



Check against delivery

Closing Statement

H.E. Mr. Miloš Koterec, President of ECOSOC

2012 ECOSOC Substantive Session

New York

**Excellencies,
Under-Secretary General Sha Zukang,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

We have reached the end of ECOSOC's 2012 Substantive Session.

Before adjourning, it is imperative to look back, briefly, over the past month, before turning to the future. Let us begin with the **High-level Segment...**

Our focus was on unemployment, boosting productive capacity, mainstreaming social protection, and strengthening development cooperation. And our audience? Over 40 Ministers, coupled with countless other top policymakers, eminent academics and global leaders from business and civil society.

At this year's Annual Ministerial Review, which saw National Voluntary Presentations by eight countries — Algeria, Russia, Brazil, Ecuador, Ukraine, Kenya, Mauritius, and Qatar — we deliberated on an array of actions and initiatives to scale-up employment and decent work, and accelerate development.

There, several countries even presented for a second time: no better confirmation that the NVPs are a valuable, instructive exercise.

The challenge — and necessity — of improving global economic governance was another focus, as ECOSOC convened its high-level policy dialogue with the major international financial and trade institutions. Throughout discussions, the twin goals of improving coherence and accountability featured prominently.

ECOSOC also proved its ability to forge consensus on difficult issues, with Member States ultimately agreeing on a comprehensive Ministerial Declaration — one which stressed the need for immediate, collective action to tackle the global jobs crisis.

As a result, our partnership with the International Labour Organization became even stronger; I congratulate ILO for their role in addressing this year's theme.

Meanwhile, later in the High-level Segment, the Council's Development Cooperation Forum earned stellar reviews yet again, while enjoying record turnout.

Indeed, the DCF has plenty to commend it. In just its 3rd gathering, the Forum is making its mark on the development landscape, demonstrating its worth as a marquee destination for policy discourse and guidance. And with calls for more inclusive development cooperation growing ever louder, the DCF's star will, no doubt, only shine brighter in the years ahead.

It is, in addition, also worth noting the high quality and evidence-based nature of both discussions and substantive inputs throughout the DCF. We must strongly commit to deepening this approach.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

There was, of course, much more on offer...

The Council's **Coordination Segment** achieved precisely what its name suggests, skilfully orchestrating follow-up to both last year's Ministerial Declaration on education and the Conference on Financing for Development. The value of a well coordinated follow-up, I should add, can not be overstated: multilateralism, after all, amounts to little if international agreements are not rigorously monitored.

One sure way, in fact, to achieve greater coordination is to intensify the Council's dialogue with the Breton Woods Institutions – a goal to which we have fully committed.

I would also like to commend the Segment's focus on leveraging public-private partnerships to support sustainable development. To truly “deliver as one”, we must harness capital, know-how, and innovation like never before.

Progress, likewise, demands casting a sharp eye to the future too...

Hence the importance of this year's **Operational Activities Segment**, with its focus on the upcoming Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review of UN operational activities for development. There, the issues covered were as technical as they were timely:

- Assessing UN-system funding;
- Building better tools to improve coherence;
- Strengthening the resident coordinator system;
- And boosting the efficiency of business operations, to name just a few.

All this, in short, means that when the General Assembly convenes in September to improve the UN's development machinery, it will have a rock solid analytical foundation on which to proceed.

Excellencies,

Whereas institutional reform is often, by necessity, a slow, grinding process, responding to the world's many humanitarian crises must, of equal necessity, be anything but.

That's why ECOSOC holds its **Humanitarian Affairs Segment** every year: not only to shine the spotlight on the world's most dire emergencies, but also to improve our capacity to confront future challenges swiftly.

This year's Segment, moreover, was notable for its emphasis on the crucial transition from "relief to development", especially in the Sahel; there, participants rightly drew attention to the need to maintain the flow of international aid well beyond immediate response needs — to encourage growth, to promote stability, and to ensure prosperity for all.

ECOSOC's 2012 **General Segment**, meanwhile, touched many bases: from Haiti to South Sudan to Palestine; from tobacco control to women's empowerment to information technology. In doing so, the Council offered Member States the chance to address a broad range of development-related issues before the close of the Substantive Session.

Here, as well, ECOSOC showed its ability to offer thoughtful analysis on complex issues via insightful reports from its Functional and Regional Commissions, NGO and Tax Cooperation Committees, and various other expert and ad hoc bodies.

Dear colleagues,

We've already accomplished much in 2012. But we can scarcely afford to stop now. Pressing ahead requires, above all, significant reforms to the way the Council conducts business, perceives itself and is perceived by others.

That is why our consideration and adoption of a resolution on the integrated and coordinated follow-up to the outcomes of United Nations global conferences and summits marks a crucial step forward.

It is why we are convening a Special Ministerial Meeting of the Council on 24 September...

And it is the reason the Bureau is taking the initiative, in the run-up to next year's 61/16 review, to shape a new vision for the Economic and Social Council. But what is this vision?

- It is one that better aligns the work of ECOSOC's subsidiary bodies by addressing gaps in coherence and effective coordination.
- It is a vision with sustainable development at the Council's core, as it works in synchrony with the General Assembly and the new intergovernmental forum mandated in 'The Future We Want'.
- It is a vision which places ECOSOC firmly at the centre of efforts to shape the UN's post-2015 development agenda, and its follow-up.
- And, finally, it's a vision that will hopefully deepen the Council's already diverse constituencies.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The tremendous experience, wisdom, and passion of all our stakeholders must be harnessed in our shared pursuit of a better world.

That world — where the Economic and Social Council serves as a central hub for policy coherence and coordination; responds effectively to emerging global challenges; and exerts a degree of influence matched only by its inclusiveness — is within reach.

Let's be bold. Let's seize the moment.

Thank you.