

8 July 2008

**2008 ECOSOC Substantive Session
Coordination Segment**

**Panel discussion on “The role of the Economic and Social Council in
addressing violence against women in all its forms and manifestations: A
dialogue with the chairpersons of the functional commissions”**

New York, 8 July 2008

4:00 – 6:00 pm

**Introductory remarks by
H.E. Mr. Antonio Pedro Monteiro Lima
Vice-President of ECOSOC**

Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the pleasure to open the round table discussion on “The role of the Economic and Social Council in addressing violence against women in all its forms and manifestations: A dialogue with the chairpersons of the functional commissions”.

This round table will provide an opportunity for the Council to follow up on General Assembly resolution 61/143 on “Intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women”.

The GA resolution invited the ECOSOC and its functional commissions to discuss the question of violence against women in all its forms and manifestations and to set priorities for addressing this issue in their future work programmes. It also invited these bodies to transmit the outcome of the discussion to the Secretary-General for his annual report to the General Assembly on this issue.

Violence against women is a dehumanizing phenomenon. It does not only hamper efforts to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women, but also to reduce poverty and hunger. The in-depth study of the Secretary-General on this issue has shown that violence against women has had a serious impact on the achievement of all these objectives.

Since the adoption of the General Assembly resolution on this subject, several functional commissions have started focusing on how violence against women has impacted their work.

A round table discussion on this theme in the coordination segment provides an opportunity for the Council to review what has been learned so far from the experience of the functional commissions on this issue. It is also an opportunity to see how this knowledge can inform the Council's reflection on how it could contribute to the efforts to prevent and eliminate violence against women.

The Council has an opportunity to set new priorities for its future work in order to follow up on the question of violence against women, including through its oversight function on the work of the functional commissions.

The Council could, for example, explore ways to integrate the discussion on this issue in the next cycle of the Annual Ministerial Review in 2010 and 2011, when the Council will focus on gender equality and education, respectively.

It is now with great pleasure that I give the floor to Mr. Olivier Belle, chairman of the Commission on the Status of Women, who will moderate the discussion. Mr. Belle, you have the floor.