



# ECOSOC NEWS

## Inga Rhonda King, President

New York, 13 – 24 May 2019

### Major developments

- ❖ The programme of the 2019 High-Level Segment and High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) is available at this [link](#).
- ❖ The 2019 ECOSOC Management segment will take place from 6 – 7 June 2019 at UN Headquarters in New York, view event materials [here](#).
- ❖ The 2019 Humanitarian Affairs segment will take place from 24 – 26 June 2019 at UN Headquarters in New York, view event materials [here](#).

### Headline



Members of the AHAG with H.E. Mr. Jovenel Moise, President of Haiti



Ambassador Marc-André Blanchard, Chair of the AHAG greets young people during the visit of a school

The ECOSOC Ad Hoc Advisory Group (AHAG) undertook an official visit to Haiti from 22 to 24 May 2019. Chaired by H.E. Marc-André Blanchard, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations, the objective of the mission to Haiti was to assess and make recommendations on Haiti's long-term economic development. The AHAG also explored the prospects for deepening the partnership between the Haitian government and the international community in support of the country's efforts on economic recovery and development.

The Group held meetings with the President of Haiti and the Presidents of the Senate and Chamber of Deputies. The Group also visited the CODEVI Industrial park which currently employs 12000 people and has the potential to employ double that number in two years. The Group engaged with human rights groups, other NGOs and with the private sector and the leadership of the Police.

The AHAG also met with representatives of the UN System to gather information on the current status of the work of the United Nations in Haiti and its future engagement, including the on-going implementation of the UN Development Assistance Framework 2017-2021 and the current work of the United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti (MINUJUSTH), as well as plans for transitioning to a post-MINUJUSTH presence in Haiti. The report of the Group will be presented to ECOSOC in July Management Meeting.

## Events of ECOSOC and its Subsidiary Bodies

The ECOSOC **Inaugural Presidential Lecture Series** was held on 20 May 2019. Launched by President Inga



ECOSOC President H.E. Ms. Inga Rhonda King delivers her statement at the inaugural Presidential Lecture Series

Rhonda King, the first guest was Professor Steven Pinker of Harvard University on the theme, “*Reason, science, humanism and progress in creating the future we want*”. In her [remarks](#), Ambassador King emphasized the need for a forward-looking Economic and Social Council that continually adapts itself to provide the kind of policy analysis review and guidance suitable for today’s challenges. She added that the future will depend on policy choices today, informed also by the long arc of history. The President of the General Assembly, [H.E. Mrs. María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés](#), welcomed the ECOSOC President’s initiative and underscored that we would need reason, science and humanism and more multilateralism to achieve the SDGs.



Professor Pinker of Harvard University delivers his official statement

In his [lecture](#), Professor Pinker provided evidence that life, health, prosperity, safety, peace, knowledge and happiness have been on the rise. Pinker argued that progress has occurred when people applied reason and science to the goal of humanism. In his view, this was very much aligned with the SDGs. Pinker emphasized that progress achieved so far should embolden the UN to continue on the path to progress into the future.

The dialogue between Professor Pinker and H.E. Ambassador H. Elizabeth Thompson, Permanent Representative of Barbados to the UN focused on the SDGs and multilateralism. Pinker emphasized that today’s global challenges, such as climate change, respected no national borders, and therefore required a global response. Noting that problems were inevitable, but solvable, Pinker suggested that focus needed to be on identifying

the factors that led to progress. Pinker underscored the need for a quantitative data-oriented view of the world as a counterpart to the image and narrative driven approach.

With regard today’s challenges, such as climate change, Pinker underlined the importance of depoliticizing issues and changing the narrative to offer solutions for clean energy. While noting that the progress of artificial intelligence has been overestimated, Pinker underscored the need to adjust economic and social systems to compensate the workers impacted from AI.



Professor Pinker and H.E. Ambassador H. Elizabeth Thompson, Permanent Representative of Barbados, engaged in a conversation

According to Pinker, multilateralism has been successful, as evidenced by data. Pinker suggested that the United Nations take on a public relations challenge of restoring its brand and glorifying its achievements to date to renew trust in multilateralism. Science, reason and humanism needed to be defended to ensure progress. According to Pinker, “there is no limit to the betterments that can be attained if we continue to apply knowledge to enhance human flourishing”.

If you missed the event, you can watch the webcast at <https://bit.ly/2WfPXfk>. Professor Pinker’s presentation and the statements delivered can be found [here](#).

On 21 May 2019, ECOSOC opened its 3-day **Operational Activities Segment** (OAS). The Segment considered the Secretary-General’s report and its addenda on the implementation of 2016 resolution on the

Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review of UN system operational activities ([A/74/73-E/2019/14](#)) and the General Assembly resolution on the repositioning of the UN development system.



From Right to Left: ECOSOC President Ambassador King; UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres; and UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed

The opening session included an interactive discussion between the Secretary-General and Member States on the UN development system repositioning process. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres [called](#) on Member States to support four areas, among them, multi-country offices, revamping regional assets, the funding compact, and finally the system-wide strategic document. Participating in various sessions of this important event, UN Deputy Secretary General Amina Mohammed [stressed](#) notably that the Sustainable Development Goals cannot be achieved without a stronger regional response. She said that “We have the assets, the leadership and the expertise to make it happen. We need political will at all levels to take it forward”.

ECOSOC President, H.E. Ms. Inga Rhonda King [highlighted](#) that the 2019 was the first formal opportunity for Member States to review and deliberate on the implementation of the mandates from the resolution on the repositioning of the UN development system. She also noted that it was the final opportunity for the Council to consider the implementation of the current Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR) cycle and mandates of resolution 71/243.

ECOSOC President, H.E. Ms. Inga Rhonda King [highlighted](#) that the 2019 was the first formal opportunity for Member



ECOSOC Vice-President, H.E. Ms. Kira Danganan Azucena speaking at the Operational Activities Segment

ECOSOC Vice-President, H.E. Ms. Kira Danganan Azucena presiding over the Operational Activities Segment [emphasized](#) that the role of the OAS since the adoption of resolution 72/305 is to serve as a platform to ensure accountability for, and acceleration of, system-wide performance and results in relation to the 2030 Agenda and provide guidance to and overall coordination of the United Nations development system. She stressed that the overall process is critical in supporting the General Assembly in its work and shaping the future of the UN development system in a manner that meets the expectation of Member States.

Over the three days there were nine engaging interactive panel discussions with selected Resident Coordinators and other speakers on topics including the changes at the field level, the reinvigorated Resident Coordinator system and the new Development Cooperation Office (DCO), the regional and multi-country office reviews, the funding compact, the traditional dialogue with the Executive Heads of the UN funds and programmes, as well as aligning system-wide and entity-level governance for better accountability.

At the closing session, Ambassador Azucena [provided](#) an overall summary of the OAS focusing on the repositioning of the UN system with the transition to the new RC system, and the views of Member States on the overall process. The UN Deputy Secretary General highlighted the key messages she took from the discussion.

The **28<sup>th</sup> Session Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ)** took place in Vienna on 20-24 May 2019. The main topics presented at the CCPCJ were on “Preventing and countering crime motivated by intolerance or discrimination” and the “Role of criminal justice systems in enabling sustainable development”.



ECOSOC President H.E. Ms. Inga Rhonda King delivers her statement at the opening of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice.

ECOSOC President Inga Rhonda King delivered a [video message](#) at the opening of the session. In her message, she noted with appreciation that the Commission has undertaken a number of activities to advance the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, in particular SDG 16. Ambassador King also highlighted the important work of the Commission, as it strives to strengthen the capacity of Member States to prevent, detect, prosecute and combat all types of transnational organized crime, to provide access to justice for all and to build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

The **4<sup>th</sup> multi-stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the SDGs (STI Forum)** was held on 14 and 15 May 2019 on the theme "STI for ensuring inclusiveness and equality, with a special focus on SDGs 4, 8, 10, 13, and 16". The Forum dedicated sessions to these focus SDGs and also included sessions on cross-cutting issues including youth, gender, indigenous knowledge, and emerging technologies. The Forum was co-chaired by the former President of ECOSOC, H.E. Mrs. Marie Chatardová of the Czech Republic and H.E. Ms. H. Elizabeth Thompson of Barbados. The President of ECOSOC delivered an opening statement.



Left to right: Ambassador Elizabeth Thompson; Ambassador Rhonda King; and Ambassador Marie Chatardová at the STI Forum

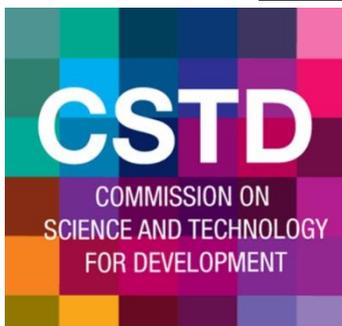
She [stressed](#) at the STI Forum the need to “collectively step up our efforts to leverage science, technology and innovation for the SDGs. Such action-oriented cooperation across and within countries and communities will be essential for making progress and bridging divides”.



ECOSOC President H.E. Ms. Inga Rhonda King at the opening of the exhibition

The President also opened a special exhibition of technology for the SDGs, featuring 10 young innovators who had been chosen through a global competition. These innovators brought solutions for bridging the education gap, transforming waste into sustainable materials, creating access to legal services for disadvantaged communities, promoting biodiversity and clean energy, and many others.

The 22nd session of the **Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD)** was held from 13-17 May 2019 on the themes, “The impact of rapid technological change on sustainable development,” and on the “role of science, technology and innovation (STI) in building resilient communities, including through the contribution of citizen science”. CSTD also reviewed the progress made in the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS). It also heard presentations on national science, technology and innovation policy reviews (STIP Reviews).

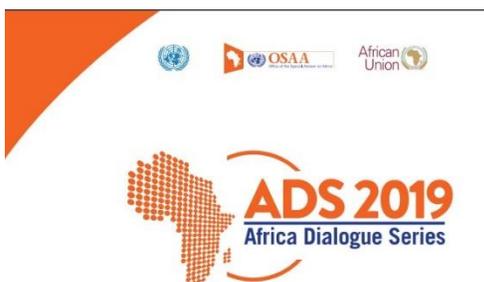


ECOSOC President Inga Rhonda King delivered a [video message](#) at the opening of CSTD. In her message, the President underscored the key role the Commission has played in providing high-level advice on the opportunities and challenges raised by STI, and the actions needed to ensure that STI benefits all humanity.

She noted that the gains from rapid technological change were not automatic and underscored the need to consider appropriate policies to maximize its benefits and reduce its negative effects.

## Other UN Events

The **Africa Dialogue Series on “Towards Durable Solutions for Forcibly Displaced Persons in Africa”** took place on 21 May 2019. H.E. Ms. Mona Juul, Vice-President of ECOSOC (Norway) [spoke](#) on behalf of the ECOSOC President Inga Rhonda King at the opening of the event and stressed the need for urgent and durable solutions for internally displaced persons, citing the rapid increase in the number of forcibly displaced persons across Africa.



Ambassador Juul stated that “Climate change displacement is a reality” and “Global temperature rise is a threat multiplier, aggravating already fragile situations, leading to forced displacement and migration as well as contributing to social tension and conflict”. She called on the international community, including the United Nations system, to enhance their commitment to work together coherently to better support countries to put them on a path to a resilient and risk-informed 2030 Agenda and to ensure that no one is left behind.

ECOSOC President Inga Rhonda King participated in the **High-level Meeting on Illicit Financial Flows**



ECOSOC President H.E. Ms. Inga Rhonda King delivers her statement at the opening of the High-level Meeting on Illicit Financial Flows

convened by the President of the General Assembly Maria Fernanda Espinosa Garcés on 16 May 2019. Ambassador King [stressed](#) that the “global community has expressed its deep concern about the impact of illicit financial flows caused by tax evasion, corruption and transnational organized crime, on the economic, social and political stability and development of societies”.

Referring to the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the need to mobilize all types of financial flows, public and private, domestic and international, she stressed that “Financial integrity is one of the foremost areas where we need urgent change”. That includes tackling illicit financial flows as an important means to support the timely implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

The 6<sup>th</sup> Session of the **Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction** was organized in Geneva from 13-17 May



ECOSOC President H.E. Ms. Inga Rhonda King delivers a video message at the opening of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction

2019 on the theme of “Resilience Dividend: Towards Sustainable and Inclusive Societies”. It was an opportunity for representatives from governments, international organizations, and stakeholders to review achievements and discuss accelerating action on sustainable development and the commitments of the Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction.

The ECOSOC President Inga Rhonda King delivered a [video message](#). She highlighted the importance of a risk-informed approach to sustainable development. She emphasized that it is clear that if the goals of the 2030 Agenda are to be achieved, the international community can no longer only begin to think about disaster risk after a disaster.

## Bilateral Meetings of the President of ECOSOC

On 17 May 2019, the President of ECOSOC, H.E. Ms. Inga Rhonda King met with the Minister of



The President of ECOSOC with Ms. Maryam Monsef, Minister of International Development and Minister for Women of Canada

International Development and Minister for Women and Gender Equality of Canada, the Honourable Maryam Monsef and H.E. Mr. Marc-André Blanchard, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations. They held discussions on Sustainable Development Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls, status of women, among other related topics.

On the margin of the Fourth STI Forum on 17 May 2019, the President of the ECOSOC, H.E. Ms. Inga Rhonda King met with the Managing Director of the Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries, Mr. Joshua Setipa.

They held an in-depth discussion on the challenges of the world's poorest countries through science, technology and innovation. The Technology Bank is working closely with the Technology Facilitation Mechanism which falls under the purview of ECOSOC.



The President of ECOSOC with Mr. Joshua Setipa, Managing Director, Technology Bank for the LDCs.