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The United Nations issued the following press release:

The Economic and Social Council this morning suspended its substantive session after adopting seven resolutions and several decisions, including on its role in the integrated and coordinated implementation of the outcomes of major United Nations conferences and summits, follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development, the Information and Communication Technologies Task Force, the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, the Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters, the United Nations Forum on Forests, and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice.

The Council deferred consideration of remaining issues under its agenda item entitled non-governmental organizations to the resumed substantive session, as well as the consideration of the reports of the Committee for Development Policy and of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development to the same session.

The Council also took note of the report of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. It transmitted one resolution on strengthening the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme and the role of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice as its governing body to the General Assembly for its consideration.

In a closing statement, Jose Antonio Ocampo, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, said the main achievements of the session went beyond the successful and timely conclusion of the various segments. Equally important were the messages about the current and future role of the Council. The Ministerial Declaration on Employment and Decent Work for All identified a number of concrete steps to further implementation of the 2005 World Summit commitment to make the goal of full and proactive employment and decent work a central objective of national and international policies. The Council had demonstrated that it could mobilize various parts of the United Nations system to work together in order to support its deliberations.

In concluding remarks, Dalius Cekuolis (Lithuania), Vice-President of the Council, said it had been a successful substantive session, and all should be thanked for their hard work and determination to work together in a collaborative spirit. The discussions in the high-level segment had been enriched by the participation of three Prime Ministers and many Ministers, and this put the issue of productive employment at the forefront of the agenda. The Ministerial Declaration contained concrete measures, recognising that employment was a critical element in the achievement of the internationally recognised development goals, and should help to create a United Nations development agenda. It was hoped the United Nations system would contribute towards ensuring that economic growth yielded benefits for all segments of society. The session had covered a broad range of issues, and on all of them, the quality of the

debate and ideas put forward reflected the commitment of the stakeholders, and this bringing together of different levels of society showed the importance of the Council.

Sarbuland Khan, Director of the Office for the Economic and Social Council Support and Coordination, said the Council had made great progress in achievements during the last decade. It had been closer to people and a partner to the developing countries. It was hoped that the Council would further continue to improve and, in the context of the United Nations reforms, continue to achieve greater success. No efforts would be spared in increasing its role and effectiveness as a coordination tool.

The theme of the high-level segment was "creating an environment at the national and international levels conducive to generating full and productive employment and decent work for all, and its impact on sustainable development". United Nations Deputy Secretary-General Mark Malloch Brown said the Council had always been the United Nations principal body for advancing policy, and today it had the Millennium Development Goals, which were an opportunity for the Council to rally around a concrete set of achievable goals and targets. It was up to the Council to have these benchmarks and the broader United Nations development agenda to motivate its work.

At the end of the three-day high-level segment, the Economic and Social Council adopted a Ministerial Declaration on the attainment of full and productive employment and decent work, which stated that the Ministers and Heads of Delegations participating in the high-level segment were convinced of the urgent need to create an environment at the national and international levels that was conducive to the attainment of full and productive employment and decent work for all as a foundation for sustainable development. They recognised that full and productive employment and decent work for all, which encompassed social protection, fundamental principles and rights at work and social dialogue, were key elements of sustainable development for all countries, and therefore a priority objective of social cooperation.

Speaking this morning were the representatives of Finland for the European Union, Brazil, Canada, Greece, the United States, Australia, and the Russian Federation.

The Economic and Social Council will take up the outstanding issues at its resumed session, but the dates have not been set.

Action on resolutions

In a resolution (E/2006/L.35) entitled role of the Economic and Social Council in the integrated and coordinated implementation of the outcomes of and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits, in the light of General Assembly resolutions 50/227, 52/12B and 57/270B, adopted without a vote, the Council decides to continue to promote the integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits, bearing in mind the need to respect the thematic unity of each of the conferences and the interlinkages between them; decides to replace the individual joint bureaux meetings with one meeting of the chairs of the functional commissions and the Economic and Social Council to be held in the beginning of each calendar year; decides to further strengthen its linkages with the regional commissions; and decides to continue to take necessary steps towards the effective implementation of the provisions of General Assembly resolutions 50/227, 52/12 B and 57/270 B that are relevant to the work of the Council and its subsidiary system.

In a resolution (E/2006/L.34) entitled follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development, adopted without a vote, the Council requests the President of the Council, with the support of the Financing for Development Office of the Secretariat, to initiate consultations, including with all major institutional stakeholders, on how to enhance the impact of the

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special high-level meeting of the Council.

In the context of its consideration of agenda item 12 entitled Non-Governmental Organizations, the Council decided to defer consideration of the item to the resumed substantive session.

In a resolution (E/2006/L. 33), entitled Information and Communication Technologies Task Force, adopted without a vote, the Council welcomes the valuable contribution of the Task Force to harnessing the potential of information and communication technologies as powerful tools with which to foster socio-economic development and contribute to the realisation of internationally agreed development goals; and reiterates the need to sustain and further strengthen multi-stakeholder cross-sectoral dialogue on the role of information and communication technologies in development, and to this end encourages the development of multi-stakeholder processes at the international level aimed at engaging all stakeholders in open and inclusive collaborative initiatives and partnerships to enhance the impact of information and communication technologies on the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals.

In a resolution (E/2006/L. 37) entitled follow-up to the World Summit on the Information Society and review of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, adopted without a vote as orally amended, the Council decides to carry out its responsibilities for overseeing the system-wide follow-up to the Summit outcomes in the context of its annual consideration of the integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits in its coordination segment on the basis of a thematic approach and a multi-year programme; decides that the Commission on Science and Technology for Development shall effectively assist the Council as the focal point in the system-wide follow-up; agrees that the system-wide follow-up shall have a strong development orientation; decides that the Commission shall be strengthened in its substantive capacity and enhanced through effective and meaningful participation of Member States in its work; and decides that while using the multi-stakeholder approach effectively, the inter-governmental nature of the Commission should be preserved.

In the context of the recommendations contained in the report of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development on its ninth session (E/2006/31), the Council decided to defer consideration of the report of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development to its resumed substantive session, in light of the resolution on the follow-up to the World Summit for the Information Society, and to examine the recommendations in the report with a view to aligning them with that resolution.

In a resolution (E/2006/L. 31), entitled Report of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration on its fifth session and dates, venue and provisional agenda for the sixth session of the Committee, adopted without a vote, the Council takes note of the report; encourages Governments to create an environment that is supportive of further improving an effective public administration; requests all Member States to abide by the principles of proper management of public affairs and public property, and fairness, responsibility and equality before the law; and recognises the role that the United Nations Public Service Awards could play in promoting and disseminating best practices in the field of public administration and in this regard requests the Secretariat to enhance the information to be provided to Member States on the Awards, with a view to encouraging greater participation.

In a resolution (E/2006/L. 36) entitled Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters, the Council invites the Committee to continue to organise training workshops for developing countries and countries with economies in transition as part of the work required to carry out its mandate; and approves the provisional agenda for the second session of the Committee.

In a resolution contained in the report of the sixth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests entitled outcome of the sixth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests, adopted without a vote as orally amended, the Council decides to strengthen the international arrangement on forests through the following measures; decides, with a view to achieving the main objective of the international arrangement on forests and enhancing the contribution of forests to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, in particular with respect to poverty eradication and environmental sustainability, and emphasizing in this regard the importance of political commitment and action at all levels for effective implementation of the sustainable management of all types of forests, to set shared global objectives on forests and to agree to work globally and nationally to achieve progress towards their achievement by 2015; and urges countries to make concerted efforts to secure sustained high-level political commitment to strengthen the means of implementation, including financial resources, to provide support, in particular for developing countries, including least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States, as well as countries with economies in transition, in order to achieve the global objectives and to promote sustainable forest management.

In a decision contained in the report of the sixth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests and entitled report of the United Nations Forum on Forests on its sixth session and provisional agenda for its seventh session, adopted without a vote, the Council takes note of the report of the United Nations Forum on Forests on its sixth session; and approves the provisional agenda for the seventh session of the Forum.

In a resolution contained in the report of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice on its fifteenth session and entitled strengthening the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme and the role of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice as its governing body, the Council authorises the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, as the principal United Nations policymaking body on crime prevention and criminal justice issues, to approve, on the basis of the proposals of the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime the budget of the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Fund; requests the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions to submit its comments and recommendations on the biennial consolidated budget for the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice; requests the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice to report to the Economic and Social Council in 2007 on how it plans to carry out those administrative and financial functions; and requests the Secretary-General to promulgate financial rules for the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Fund.

In the context of its consideration of the agenda item on Social and human rights questions, the Council took note of the report of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (E/2006/22).

Statements

JANNE JOKINEN (Finland), speaking on behalf of the European Union, said with regards to the proposal to defer issues under the agenda item on non-governmental organizations to the resumed session, it was the opinion of the European Union that every NGO was entitled to equal treatment in accordance with the Council's resolution on the consultative relationship, and the Council should follow standard practice, notwithstanding the nature of the non-governmental organization. The applications of the three non-governmental organizations defending the rights of sexual minorities should get a fair hearing from the body. Last Friday, the Council had rejected the draft decisions recommended by the Non-Governmental Organization Committee on these non-governmental organizations, and the will of the Council had been clearly expressed. The European Union regretted that the Council could not bring its consideration of the item to a successful conclusion. The European Union was

ready to bring the matter to a close, and its proposals were on the table. The proposed deferral had been carefully considered. It was the preference of the European Union to complete the consideration of the item at this session, but if it were the unanimous will of the rest of the Council to defer the issue to the resumed session, the European Union would join consensus, on the understanding that at the resumed session the issue would be taken up again.

BENESICTO FONSECA FILHO (Brazil) said with regards to the proposal to defer issues under the agenda item on non-governmental organizations to the resumed session, the position of Brazil was that non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society should play an active role in the work of the Council. Brazil would have preferred that the issue of granting Economic and Social Council status to some non-governmental organizations to be decided during the current session. However, as expressed by the speaker from the European Union, Brazil would not oppose the deferral of the consideration of the issue of the NGOs requesting for status.

CATHERINE BROWN (Canada) said with regards to the proposal to defer the consideration of issues under the agenda item on non-governmental organizations to the resumed session, Canada regretted that the Council had not brought its work to a conclusion, and supported the proposals of the European Union, as it was strongly in favour of an inclusive United Nations that allowed diverse voices to be heard. Canada had listened to the views of other delegations, and was pleased that the Council would take up the issue again at the resumed session, and urged all delegations to keep in mind the importance of maintaining credibility and consistency.

ANDREAS CAMBITSIS (Greece), referring to the demand for the granting of ECOSOC status by the "Macedonian Centre for International Cooperation", said that the non-governmental organization should use the only name agreed upon in the UN context in order to the country its was established in -- the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia -- to avoid confusion as to the country it was based in. The name the NGO used was contrary to Security Council resolution 817 and 845 of 1993 as well as General Assembly resolution 47/225. He requested that his statement be included in the record of the meeting.

TERRY MILLER (United States) said the United States was pleased to join consensus on L. 37, which mapped a way forward for the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, on the understanding that the multi-stakeholder approach would be fully integrated into the work on follow-up to the World Summit on the Information Society.

ULLA-MAIJA FINSKAS (Finland), speaking on behalf of the European Union, said the European Union was pleased that the draft resolution clearly defined the role of the Commission on Science and Technology in the follow-up to the World Summit on the Information Society. It was important to do justice to the spirit of the Summit, and ensure that the valuable experience and practice gained during the two phases was not lost, and would be applied during the future work of the Commission. It was up to the latter to make the full, effective and meaningful participation of all stakeholders take place, as this would be the only way to ensure bridging of the digital divide.

CATHERINE BROWN (Canada) said Canada was pleased to join consensus, as it attached great importance to the multi-stakeholder process, with the involvement of all groups. The resolution confirmed that the process would be preserved and encouraged.

GUY MAXWELL O'BRIEN (Australia) proposed an amendment to operative paragraph 29 of the resolution on the outcome of the sixth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests, as this would make it up to Governments to nominate members to the Group. With this amendment, delegations would be able to join consensus on the resolution.

V. A. NEBENZIA (Russian Federation) said in connection with the adoption of

the decision on the report of the United Nations Forum on Forests, Russia had joined consensus on this so as to ensure the best possible conditions for the Group's future effective work. However, it was disappointed and concerned that the Council had had to reopen the consensus decision that had been taken on the Forum. This gave rise to regret, and in this context, Russia hoped the Secretariat would take all necessary steps to ensure that full conference services were provided for the Expert Group and its work.

JARL-HAKAN ROSENGREN (Finland), in a general statement and speaking on behalf of the European Union, said the draft resolution of the Commission of Crime Prevention on the strengthening of the Commission had been adopted by the Council and the European Union had cosponsored it. However, it was regrettable that the draft had been delayed from being transmitted to the General Assembly.

Closing Statements

JOSE ANTONIO OCAMPO, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, in a closing statement, said the main achievements of the session went beyond the successful and timely conclusion of the various segments. Equally important were the messages about the current and future role of the Council. The Ministerial Declaration on Employment and Decent Work for all identified a number of concrete steps to further implementation of the 2005 World Summit commitment to make the goal of full and proactive employment and decent work a central objective of national and international policies. The Council had demonstrated that it could mobilize various parts of the United Nations system to work together in order to support its deliberations. Timely selection of a topical theme was crucial for attracting high-level and diverse participation, as well as for achieving an outcome likely to have far-reaching impact. The coordination segment dealt with another central issue for the ongoing efforts to implement the United Nations development agenda: how to translate economic growth into effective social development, including eradication of poverty and hunger. During the operational activities segment, the Economic and Social Council had launched the triennial review of funding for development cooperation.

Turning to the future work of the Council, the speaker said that the Annual Ministerial Review had the potential to become the major mechanism to strengthen accountability for international commitments to the agreed development goals and thus for implementation of the United Nations development agenda by all partners. The Development Cooperation Forum would provide the first global platform where all actors involved had an opportunity to engage in a dialogue on the key policy issues affecting development cooperation, in all its forms: multilateral, North-South and South-South. The Forum could promote mutual accountability of donors and recipient countries for living up to international commitments relating to national ownership, alignment, harmonizing, scaling-up resources and development results. The new functions had, therefore, the potential to revitalize the role assigned by the Charter of the United Nations to the Economic and Social Council as the body for policy coherence. To ensure, however, that those functions were operationalized effectively, a number of steps should be taken urgently.

DALIUS CEKUOLIS (Lithuania), Vice-President of the Economic and Social Council, in concluding remarks, said it had been a successful substantive session, and all should be thanked for their hard work and determination to work together in a collaborative spirit. The discussions in the high-level segment had been enriched by the participation of three Prime Ministers and many Ministers, and this put the issue of productive employment at the forefront of the agenda. The Ministerial Declaration contained concrete measures, recognising that employment was a critical element in the achievement of the internationally recognized development goals. It should help to create a United Nations development agenda. The issue of translating economic growth into positive empowerment was essential. It was hoped the United Nations system would contribute towards ensuring that economic growth yielded benefits for all segments of society.

The discussion on the important issue of avian flu showed the role of the Council with regards to looming crises, and this should be used to strengthen the Council's ability to forewarn of impending challenges. The Council's potential to rally the whole system on such issues should be used fully. On humanitarian issues, the Council had showed its ability to strengthen guidance on themes, including this year gender-based violence. More needed to be done to alleviate the sufferings of the victims, but the work of the Council should have a palpable impact on this. Despite some differences, the comprehensive and substantive resolution on the Triennial Comprehensive review had been adopted, and this was a very positive step forward. New opportunities were opening with regards to the United Nations' role in the development of science and technology, in particular with regards to development. The session had covered a broad range of issues, and on all of them, the quality of the debate and ideas put forward reflected the commitment of the stakeholders, and this bringing together of different levels of society showed the importance of the Council.

SARBULAND KHAN, Director of the Office for the Economic and Social Council Support and Coordination, said the Council had made great progress in achievements during the last decade. It had been closer to people and a partner to the developing countries. It was hoped that the Council would further continue to improve and, in the context of the United Nations reforms, continue to achieve greater success. No efforts would be spared in increasing its role and effectiveness as a coordination tool.