



CONCEPT NOTE AND PROGRAMME

Social Development: From Copenhagen to the post-2015 development agenda

5 February 2014, 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m., Conference Room 4

Commemorating the 20th Anniversary of the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action

“We are deeply convinced that economic development, social development and environmental protection are interdependent and mutually reinforcing components of sustainable development, which is the framework for our efforts to achieve a higher quality of life for all people. Equitable social development that recognizes empowering the poor to utilize environmental resources sustainably is a necessary foundation for sustainable development. We also recognize that broad-based and sustained economic growth in the context of sustainable development is necessary to sustain social development and social justice.”

We recognize, therefore, that social development is central to the needs and aspirations of people throughout the world and to the responsibilities of Governments and all sectors of civil society. ...”

Outcome Document of the World Summit for Social Development,
The Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action

Overview

At the World Summit for Social Development held in Copenhagen, 6-12 March 1995, Member States of the United Nations adopted the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action, one of the most comprehensive action plans for achieving social development to date. The agreement set an ambitious people-centred agenda aimed at promoting social progress, justice and the betterment of the human condition, based on full participation by all.

At the World Summit, Member States proposed a holistic approach to development practice. Acknowledging sustainability as the overarching development framework, the Declaration clearly stated that economic development, social development and environmental protection are interdependent and mutually reinforcing components of sustainable development. The outcome of the Summit was built on a recognition that social development could not be pursued as a separate sector nor could it be pursued as piecemeal initiatives but required an orientation of values, objectives and priorities towards the well-being of all. It aspired to “place people at the centre of development and direct our economies to meet human needs more effectively.”

The Summit influenced the outcomes of many development conferences that followed, including the Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals that aimed to express it. Yet, some broader commitments of Copenhagen remain unfulfilled and others have progressed unevenly at best. Now, almost 20 years since the World Summit for Social Development and the commitments that it birthed, amidst

extraordinary progress and unacceptable gaps, the world stands at the cusp of transformation. With sustainable development firmly entrenched as the development framework for today and tomorrow, the international community is deliberating the post-2015 development agenda. This agenda is hoped to guide us toward the achievement of the future we want, “a future free from poverty and built on human rights, equality, and sustainability.”¹

With this in mind, reflection on past commitments is crucial, ensuring that we continue to build on those objectives that remain relevant today, build on past achievements and recognise challenges to progress. The Commemoration of the 20th Anniversary of the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action in the 53rd session of the Commission of Social Development will be the first in a series of activities during 2015 to celebrate the progress made so far and further strengthen the role of social development beyond 2015 in the process and practice of sustainability.²

Commemorating Copenhagen

Social Development: From Copenhagen to the post-2015 development agenda

“We recognize that people are at the centre of sustainable development and, in this regard, we strive for a world that is just, equitable and inclusive, and we commit to work together to promote sustained and inclusive economic growth, social development and environmental protection and thereby to benefit all.”

Rio+20 Outcome Document, the Future We Want

The 20th anniversary of the World Summit for Social Development comes at a critical time in the international community. Simultaneously focused on accelerating progress toward the unmet targets of the MDGs and the elaboration of a post-2015 development agenda, the international community is giving great scrutiny to past development practice, current development needs and future development goals, with an eye to developing a comprehensive, yet flexible sustainable development agenda that places people and the planet at the centre.

Built on the core promise on which the United Nations was founded, Member States are seeking to, not only strengthen the existing commitments to peace and security, development, social progress and human rights, but to give greater attention to their interlinkages, improve the equality and sustainability of their attainment, and to protect the planet while doing this.

To commemorate the 20th anniversary of the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action, the Commission for Social Development will host a roundtable entitled, “Social Development: From Copenhagen to the post-2015 development

¹ The Road to Dignity by 2030. Synthesis Report of the Secretary-General on the Post-2015 Agenda.

² See A/C.3/69/L.11/Rev.1, paras. 61-65

agenda.” The roundtable will be preceded by statements of reflection from key UN officials, representatives of Member States and other members of the international community. A keynote address will cap the statements of reflection and will set the tone of the discussion, outlining the impact of the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action in development efforts to date, noting the challenges that remain and reflecting on the opportunities available for embedding the unrealised goals and objectives of Copenhagen into the post-2015 development agenda.

The roundtable will take the form of an open and interactive moderated dialogue led by a group of expert discussants. In a first round of moderated discussion, the moderator will introduce the discussants and each will have the opportunity to respond to the key issues raised in the keynote address and give a few reflections on social development 20 years after Copenhagen. After initial reflections, the moderator will pose a series of questions to the Commission focused on identifying the current contributions of the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action to the development process, the challenges to and gaps in the implementation of the commitments made, and effective strategies for building on the lessons learned in implementing the commitments of Copenhagen, for furthering social development beyond 2015.

Some key questions guiding the discussion would include:

- Since the adoption of the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action for social development in 1995, how successful have we been (or not) in realising its commitments and objectives? In which areas the progress has been achieved the most? What have been the driving forces for this progress?
- What are the main challenges to implementing the outcomes of the World Summit?
- What are the major global challenges social development has to address in the next 15 years?
- Based on lessons learnt, how can we best rethink and strengthen social development to ensuring a successful implementation of the post-2015 development agenda?

At the end, the moderator will summarize the discussions and will provide closing remarks. The dialogue will compliment directly the discussion of the priority theme of the Commission, “Rethinking and strengthening a social development in the contemporary world. As such, a summary with recommendations will be developed

after the meeting, and the discussion will contribute to the Chair's Summary of the 53rd Session of the Commission for Social Development.

Programme

Commemorating Copenhagen (50 mins)		
Welcome	Chair of the Bureau of the Commission for Social Development, H. E. Ms. Simona-Mirela Miculescu , Permanent Representative of Romania to the United Nations	<i>3-5 mins</i>
Key Note Address	Mr. Juan Somavia, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Interregional Policy Cooperation, and Chair of the Preparatory Committee of the World Summit for Social Development (via video link)	<i>15-20 mins</i>
Statement of Reflection	United Nations Secretary General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon	<i>3-5 mins</i>
Statement of Reflection	Acting President of the General Assembly, H.E. Mr. Denis G. Antoine , Permanent Representative of Grenada to the United Nations	<i>3-5 mins</i>
Statement of Reflection	Vice President of ECOSOC, H. E. Mr. Oh Joon , Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations	<i>3-5 mins</i>
Statement of Reflection	H. E. Mr. Ib Petersen , Permanent Representative of Denmark to the United Nations (as host country of WSSD)	<i>3-5 mins</i>
Interactive Dialogue: <i>Social Development: From Copenhagen to the post-2015 development agenda</i> (120 mins)		
Moderator	Ms. H. Elizabeth Thompson , Executive Coordinator (Developing Countries), UNCSD Rio+20	
Discussants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ambassador Macharia Kamau, Permanent Representative of Kenya to the United Nations • Mr. Lenni Montiel, ASG for Economic Development, DESA • Mr. Ahmed Alhendawi, Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth • Mr. Danilo Türk, Former President of Slovenia and current member of the Club de Madrid • Ms. Margaret Mayce, Chair, NGO Committee on Social Development 	