

**Opening Statement by H.E. Ali Hachani, Permanent Representative of Tunisia to
the United Nations and President of the Economic and Social Council:**

**Economic and Social Council, Special High-Level Meeting with the Bretton Woods
Institutions, WTO, and UNCTAD**

New York, 24 April 2006

Excellencies,
Secretary General,
Distinguished Representatives
Ladies and Gentlemen:

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to this year's Special High-Level Meeting with the Bretton Woods Institutions, the World Trade Organization, and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.

I would like to extend my special welcome to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the ministers and senior representatives from Member States, from development, finance and trade institutions, as well as from civil society and private sector.

Development, together with peace and security, human rights and strengthening the United Nations was a central concern of our Leaders at the 2005 World Summit. They reaffirmed their commitment to achieve the MDGs and the goals of the major UN conferences and summits. They also recognised that to meet the 2015 deadline, implementation needed to be stepped up.

To this end, the Summit assigned several new functions to the Economic and Social Council, such as annual ministerial reviews of progress towards agreed development goals; the convening of a global Development Cooperation Forum; and a strengthening as a forum for global policy dialogue. Each of these new tasks places ECOSOC at the centre of the effort to monitor and advance implementation of the development agenda.

The Council can only successfully undertake these functions with the full engagement of all stakeholders, especially the key institutions involved in the implementation process. We must seize the unique opportunity this engagement provides to advance the global partnership for development required to ensure timely and full realization of our shared vision.

The large number of high-level participants in today's meeting attests the critical importance of development cooperation for human welfare in all regions of the world. I am encouraged by our joint deliberations for the preparation of this meeting and the evolving partnership with the key international development, finance and trade institutions, as well as other main institutional stakeholders of the Monterrey Consensus.

Under the umbrella of the overall theme “Coordination, and cooperation in the context of the implementation of the Monterrey Consensus and 2005 World Summit Outcome” we will consider four very important and vital subjects in our deliberations:

- i) Implementation of and support for national development strategies, towards the achievement of the international agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals;
- ii) Fulfilling the development dimension of the Doha Work Programme: Next steps, including in the area of “Aid for Trade”;
- iii) External Debt: Implementing and building on current initiatives to enhance debt sustainability;
- iv) Supporting the development efforts of middle-income developing countries.

The last theme is particularly innovative in the dialogue between ECOSOC and international institutions and is of particular interest to a growing number of developing countries.

A note by the Secretary General on these four subjects has been prepared as a background for our discussions. This note will, I am sure, prove particularly useful for our dialogue at the round tables, and I would like to thank all our partners in the UN system for their contribution in its preparation.

The note by the Secretary-General also points to the opportunity provided by the present meeting, coming in the aftermath of the International Monetary and Financial Committee meeting, for an update on the latest developments with regards to a key commitment in the Monterrey Consensus, namely, the enhancing of voice and participation of developing countries and countries with economies in transition in economic decision-making and norm-setting.

Excellencies,
Distinguished Representatives,

The recent International Monetary Fund and World Bank Ministerial meetings in Washington have confirmed the likelihood of continuing satisfactory growth for the world economy as a whole at least in the short term. This should not lead to complacency. Indeed, current circumstances give us the opportunity to advance more rapidly in the required national and international actions to achieve the internationally agreed development goals. The Monterrey Consensus recognized that national efforts should be complemented by supportive global programmes and actions aimed at maximizing the development opportunities of developing countries. Taking difficult decisions and implementing them, as well as undertaking required reforms can be facilitated by increasing economic and financial resources as a result of a growing world economy.

Today’s deliberations are important to identify how we could seize this opportunity.

In this sense, your personal contributions to the interactive dialogue will be crucial. New initiatives are welcome. There are also solid initiatives on the table which have not been acted upon as there are agreed development cooperation initiatives whose implementation is lagging. You could consider new steps or additional efforts for their effective implementation in an integrated and coordinated manner.

Before giving the floor to the Secretary-General, I would like to mention some organizational aspects of today's meeting. To give you the possibility to actively engage in a discussion, we will break up into four roundtables following the opening remarks of the Secretary-General and statements from the intergovernmental representatives.

In the afternoon, the chairpersons of the roundtables will report back to the plenary on the highlights of the roundtables and there will be the possibility for delegates to interact with high-level representatives of the private sector and civil society.

At the end of today's meeting, I will present a brief summary and the main conclusions of the discussion. A more comprehensive President's summary of the discussions, including specific proposals, will be circulated subsequently.

Mr. Secretary-General, may I invite you to take the floor.