



Statement of

**H.E. Mr. Lazarous Kapambwe, Incoming
ECOSOC President**

**Permanent Representative of Zambia to the
United Nations**

Election of ECOSOC President and Bureau

18 January 2011

New York

Excellencies,
Deputy Secretary General,
Under-Secretary-General Sha,
Under-Secretary-General Shaaban,
Distinguished Colleagues,

I come before you all with great humility to assume the post of President of ECOSOC on behalf of the African Group. I represent the region that is lagging behind the most in terms of development in all socio-economic sectors, and I pledge to do my best to ensure that Africa's challenges as well as all other regions are tackled in the best way possible by the Council. I wish to thank members of the African Group and indeed all member states for the confidence that has been placed in me personally and my country, Zambia.

I also wish to extend my congratulations to the members of the ECOSOC Bureau with whom I shall serve. I look forward to working with each one of you. Working together, we can make significant contributions to advancing the increasingly complex agenda and mandate of this critical Charter Body.

Allow me to pay special tribute to His Excellency, Ambassador Hamidon Ali, Permanent Representative of Malaysia to the United Nations, and the outgoing Bureau for their excellent stewardship. Ambassador Ali, we witnessed significant milestones in the Council due to your skillful and competent leadership. We have also seen continued growth in effectiveness and profile of the Council. Let me assure you, Excellency, that I will strive to take forward all these good works with the support of the new Bureau, ECOSOC members and the wider community of UN member states.

Last September, Heads of State took yet another bold step in adopting the MDG Summit Outcome Document, articulating an Action Agenda for the next five years. It is imperative, therefore, that the Council should accelerate its review and coordination of implementation actions. The Annual Ministerial Review, with the focus on education in July this year, will have accomplished

a comprehensive review of each of the main Goals. The Development Cooperation Forum has helped to sharpen the understanding on how to maximize the impact of policies and development assistance on the MDGs. I intend, with your collaboration, to speedily address the setting of the main themes for the forthcoming 2012-2014 reviews in a manner that will enhance the cross-cutting, multi-dimensional nature and importance of the UN Development Agenda.

Equally important is the need for the Council to begin to pronounce itself on the post-2015 development framework. The Summit clearly demonstrated that some regions, especially Africa, will not achieve the MDGs by the stipulated deadline unless more effort is exerted by the international community. Some of the Council's deliberations in the course of this year will help to shed light on both the progress to date and the required actions, as well as on the post-2015 perspective.

Many hold the view that the Council's effectiveness can be further enhanced if a number of steps are considered. Some of these were discussed at the retreat to which Ambassador Ali has made reference. My Bureau and I will reflect on these issues and other pressing matters. It is my intention to participate actively in the arrangements put in place by the President of the General Assembly and to cooperate closely with the Facilitator, the distinguished Ambassador of Chile and former Vice President of the Council, appointed by him to spearhead the review of GA resolution 61/16.

Undoubtedly, an abiding strength of ECOSOC lies in its composition as a forum of representatives of Governments, civil society organizations and UN system partners. This multi-disciplinary composition has ensured that policy recommendations emanating from it are infused with the perspectives of each group of participants. Notably, missing however, are the insights of academia as an important stakeholder group. I trust that we can find effective ways to ensure that our deliberations benefit more completely from the contributions of the academic community to our work in the very near future. Involving other public policy actors, such as Parliamentarians, local Governments and national and regional Economic and Social Councils, can

also considerably enrich our deliberations and connect our work further to the world.

Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Last year we witnessed a significant event which has gone down in history regarding system wide coherence, with the establishment of UN Women. There are other useful suggestions for ECOSOC to continue to advance in this objective. Its role in bringing together the normative and operational aspects of the system's work, in the field and headquarters, cannot be overstated. Our challenge now is to review the manner in which the Council addresses this task, in cooperation with all relevant arms of the system. I believe that promoting closer collaboration between the Council and its functional commissions, and better linking its work with that of the Executive Boards of funds and programmes, as well as with the UN Development Group Regional Mechanisms, is one way to bring about this. Progress made in that respect through the establishment of UN Women will be addressed at the Council's coordination segment this year, which is devoted to gender equity and women empowerment.

ECOSOC has a clear role to play in the continuum from crisis to development and in Peacebuilding. I intend, during my tenure, to pursue as a priority the deepening of the dialogue between the Council and the Peacebuilding Commission, through more regular joint Bureau meetings. My aim will be to identify areas in which the Council may receive from, and provide more timely advice to, the PBC to enable ECOSOC respond more effectively to emergencies and crises. Streamlining of actions in addressing our respective mandates is a worthy objective which I am confident will find favour on all fronts.

The very nature of crises has changed. Conflicts are now mainly within States pointing to very close links with underlying development and other concerns. Similarly, climate change has exacerbated the threat of natural disasters to development, peace and security, making it imperative that the

Council be properly seized of the connections with its policy making and coordinating roles. In this connection, I would like to take the opportunity to underline my own commitment to ensuring that Haiti remains on top of the Council's agenda. We look forward to future recommendations of the ECOSOC Ad Hoc Advisory Group on how the UN system, in collaboration with the international community, can strengthen its support of a Haitian-led recovery process.

Excellencies,

Distinguished colleagues,

I have attempted to outline for you some of the crucial issues before us in the year ahead. It is also my hope that the Council will contribute to the successful outcome and implementation of the forthcoming United Nations Fourth Conference on the Least Developed Countries to be held in May 2011 in Istanbul, Turkey.

I know I can count on you all for a stronger spirit of collaboration in overcoming obstacles and in moving the Council to a more strategic and pivotal role in furthering the United Nations' Development Agenda.

I thank you.