

Mr. Secretary-General,
Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great honor to welcome you to the special high-level meeting of ECOSOC with the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization. During the last four years, our spring meetings have evolved into a unique forum enabling dialogue between key policy-makers on financial, monetary, development and foreign affairs. They have contributed to the strengthening of policy coherence, coordination, cooperation, as well as, maintaining an important focus on the Millennium Development Goals. Earlier high-level meetings laid the foundation for the International Conference on financing for development. This meeting today is dedicated to the implementation of its conclusions, with the aim of contributing to the deepening of the Monterrey process.

In the run up to Monterrey, cooperation with civil society and the business community was carried forward to an unprecedented level. Traditionally, ECOSOC has been a particularly important entry point for NGOs to work with the UN. It is my pleasure to announce that, for the first time, we have opened our meeting today to the representatives of NGOs, business community and the media.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Policy coherence and the mobilization of all types of resources and their effective, efficient and equitable use, are essential for the eradication of poverty and sustainable development. Millennium Development Goals can only be achieved with the mutual commitment of international organizations, NGOs, business community as well as developed and developing countries. The Monterrey Conference was an important first step in creating a coherent and more participatory multilateral system, that is more beneficial to the realization of the Millennium Development Goals. A massive effort is now required to mobilize more and better cooperation for development and to build an international economic system more conducive to the development of the poor.

To maintain the momentum of political commitments made in Monterrey, we must consider how to make the most out of our annual spring meetings. Can we prepare for them better? Can we produce some more effective outcomes? Are we ready to address selected problems more concretely? Can we agree on benchmarks on specific aspects of the Monterrey Consensus? Can we jointly monitor progress in its implementation?

Our goal is obviously to make financial, trade and economic activities and systems more supportive of our development goals, as well as, to make the most out of existing institutions by strengthening cooperation between them. But, how? Should we make our contacts between spring meetings more intensive? Should we introduce smaller interim meetings, or structure more our cooperation otherwise? Finally, how can we give developing countries a stronger voice in the decisions affecting their development prospects?

It was emphasized many times that Monterrey was not merely a one-week event, but the beginning of a process. Our deliberations today are extremely important for shaping this process. If we are going to take "staying engaged" from the Monterrey consensus seriously, we have to establish a close link between individual Millennium Development Goals and principles set for their financing in Monterrey. This would finally improve our effectiveness in dealing with real world problems such as: hunger, illiteracy, poverty and diseases.

We should also use other international fora to ensure that the spirit of the Millennium Declaration is maintained and to advance the Millennium Development Goals. The forthcoming World Summit for Sustainable Development in Johannesburg should build on the accomplishments of Monterrey in search of sustainable growth and implementation of the Millennium Development Goals.

Finally, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The fact that we are meeting on 22nd of April – "Earth Day" should serve as an inspiration in our deliberations. We should be fully aware of the responsibility that all of us share as global stakeholders.