



*Check against delivery*

**Closing Statement**  
**H.E. Mr. Néstor Osorio, President of ECOSOC**

**2013 ECOSOC Substantive Session**  
**Geneva**  
**26 July 2013**

Excellencies,  
Distinguished delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

As we come to the end of this 2013 Substantive Session, all of us will agree that much has been accomplished. I would like to thank you for your contributions during the preceding weeks.

I am especially grateful for the dedicated support of my colleagues in the Bureau: Ambassadors Martin Sajdik, Ferit Hoxha, Daffa-Alla Elhag Ali Osman and Masood Khan. I owe a debt of gratitude to my staff of the Permanent Mission, as well as to the secretariat staff and other UN system colleagues whose contribution to the success of our work is immeasurable.

Let me highlight some of the key moments and outputs of the past month.

During the **High-level Segment**, our focus was on science, technology, innovation (STI) and the potential of culture for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and sustainable development.

I congratulate all delegations for their hard work on the Ministerial Declaration, often very late into the night. Admittedly, some difficulties arose and I look forward to its adoption in due course. The Declaration's action-oriented approach to strategies for using STI and culture as enablers and drivers of development will be a critical input to the discussions on the post-2015 development agenda.

This year we welcomed a diverse group of thinkers, innovators and individuals representing policymaking, academia, business and civil society. We discussed ideas to build strategies for embedding STI and culture in development efforts. Throughout, we kept our sights on completing the task of the MDGs and shaping the post-2015 development agenda.

A strong message we heard is that ECOSOC must engage new development players if we are to succeed as the principal UN body for policy review, dialogue and recommendations on global development.

Today, the increasing numbers and roles of non-state actors call for greater multi-stakeholder coordination and stronger partnerships. The Council must elevate itself as a platform for such partnerships and a staging ground for action. In this vein, I am happy to note that a record number of NGOs contributed to this year's Annual Ministerial Review discussions, representing a 23 per cent increase since 2012.

Our tradition of facilitating public-private engagement and promoting new measures of progress was evident in our ECOSOC Innovation Fair and the launch of the Global Innovation Index. Policymakers, business leaders and other stakeholders can now evaluate opportunities for partnering to drive innovation across countries.

Indeed, several important initiatives that have already proven successful were presented in the first ever Implementation Forum. One recommendation put forward was that the Council should establish a global database of implementation initiatives. I would welcome this as an opportunity to scale up collaboration, information and experience sharing.

Excellencies,

I wish to commend the Governments of France, Nigeria, Peru and Viet Nam on their inspiring National Voluntary Presentations.

Their presentations affirmed the need for the Council to deepen its role as an open forum to monitor progress in implementation and promote exchange of ideas—on a voluntary, constructive basis—with regard to trends and challenges in national development strategies.

Likewise, the discussion on Africa and the least developed countries drew our attention to the need for investment in infrastructure, human capacity and institution-building. Technological and environmental “leapfrogging” must be encouraged.

A separate but related discussion on universal health coverage emphasized the leapfrogging potential of new mobile and e-health technologies to facilitate access to health services and reduce costs in rich and poor countries alike.

During the **Coordination Segment**, we were reminded that international agreements need to be effectively monitored in order to gauge their impacts on challenges to sustainable development. As part of these efforts, we focused on the follow-up to last year's Ministerial Declaration on productive capacity, employment and decent work, and on Financing for Development.

Those discussions highlighted ways in which United Nations inter-agency collaboration and partnerships with other stakeholders, including the private sector, could enhance productive capacity, employment and decent work.

Our discussions went beyond simply increasing the number of new jobs available. Rather, the focus was on how decent work opportunities for all—drawing on ILO standards and instruments that safeguard universal human rights—could be created.

We also deliberated on the regional perspectives on the post-2015 development agenda, as crucial components of the development debate. Coherence and coordination continue to be essential elements of a dynamic UN development system, capable of evolving alongside the rapid changes in the global development landscape.

This year's **Operational Activities Segment** gave Member States the opportunity to start a dialogue sooner, rather than later, on the changing nature of development challenges, and on overdue shifts in ways of doing business in the UN development system. The UN must deliver on the MDGs, and importantly, on a post-2015 development framework.

While participants were generally encouraged by the progress made in the early implementation of the resolution on the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR), Member States want to see action stepped up in several areas, including:

- Strengthening national institutions and capacities;
- Simplifying and harmonizing business practices and reporting;
- Implementing fully the delivering-as-one approach;
- Reducing unnecessary competition for funds at the country level; and
- Strengthening the role of the UN resident coordinator.

### **Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,**

This year's **Humanitarian Affairs Segment** built on the approach taken in the Secretary-General's report to consider the current challenges of humanitarian action and to examine how we, collectively - as the UN, governments, the private sector, affected communities, and other new actors such as the volunteer community - can adapt and better respond to the changing humanitarian landscape. The side-events, humanitarian trade fair and two panel discussions - on managing risk and reducing vulnerability and on innovation - were aligned to move this agenda forward. These have helped propel the dialogue in the right direction, including toward the World Humanitarian Summit in 2015. I commend our colleagues in the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, for enabling the impact of this Segment through its convening power and credibility.

This year's **General Segment** brought a sharper focus to a number of key concerns, including the implementation of the 10 Year Framework Programme on sustainable consumption and production, as mandated by Rio+20, reasserting the Council's role on sustainable development issues. On the interface between peace and security, the Council considered lessons learned from successes and failures related to the transition of some African countries emerging from conflict, drawing lessons for South Sudan. Haiti remained central to our focus, as we reviewed tangible progress and continuing obstacles, and extended the mandate of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group. In doing so, the Council has demonstrated the scope for deepening its relationship with the Peacebuilding Commission.

We welcomed the inclusion of NGO voices during the General Segment. We see this as vital

for future sessions and the Council's commitment to multi-stakeholder approaches to development.

Dear colleagues,

It is my fervent belief that if ECOSOC does not innovate in the way it works and communicates, fulfilling its mandate and proper role in the post-2015 context will be difficult.

Fortunately, much of the groundwork for the needed innovation has been already laid by this Council and by the processes taking place in the General Assembly.

I welcome the recent adoption of the resolution establishing the High-level Political Forum, which replaces the Commission on Sustainable Development. I have no doubt that the Forum will serve as a dynamic platform for regular dialogue, stocktaking and agenda-setting on global progress on sustainable development.

This decision expands the scope of the Council's work, in mobilizing political leadership and providing guidance and recommendations for sustainable development. The Council will continue in its long-held tradition of reviewing progress in the implementation of international commitments.

In tandem with this is process for the review of resolution 61/16 on the strengthening of ECOSOC, several proposals are under discussion that should streamline the Council's agenda, format and working methods.

Together, these would enhance the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development and solidify ECOSOC's standing as the premiere intergovernmental and multi-stakeholder forum. I urge all Member States to give the strengthening initiatives their fullest support.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The expected culmination in September, of the ECOSOC strengthening process will mean further substantive deliberations for us. The Bureau and I will return to New York intent on building on the momentum generated here and beyond. I propose to present a draft resolution in the fall, capturing the recommendations addressed by the co-facilitators to the Council. A facilitator will be designated to spearhead informal consultations with the view to arriving at a consensus decision on a set of follow up actions by the Council.

I wish to close by once more thanking all of you, our panellists and moderators for generously sharing your ideas and experiences.

We have covered much ground this month. We must now translate the many ideas exchanged here into concrete actions in the period ahead.

Thank you.