

**Meeting of EC-ESA Plus Deputies**  
**Thursday, 16 June 2011**  
**8:30 a.m.-10:00 a.m. (EST)**  
**Room No. 2330, Two UN Plaza (DC2)**  
**New York**

**Conclusions and decisions**

**1. Rio + 20**

To strengthen the social pillar of sustainable development, the Social Development Cluster of ECESA will meet on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2011.

**2. Follow-up to the 2010 MDG Summit**

- A draft of the Report will be circulated on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2011, with a tight deadline for further comments. The Final Report is due for submission on **11th July 2011**.
- ESCWA will share an outline of a regional commissions' study on pursuing the UN development agenda beyond 2015.

**Other**

UN-Women expressed its interest in formally joining ECESA; the process of membership will be initiated as soon as a written request is received from the Head of UN-Women.

**Summary of Discussions**

**I. Update on preparations for United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development 2012 (Rio+20)**

**Mr Jomo** introduced the agenda item by stating that four aspects of the preparations would be discussed namely: format and content of the outcome document; update on the study on the Institutional Framework for Sustainable Development (IFSD); status of national preparations; and resource mobilization. He mentioned that the Co-chairs, on behalf of the UNCSD Bureau, had sent a letter requesting concrete proposals for the outcome document on the objective and two themes of the Conference. The deadline for submitting proposals was 1 November 2011, when all inputs would be compiled; a zero draft would be submitted by early January 2012, and negotiations would begin from January, one week for every subsequent month. He emphasized that the UN system should think together of what a focused political document should look like. It should also identify the emerging challenges that deserve specific attention and how these issues should be addressed in the outcome?

In addition, the outcome document must reflect a balance among the economic, environment and social pillars. Thus far, the social pillar had remained

weak compared to the economic and environmental pillars. As developments in the Arab region and the financial crisis had recently demonstrated, social issues like youth unemployment, social inequalities and social exclusion all profoundly impact development, peace and security. ECESA members could play a significant role in ensuring due attention to social development issues. To focus the discussion, an invitation was sent out by DSPD/DESA for a meeting of the Social Development Cluster to be held on 29 June 2011. He urged ECESA members to participate actively.

He then invited Mr Tariq Banuri, Director, Division for Sustainable Development (DSD), to brief ECESA members.

**Mr Banuri** provided updates on the latest developments, including the last meeting of the Rio+20 Bureau held on 14 June. The Bureau had decided to ask the secretariat to prepare a general and neutral guidance note, in consultation with the Co-Chairs, to assist stakeholders to submit their inputs for the compilation document by 1<sup>st</sup> November.

The Bureau stressed the importance of drafting a practical and policy oriented outcome document. Sectoral themes such as energy, oceans, agriculture and food security were attracting sufficient interest from various stakeholders. Other ideas mentioned included a peer review mechanism, sustainable development goals, a roadmap, etc. The UN system and country-led intersessional activities on the road to Rio continued to play key roles in mobilizing attention to issues. Information on such activities were accessible in a web-based calendar in the Rio+20 website

Mr Jomo then opened the floor for questions and comments.

**UN-WTO** asked how the lack of an agreed outcome for CSD-19 would impact the issue of sustainable development governance.

**WHO** questioned how the social pillar of sustainable development would be addressed and discussed by the Conference, and whether it would be treated separately or in an integrated manner.

**ILO** noted that the perception of a weak social pillar of sustainable development did not mirror the progress and developments that had taken place in several fora, including the attention to the MDGs and within the context of the Commission on Social Development. ILO suggested that it might be sufficient to tease out existing developments in these areas to strengthen recognition of the social pillar in preparation for the Conference.

**FAO** recommended food security as a potential outcome, and was committed to move this issue forward, including through its “Greening the

economy with agriculture” (GEA). FAO would also organize inter-sessional meetings such as the one planned in Paris for September.

**UNDP** concurred on the need to develop a system-wide approach that would reflect the integration of the social pillar with the environmental and economic pillars. Green growth must also be inclusive and equitable. UNDP recommended that the Rio +20 secretariat should convene an informal working level brainstorming session on the outcome document and prepare a non-paper to facilitate discussions at the session. It was emphasized that UNDP was committed to contributing to this work.

**DESA (DSPD)** stated that it was considering the adoption of ‘the social dimension of sustainable development’ as the theme for its Report on the World Social Situation (RWSS) in 2013. The Division would also propose to the CSocD Bureau to make the ‘social dimension of sustainable development’ an “emerging issue” at the 50<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission. Moreover, in its capacity as Co-Convenor of the Social Development Cluster of ECESA, DESA (DSPD) would hold a meeting of the cluster on 29<sup>th</sup> June, with a view to strengthening the social pillar in the context of sustainable development.

**UNESCO** stressed its commitment to contribute to issues such as science, oceans and freshwater. UNESCO would be organizing five regional forums, in collaboration with ICSU and other partners, as contributions to the scientific dimension of sustainable development and to Rio+20.

**UNHCR** mentioned the need to address the tension between the humanitarian and development agendas as well as issues pertaining to displaced people. It re-emphasized the importance of the social pillar, especially in light of the fact that 44 million people were without access to clean water and sanitation.

**UN Women** emphasized the need to integrate the three pillars of sustainable development. There was also the need to ensure the inter-linkages between Agenda 21 and Rio Principles on gender and women’s issues were established with other environmental and human rights agendas. It expressed its interest in becoming a member of ECESA and coordinator of the gender cluster.

**UNCCD** emphasized the threat to agriculture and food security owing to land degradation. Therefore, desertification, land degradation and drought (DLDD) must be central to Rio+20 deliberations. It was expected that the GA High Level Event planned for 20 September 2011 would contribute to raising the profile of this issue on the road to Rio.

**FAO** stressed the importance of food security. A paradigm shift was required to manage natural resources and biodiversity in a way that could feed the world in a more sustainable future.

**WFP** seconded FAO and raised the importance of social safety nets and social protection to address the future of the bottom billion.

**ESCWA** stressed that the regional dimension was key to shaping policies and positions relevant to sustainable development and the themes of the Conference. In spite of current events in the region, ESCWA had been pushing the Rio+20 agenda forward and had established collaborative partnerships with a broad range of partners and stakeholders in preparing for the Regional Preparatory meeting in Cairo and also in assisting national preparations.

**OHRLLS** emphasized the potential of Rio+20 for addressing the challenges faced by SIDS. It referred to the recently concluded LDC IV as a forum where the links between sustainable development and SIDS were reiterated. Issues such as water, land and funding were key to their constituency and to ensure strong participation from their key stakeholders including CSOs.

**UN-HABITAT** raised issues pertaining to access to land, urbanization and the rapid growth of urban settlements, and stressed the need to capture these dimensions leading to Rio+20 and beyond. Consultation at local and sub-regional levels would be critical to ensure that local dimensions are reflected in the outcome document. The recently concluded 23<sup>rd</sup> session of its Governing Council focussed on ‘Sustainable Urban Development through Expanding Equitable Access to Land, Housing, Basic Services and Infrastructure’, and its outcome would be shared at the next intersessional meeting.

In responding to these comments, **Mr Banuri** expressed satisfaction at the high level of interest and engagement by ECESA Plus members and the trend towards convergence in their actions. He welcomed, in particular, the potential for convergence indicated in the comments by FAO, UNCCD and WFP in the context of agriculture and food security and on the question of land. He agreed with the comments by the ILO and other agencies that the UN system had a long and illustrious record on issues included in the social pillar.

In response to the UN-WTO question on the impact of CSD-19, he noted that member States were able to come to an agreement on almost all substantive issues. The stumbling block was primarily owing to the lack of willingness by some member States to reaffirm commitments made in the previous conferences, related to the main objective of Rio+20.

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## **II. Follow-up to the 2010 MDG Summit**

### **(a) Report of the Secretary-General on MDGs**

**Mr Jomo** stated that the MDG Summit had requested the Secretary-General to report annually on progress in the implementation of the MDGs until

2015 and to make recommendations on further steps to advance the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015. He added that in pursuance of the GA requests, an analytical annual report of the Secretary-General would be prepared on progress towards the MDGs until 2015. It would include policy recommendations on accelerating achievement of the MDGs as well as recommendations on advancing the UN development agenda beyond 2015.

He then invited Mr Rob Vos, Director, Development Policy and Analysis Division, (DPAD) for a briefing.

**Mr Vos** informed participants that the report would draw upon national experiences and look at what had worked and what had not. The key messages would include the need for strong national policy frameworks, including macro-economic policy frameworks, economic diversification and structural change. The report would also stress the importance of sustainable and inclusive growth while addressing the linkages between peace and security and development.

On the preparatory process, Mr Vos mentioned that an outline had already been circulated. He hoped to send a draft of the full report to ECESA Plus on 20 June 2011. The deadline for the submission of the final report was 11 July 2011. He added that the MDG Gap Task Force Report would also be completed soon, and was likely to complement the annual report of the Secretary-General.

**Mr Jomo** opened the floor for discussions on the **main messages** that this report should highlight and invited participants to share information on their respective organization's work in exploring ideas on pursuing the UN development agenda beyond 2015.

**UNCCD** cautioned that it was unlikely that any of the MDGs would be met by 2015 in the drylands.

**UNWomen** stated that the report should say that none of the goals would be fully met in all countries, and that there was a need to sustain efforts. On the matter of pursuing the MDGs agenda beyond 2015, it stressed that it was necessary to diversify existing goals and to add new goals. The UN system should also look at how it could qualitatively enhance the goals, especially the gender goals; addressing the issue of quality of education was another example provided.

**IMF** pointed out that the international community should address not just those goals most relevant for the poorest of the poor, but also those for the entire UN membership. For example, issues relevant to population and ageing needed to be highlighted as they are crucial to developed countries.

**ESCWA** agreed that not just those goals relevant for the poorest should be addressed. Issues pertinent to middle income countries also needed to be adequately reflected. It also noted that the Regional Commissions had initiated a

study on “the regional perspectives on the UN development agenda beyond 2015”, which would be completed sometime next year. ESCWA had been mandated to develop a concept paper which it had prepared and had circulated to the UN regional commissions. This paper will be discussed at the meeting of RC Executive Secretaries to be held during the substantive session of ECOSOC in Geneva. Mr Jomo requested ESCWA to share the outline of the study with ECESA Plus.

**UNDP** mentioned that the focus should be on accelerating implementation of the MDGs and the UN could play an important role in this regard. The UNDP Administrator had invited the Resident Coordinators from around the world to discuss not only just achieving the MDGs, but also in achieving the goals beyond 2015 at the end of June. Mr Sha would receive an invitation.

**OHRLLS** stressed the importance of Goal 8, especially for LDCs.

**FAO** and **WFP** emphasized the importance of food and agriculture. **WFP** also emphasized the need to address ~~the inter-linkages among the goals~~ **malnutrition, which is linked to all MDGs**

**ITU** mentioned the importance of ICTs, innovations and their role in accelerating achievement of the MDGs.

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### **III. Briefing on G20**

**Mr Jomo** briefed ECESA members on G20. He clarified that the UN is not a member, and therefore the nature of engagement is different from members; among international organizations, its role has slowly, but steadily been strengthened. The IMF is the key IO, while the other IOs participate in different ways, depending on what its members decide. He clarified that the G20 has three distinct processes:

- (i) The *Leaders* Process: ‘Sherpas’ prepare for the “Leaders” meetings and “Leaders” will meet once a year from 2011, unlike in 2009 and 2010 when they met twice. The next ‘Leaders’ meeting would be held in Cannes in November this year. UN engagement in the Sherpa process has mainly involved two key issues: MDGs and Climate Change. Although the Sherpas had decided not to open up discussion on climate change financing in the G20, the subject had been taken up in the finance ministers’ track.
- (ii) The meetings of *finance ministers* is the second but original process. Under the French Presidency, two issues had been taken up:

reform of the monetary system and volatility of commodity prices (a consensus paper by a study group was being prepared on this topic).

(iii) The third process was the work done by the Development Working Group (DWG) set up under the sherpas. The group had identified 9 pillars. France co-chairs this group with South Korea and South Africa. Of the 9 pillars, France had prioritized two -- food security and infrastructure finance. Meanwhile, work is continuing unevenly on the other 7 pillars. The UN has had a significant role in the DWG from the outset, and Mr Olav Kjørven of UNDP now leads the UN in this group.

#### **IV. Briefing on Preparations for UNCTAD XIII**

**Mr Jomo** reminded ECESA members that the 13<sup>th</sup> session of UNCTAD would be held on 21-26 April 2012 in Doha, Qatar. He noted that the theme of the session “Development-centred globalization: Towards inclusive and sustainable growth and development” was timely. He added that the next President of the General Assembly would be from Qatar and his priorities included UNCTAD XIII and Rio+20.

He then invited Mr Petko Draganov, Deputy Secretary-General of UNCTAD, to give a briefing on the preparations for UNCTAD XIII.

**Mr Draganov** said that preparations for the meeting were on track, and UNCTAD was about to sign a host country agreement with Qatar on 4<sup>th</sup> July. The conference would be ‘paperless’.

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#### **V. Recent developments in the Arab region**

**Mr Jomo** mentioned that the Arab region was going through a defining moment in its history. The events of the past few months had serious implications for peace, security as well as development policy. The Policy Committee, led by the Secretary-General, had also adopted decisions for the UN’s role in supporting the transition in Egypt and Tunisia. ESCWA has done some work in this regard.

He then invited Ms. Anhar Hegazi, Acting Deputy Executive Secretary from ESCWA, to brief ECESA members on the latest developments in the region.

**Ms. Hegazi** said that the UN should look closely at Tunisia and Egypt to identify the governance support needed to bring about positive change in the region. Citizens in a number of countries in the region did not enjoy human rights, and these countries were also rife with corruption. While growth rates had increased, they had not had any significant impact on most of the population while youth were disaffected owing to lack of employment. People sought decent

lives as much as democracy. Challenges of social exclusion needed to be addressed along with promotion of the private sector and job creation, support for the agricultural sector and food security among others. Regional action was crucial for change and the region needed UN support.

## **VI. Briefing on LDC IV Conference**

**Mr Jomo** invited Mr Sandagdorj Erdenebileg, Acting Director, UN-OHRLLS, to give a briefing on OHRLLS' assessment of LDC IV and its outcome.

In his briefing, **Mr Erdenebileg** mentioned that the Istanbul Programme of Action had focused on eight priority areas including productive capacity, agriculture and manufacturing services among others. There was a definite qualitative shift in focus from an emphasis on export led growth (as in the Brussels PoA) to enhancing the productive capacity of LDCs. The outcome had also agreed on a definition of development partners including the traditional donors, UN system organizations, including the BWIs, developing countries, private sector, civil society, parliamentarians and emerging economies. The Annual Ministerial Review (AMR) of ECOSOC and the DCF would also review implementation of the Istanbul PoA. The outcome document contains a number of key deliverables for LDCs for the next decade which includes, among others, concrete goals and targets for building productive capacity in LDCs; developing Science, Technology and Innovation capacity in LDCs including through establishing a Technology Bank; adopting investment promotion regimes by the development partners; developing risk mitigation strategies, such as national facilities for crisis mitigation and resilience in LDCs; and establishing an ad-hoc working group to further study and strengthen the smooth transition process of LDCs. The outcome document also contains an important follow-up and monitoring mechanism.