable part of it**. It was also stressed that even though the outcomes of the conferences and summits might have laid foundation to promote development, it is important to accept that what is actually needed was **the full implementation of all of those commitments**. The international community should also fulfill the commitments and objectives of the Monterrey Consensus with respect to Official Development Assistance for the Least Developed Countries and to other financial measures.

...Continue on page 18

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The discussion on the theme of empowering the Least-Developed Countries further enriched through a panel discussion on the issue of **mobilizing resources and creating an enabling environment for poverty eradication in the least developed countries**, including implementation of the ECOSOC Ministerial Declaration adopted on this theme in 2004. Panelists expressed concerns on the relatively slow and patchy progress. They reiterated that it is high time to mobilize resources to help the poor and to combat the situation of poverty in the least developed countries and that real progress should be made with regard to the Brussels Programme of Action. During the interactive debate, participants stressed that productive capacity should be at the heart of development; there was a need to move towards a strategy that ensures more effective direction of resources; and the need for home-grown strategies.

The Council also discussed the issue of regional cooperation and the economic and social repercussion of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestine people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan. Participants noted that the socio-economic situation inside the occupied Palestinian territory was deteriorating. The Council adopted a **resolution on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan**. The resolution called for the lifting of the severe restrictions imposed on the Palestinian people; and demanded that Israel comply with the Protocol on Economic Relations between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization signed in Paris on 29 April 1994 and that it urgently transfer Palestinian tax revenues.

In other business concerning regional cooperation and coordination, the Council heard reports on:

- The implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples;

- International cooperation in the field of informatics;
- The information and communication technologies task force; and
- Reports of coordination bodies.

Acting under its agenda item on **economic and environmental questions**, the Council **adopted texts** emanating from:

- The Commission on Sustainable Development;
- The United Nations Forum on Forests which includes proclaiming 2011 as the International Year of Forests;
- The Global Ministerial Environment Forum of the United Nations Environment Programme;
- The Statistical Commission;
- The Commission on Population and Development; and
- The United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names.

The Council continued with its general discussion on economic and environmental questions, including the sub-items on sustainable development, human settlements, environment, forests, tobacco or health, statistics, population and development, public administration and development, international cooperation in tax matters, assistance to third States affected by the application of sanctions, and cartography.

The Council adopted resolutions in which **it extended the mandate of the Ad Hoc Advisory Groups on Haiti and Guinea-Bissau** and terminated the mandate of the Advisory Group on Burundi. It also adopted a resolution on the assessment of the Ad Hoc Advisory Groups of the Economic and Social Council on African countries emerging from conflict, in which it commended the Groups for promoting a comprehensive approach to political stability and economic and social development, based on an integrated approach to relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and development, and for fostering interaction and coordination among the United Nations system and other actors working in the countries concerned. The

...Continue on page 19

...Continued from page 18

Council also decided to bring the lessons learned from the Ad Hoc Advisory Groups to the attention of other UN bodies working on post-conflict and peacebuilding issues.

In other business, the Council adopted a series of resolutions and a decision pertaining to **social and human rights issues**. ECOSOC also endorsed a resolution on promoting youth employment in which it encouraged the international community to provide technical and capacity-building support to developing countries in supporting national development strategies, including poverty reduction strategy papers. In a resolution on a comprehensive and integral international convention to protect and promote the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities, the Council welcomed the progress achieved by the ad hoc committee in the negotiation of a draft convention at its seventh session.

In another resolution on the report of the Commission for Social Development on social dimensions of the New Partnership for Africa's Development, the Council, among other things, emphasized that economic development, social development and environmental protection were interdependent and mutually reinforcing components of sustainable development. In a resolution on the future organization and methods of work of the Commission for Social Development, the Council decided that the outcome of the Commission's review should be in the form of a Chairperson's summary, done in close coordination with other members of the Bureau, and that the policy segment should have a negotiated outcome with action-oriented strategies.

The Economic and Social Council also adopted a number of texts contained in the report of the **Commission on the Status of Women**, including resolutions on the situation of and assistance to Palestinian women and on the situation of women and girls in Afghanistan. Subsequently, the Council held a **general discussion** on mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system; women and development; and the advancement of women. Participants stressed that neither economic nor political empowerment would mean anything without the existence of

basic human security and that the physical, sexual, psychological and economic violence perpetrated against women on a daily basis throughout the world still constituted the most significant obstacle to gender equality.

The Council took note of the report of the Secretary-General on the Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and progress made in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly.

In a resolution on **smoke-free United Nations premises**, the Council recommended that the General Assembly, at its sixty-first session, consider the implementation of a complete ban on smoking at all United Nations indoor premises, at Headquarters as well as at regional and country offices throughout the United Nations system, and the implementation of a complete ban on sales of tobacco products at all United Nations premises.

ECOSOC also met to discuss the report of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and took action on recommended texts in the report which, among other things, approved giving consultative status to a series of non-governmental organizations and approved the Committee's rejection of other applications.

In a resolution (E/2006/L.37) entitled **follow-up to the World Summit on the Information Society and review of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development**, adopted without a vote as orally amended, the Council decided to carry out its responsibilities for overseeing the system wide follow-up to the Summit outcomes in the context of its annual consideration of the integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits in its coordination segment on the basis of a thematic approach and a multi-year programme. ECOSOC also decided that the Commission on Science and Technology for Development shall effectively assist the Council as

...Continue on page 20

...Continued from page 19

the focal point in the system-wide follow-up. The Council agreed that the system-wide follow-up shall have a strong development orientation. ECOSOC also decided that the Commission shall be strengthened in its substantive capacity and enhanced through effective and meaningful participation of Member States in its work. The Council finally decided that while using the multi-stakeholder approach effectively, the inter-governmental nature of the Commission should be preserved.

On 28 July 2006, The Council deferred consideration of remaining issues under its agenda item entitled non-governmental organizations to the resumed substantive session, as well as the consideration of the reports of the Committee for Development Policy and of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development to the same session.

For more information, please visit <http://www.un.org/docs/ecosoc/meetings/2006/g2006/>

I - NGO Contribution to the theme of the High-level Segment of ECOSOC

The Economic and Social Council held a series of preparatory meetings to address the important issue of employment which attracted not only a substantial number of ministers and high-level officials, but also representatives of civil society, in particular NGOs, in considerable numbers.

The first ECOSOC NGO Forum was held in two parts this year in New York. Part 1 took place on 6 April 2006 with participation from more than 100 NGOs. NGO Forum Part 2 was done through video conferencing on 20-21 April 2006 titled “VI Infopoverty World Conference” with a true partnership between NGOs and Member States as it was facilitated by the two pilot countries of the United Nations Public Private Alliance for Rural Development, the Republic of Madagascar and the Dominican Republic. The forum focused on strengthening human capital and the concept of re-use of technology emphasizing the use of ICTs as a tool for development and towards decent employment. Education and vocational training was also emphasized in a side event that recommended the creation of a ‘World Sports Alliance’ and brought focus on “Sports as a Means to Support Local Economic Development and Job Creation”. The 2nd NGO Forum was held in Geneva on 28-29 June 2006 and 450 NGOs participated at that event. Two final recommendations coming out of the Geneva Forum include:

1. Holding an interactive dialogue during the High-level Segment; and
2. Establishing a high-level expert working group to develop a plan for the implementation of a sustainable basic income for all people.

At the closing session of the High-level Segment of ECOSOC, H.E. Mr. Ali Hachani, President of ECOSOC thanked the NGO community for its rich proposals and active participation in the work of the Council. Ambassador Hachani also acknowledged the work of the International Association of Economic and Social Councils and Similar Institutions (AICESIS), particularly their platform for action adopted in Madrid to create centers of excellence for MDGs education and training.

For more information, please visit the internet page of the outcome document (<http://www.ngocongo.org/index.php?what=resources&id=10213>)

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