

# ECOSOC's consideration of country situations: The Horn of Africa, South Sudan and Haiti



UN Photo, Sophia Paris

## 1 The humanitarian situation in the Horn of Africa

One day after the United Nations declared famine in two regions of southern Somalia on 20 July 2011, the ECOSOC Bureau, decided to hold a special event on the humanitarian situation in the Horn of Africa. The special event attracted high-level speakers and included the High Commissioner for Refugees, the European Union Commissioner for Humanitarian Affairs, and the Secretary-General's Special Adviser on Africa. During the debate, Member States and United Nations agencies expressed commitment and pledges of solidarity and offered assistance to those affected by the crisis.

## ***The humanitarian situation in July 2011***

Ms. Amos, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, highlighted the dire situation in the Horn of Africa, where at the time, tens of thousands of people had already died and hundreds of thousands more were starving. On 20 July, a famine was declared in southern Bakool and Lower Shabelle regions of Somalia and eight other regions of southern Somalia were at risk of famine. Across the Horn of Africa, 11.5 million people were in urgent need of humanitarian assistance, presenting one of the gravest food crises in the world and the numbers were getting worse. The refugee influx from Somalia into Kenya and Ethiopia continued, with an exodus of 3,500 people a day arriving in the week prior to the special event in areas of Ethiopia and Kenya. In the Dadaab camp in Kenya alone, 20,000 new refugees awaited registration and accommodation.

In terms of humanitarian financing, in July, already some \$1.9 billion had been requested, through the Consolidated Appeals Process, to provide life-saving assistance and protection to affected people in Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia. Of this, less than half was funded, leaving a gap of over \$1 billion. The humanitarian community called on all to give generously. Many had already announced the disbursement of additional resources but Ms. Amos hoped that they could do more and warned that the crisis would not be a short one, as the United Nations and its partners fully expected to be dealing with the situation for at least the next six months.

Despite the many challenges—ranging from access and security to financing and bureaucratic constraints—humanitarian agencies are working hard to respond. In an effort to reach more children with life-saving interventions, the United Nations and its partners had scaled up emergency nutrition, water and sanitation, and immunization efforts to combat malnutrition and reduce disease. To expedite the delivery of

supplies into the worst-affected areas, the United Nations had started airlifting urgently needed medical, nutrition and water supplies.

## ***On Somalia***

The most affected areas of Somalia were in the south, particularly the region of Lower Shabelle, Middle and Lower Juba, Bay, Bakool, Benadir, Gedo and Hiraaan, which host an estimated 310,000 acutely malnourished children. Nearly half of the population in Somalia was facing a humanitarian crisis and was in urgent need of assistance. The number of people in crisis had increased by over one million in the previous six months. Over 166,000 Somalis had already fled the country to seek assistance and refuge in neighbouring countries since the start of the year, with over 100,000 of those fleeing since May. At the time, almost 40,000 new Somali arrivals have been registered in refugee camps in the region.

Ms. Amos warned that if nothing was done, the famine would spread to the rest of south Somalia within two months and its effects could spill over to countries across the region.

## ***Focus of the debate***

After the presentation by the speakers, the debate from the floor reminded participants that drought was not a new problem in the Horn of Africa but it was happening more often. Once-a-decade crises were now occurring every two years. In this light, many were asking why more had not been done to pre-empt this crisis, to build resilience, to put in place the resources needed and set agriculture and livestock management on a stronger footing. The humanitarian community present at the special event assured that it had been preparing for this situation and had helped build resilience through long-running projects. The current situation would have been worse if significant gains had not been made in the past.

Participants and Member States expressed their commitment to a united, coordinated and effective response, called for greater access and safety for humanitarian workers, so that more lives could be saved and pledged to increase their focus on building resilience to make communities better able to withstand future crises.

### **Ministerial Level Mini-Summit: The humanitarian response to the Horn of Africa crisis (24 September 2011)**

In addition to the ECOSOC special event, leaders from more than 60 countries came together on 24 September 2011, during the General Assembly's General Debate, to raise awareness of the scale and urgency of the humanitarian situation. During the event, more than US\$ 218 million of new humanitarian aid was pledged by Australia, Belgium, Chile, Finland, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Norway, the Republic of Korea, Switzerland and the Russian Federation. "Together, we must act to help the millions suffering in the Horn of Africa now, and find sustainable ways to build resilience against future droughts and food crises", said the United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator Valerie Amos. "We must keep this crisis and the plight of the people suffering because of it in the spotlight. I thank the Governments who have given generously both today and over the last months."

### **Somalia situation snapshot as of 28 September 2011**

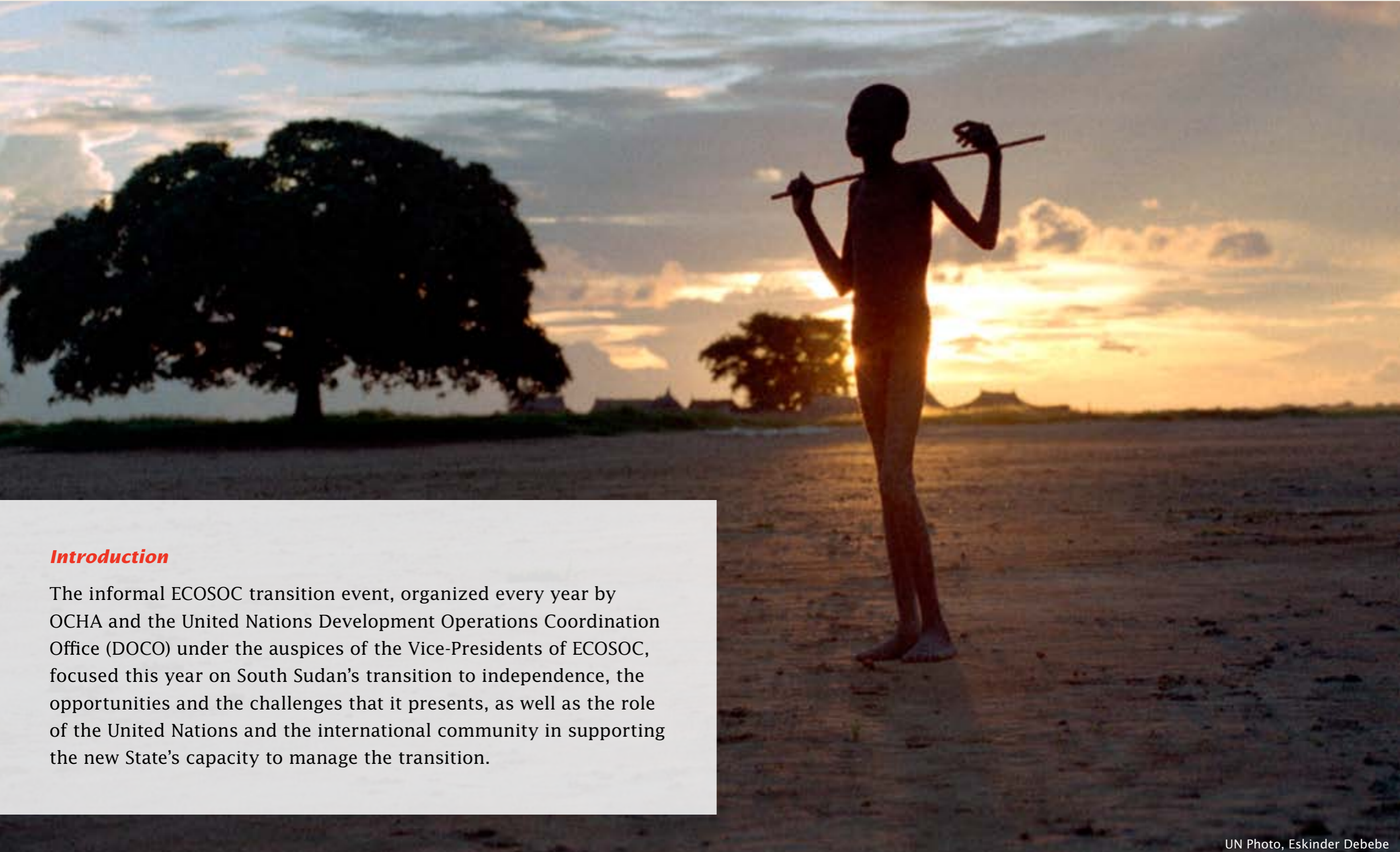
According to the Somalia Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit (FSNAU), four million Somalis remain in crisis nationwide, three million of whom are in the south. Of these, 750,000 people risk death in the next four months. So far, six regions in the south have been declared famine areas.

Currently, some 910,000 registered Somali refugees and asylum-seekers are in neighbouring countries, with Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya and Yemen hosting more than 90 per cent of them. Estimates are that Kenya is hosting some 500,000; Yemen 196,000; Ethiopia 183,000 and Djibouti 18,000 Somali refugees. Somali arrivals in Kenya continue at an average of 1,100 per day, bringing the total population in Dadaab, the world's largest refugee camp, to about 444,149. The Dollo Ado complex of camps in Ethiopia has received some 83,000 Somali arrivals already this year, at a current average of 300 new arrivals daily. The funding appeals for the Horn of Africa—requesting US\$ 2.48 billion—still need around US\$ 480 million to help the people most in need of critical assistance.

For more information about the humanitarian response to needs in the Horn of Africa visit:

<http://www.unocha.org/crisis/horn-africa-crisis>

## 2 Promoting durable peace and sustainable development in Sudan and South Sudan



### **Introduction**

The informal ECOSOC transition event, organized every year by OCHA and the United Nations Development Operations Coordination Office (DOCO) under the auspices of the Vice-Presidents of ECOSOC, focused this year on South Sudan's transition to independence, the opportunities and the challenges that it presents, as well as the role of the United Nations and the international community in supporting the new State's capacity to manage the transition.

It was a historical and memorable moment—one of the first international engagements of the Republic of South Sudan.

### **Shifting priorities on**

South Sudan, on the eve of statehood, is one of the most underdeveloped places in the world. The humanitarian situation remains very fragile. And yet, in few other places, so much has been done over such a short period as in the past six years, the interim period from 2005 to 2011. The main focus has been on relief but now the focus is transitioning to development. Similarly, priorities are shifting to service delivery and strengthening the rule of law. Providing effective security at the state and local levels is crucial. Panellists at the meeting noted the following key priorities going ahead: scaling up social service delivery, addressing remaining political issues and, finally, undertaking peace and conflict resolution/peacebuilding. The reconciliation of communities affected by years of conflict is just beginning.

### **Civilian capacities**

The discussions took place against the background of the findings of the *World Development Report* and the recommendations of the *Independent Civilian Capacity Review*. Both place a strong emphasis on the key role of national civilian capacities to build lasting peace, requiring strong partnerships. In 2005, South Sudan had few of the capacities required for governance and security. Since then, the Government had undertaken the fastest development of public institutions in modern statehood. A number of key governmental institutions and infrastructure are now in place. However, institutions remain fragile and individual capabilities are limited. Rapid scaling up of capacity in service provision is necessary although only a fraction of public servants has education and university degrees.

South Sudan's development plan includes a three-year strategy for capacity-building. The capacity gap remains perhaps the greatest challenge facing the young nation.

### **South-South cooperation**

Part of the strategy of rapidly addressing capacity challenges are initiatives with support from the United Nations Volunteers (UNVs), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the African Union (AU). Under the Rapid Capacity Placement Initiative, 150 specialist UNVs, including from the diaspora, are embedded in key public sector institutions. Under the IGAD Regional Initiative, 200 experienced civil servants are being deployed to core ministries. The IGAD project, supported by UNDP, is an example of South-South cooperation, as well as triangular cooperation, as Norway funds the project costs. The AU Initiative, also supported by UNDP, will see up to 1,000 technical experts from AU member States deployed to work within the Government of South Sudan (GoSS) civil service. As part of these initiatives, Kenya is contributing to capacity-building by training officers and undertaking several projects in South Sudan.

A protocol for capacity development is being developed in place, along with a compact including the donor community. It was noted by the panellists that the large numbers of populations displaced from South Sudan had the experience of living in other countries and continents. They will be returning to South Sudan with great expectations concerning the capacity of the Government to perform at an accelerated pace.

### **Transition**

When moving towards development, the transition needs to be managed with a clear sense of direction. The Government has, indeed, established its first three-year development plan. However,

the conditions in the south do not permit closing down humanitarian operations, which will continue to be required over the first years of statehood. Southerners are returning to one of the largest, semi-peacetime movements in recent times, including more than 600,000 people on the move, with more than 300,000 having returned from the north, and another 300,000 displaced by violent conflict in the south. South Sudan represents the single biggest state-building challenge of this generation, facing this challenge with an incredibly large capacity deficit. Addressing capacity gaps was one of the key elements of South Sudan's development programme.

In 2007, humanitarian operations were prematurely closed down, which led to a whole new structure having to be set up again. This time, best practices from other countries, such as Ethiopia, Kenya and Mozambique are being studied to make this transition period successful.

The resolution on a new peacekeeping mission in South Sudan was passed shortly before the meeting. It was recognized as very important to build on existing programmes, including working with DPKO for the mission to scale up certain initiatives instead of setting up new ones. Generally, it is important to let Juba take the lead on the way forward.

### ***International support***

The panellists urged the international community to provide support, given the enormous challenges South Sudan is facing in the transition. There are five pooled funds that need to be adjusted and evolved, with need for sectoral basket funds, instruments for stabilization and a fund for humanitarian assistance. The need for speed and flexibility, including funding is crucial. Speakers stressed the importance of coordination as well the necessity to go beyond



UN Photo, Isaac Billy

bureaucratic obstacles and provide resources through existing financial mechanisms.

More support is needed to the Office of the Resident Coordinator. Smooth transitions do not happen without the Resident Coordinator/ Humanitarian Coordinator (RC/HC) offices being equipped and well supported, requiring staff and funding. The issue of the United Nations delivering as one is important in South Sudan. As a post-conflict country, South Sudan could benefit from the expertise of the Peacebuilding Commission.

### ***Way ahead—development matters***

Development matters; it has to be equitable; and it does take time. The global community has to work together in South Sudan so that the country can become a success story. For this, South Sudan needs jobs—along with an increased sense of security. The people of South Sudan need to know that being a citizen means something; that the Government is responsible, as well as responsive. That taxes and revenues are used to develop the country for all its people. There is a need for a heightened sense for the Government, together with civil society, to deliver services and security. Finally, the importance of the relationship between Sudan and South Sudan will be the key for the region.

## **MODERATOR**

**Mr. Jordan Ryan**, Assistant Administrator and Director,  
Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery, UNDP

## **PANELLISTS**

**H.E. Mr. Gonzalo Gutiérrez Reinol**, Vice-President, ECOSOC,  
Permanent Representative of Peru to the United Nations

**H.E. Mr. Jan Grauls**, Vice-President, ECOSOC, Permanent  
Representative of Belgium to the United Nations

**H.E. Mr. Gier Chuang Aluong**, Minister of Internal Affairs,  
South Sudan (participated via video-link)

**Ms. Angeth Acol De Dut**, Under-Secretary, Ministry of Human  
Resource Development, South Sudan (participated via video-link)

**H.E. Mr. Dalmas Otieno**, Minister of State for Public Service,  
Kenya

**Mr. Mahboub Maalim**, Executive Secretary, IGAD

**Ms. Lise Grande**, UN Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian  
Coordinator, a.i., South Sudan



## 3 The long-term programme of support to Haiti

On 28 July, the Council considered the report of its *Ad Hoc* Advisory Group on Haiti ([E/2011/133](#)). This report, which was based on the Group's visit to Haiti from 15 to 18 June 2011, and on meetings with Haiti's development partners, provided an overview of noticeable progress made in the country's recovery process and of the challenges that continue to hinder it.

The report was introduced to the Council by Mr. Keith Morrill, Head of the Canadian delegation to the ECOSOC substantive session, speaking on behalf of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti. Mr. Nigel Fisher, Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator in Haiti, provided an update of the situation in the country via video-link from Port-au-Prince and presented key challenges for development actors, in particular, for the United Nations system. A debate with Council Members followed, in which 13 delegations and a non-governmental organization representative took the floor. The debate took place in a context marked by the absence of a functioning Government in the country.

The recommendations contained in the report were primarily addressed to Haiti's main partners and aimed at facilitating the effectiveness of aid and recovery. In this view, the increased capacity of the United Nations presence in Haiti to play a leadership role on humanitarian and development issues was welcomed. Discussions focused on the need to concentrate efforts on increasing national capacity-building, systematizing and coordinating joint United Nations programmes and pooling resources on the ground.

With regard to the Haitian Authorities, it was recognized that much progress was made to sustain recovery efforts. The newly elected Haitian authorities should make all necessary efforts to lead the coordination of donor support and to build on existing plans, structures and programmes to avoid the “tabula rasa” effect that would create further delays. The extension of the Interim Haiti Reconstruction Commission's mandate was considered important in that respect.



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### ***Targeting urgent needs***

Some areas of concern stood out in the discussions. At the political level, the promotion of constructive interaction between the Parliament and the new Government was recommended, in order to facilitate the preparations of the budget and the definition of future development plans. At the economic level, the implementation of a national policy for job creation was seen as an important step towards enhanced social dialogue.

Cross-cutting those two areas was the issue of Rule of Law, which has to prevail so as to guarantee key economic, political and social enablers in the areas of justice, security and property titles. This would facilitate the Haitian private sector development and foreign investments, including the banking sector, and would

include the underlying issue of land registration that touches all aspects of reconstruction and recovery. The Government of Haiti was encouraged to start reforms in the country, including land reform, in order to address IDP cases and provide the foundation for long-term recovery. Effective decentralization was considered key in that context.

### ***Aligning aid to Haitian priorities***

Assistance by the international community and, more specifically, the donor community, remains essential in order to keep assisting in the recovery and reconstruction of Haiti, as well as its longer-term development. The international community should also adapt its support to the priorities of the new Government, when in place, and empower Haitian ministries through capacity-building. The need for an institutional alignment between the Interim Haiti Recovery Commission and the sector tables for aid coordination established at the level of Haitian ministries was highlighted as a way to avoid the emergence of a parallel process for planning, coordination and oversight.

Echoing the complaints made by some partners during the ECOSOC Group's visit to Haiti that funding was not aligned to real needs, speakers highlighted the need for funding of long-term projects identified by the Government as priority areas, such as environment, employment and education and using national mechanisms, such as the National Education Fund. Meanwhile, civil society and international NGOs had to increasingly work in coordination with the different partners to improve implementation of recovery and reconstruction activities.

### ***Sustaining international support***

The discussions highlighted the need that Haiti remains on the international agenda and that appropriate support be provided to the

country, in particular, through a strong United Nations presence on the ground through the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) and the United Nations country team, both in Port-au-Prince and in other vulnerable areas of the country.

While improvements were noticed on the ground, speakers agreed that they were far from where the country needed to be, in order to ensure its political stability and economic and social development. Haiti, therefore, needed a long-term development vision, a crucial step in translating recent successes into sustainable progress. To this end, it was considered crucial that all political actors play their part and take the necessary steps to ensure the adequate functioning of

State institutions. A continued mobilization of the donor community in support of Haiti also remained crucial for its short- and long-term stability.

The Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti will continue to monitor closely the economic and social situation in Haiti and the sustainability and effectiveness of international support to the country, with a view to presenting its findings and recommendations to the Council at its substantive session of 2012.

For more information about the ECOSOC Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti visit: <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/adhocmech/haiti.shtml>