



Integration Segment

**Achieving sustainable development through employment creation and decent work for all
1 April 2015**

**H.E. Ambassador Vladimir Drobnjak
Vice-President of the Economic and Social Council**

Closing Remarks

Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

We have now concluded the 2015 integration segment of the Economic and Social Council. I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to everyone who has taken part in the intense and substance-rich deliberations over the last three days. We were honoured by the presence of a President, two Prime Ministers, a number of ministers and deputy ministers, a deputy mayor, civil society, academia, private sector and labour representatives. All of them truly enriched our discussions.

During this year's integration segment we addressed central issues such as economic growth, inequalities, climate change, ILO norms and standards, skills/jobs mismatch, among others. We looked at means of implementation in addition to solutions and partnerships that are required for an integrated approach to employment creation and decent work for all.

I am encouraged and inspired by all of the innovative ideas presented here for achieving sustainable development through employment creation and decent work for all. I am heartened to know that the integration segment has inspired some concrete policy recommendations and action-oriented solutions to promote policy coherence in economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development for the promotion of full employment and decent work for all. Certainly, the discussions we led and the conclusions

we draw from this segment can provide additional food for thought in the elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda, in particular relating to SDG 8.

I would like to share with you some highlights arising from our discussions:

- Economic growth has not generated jobs as expected, due to insufficient demand. We thus need to estimate aggregate demand through financial and tax policies. A carbon tax and a financial transaction tax could help stimulate the economy.
- We need to break the silos separating interrelated issues such as decent work, poverty eradication, industrialization, women's empowerment and the promotion of trade and investment. Achieving policy coherence is at the core of sustainable development for all.
- For Africa, infrastructure and industrialisation are the critical pillars for economic growth and job creation.
- In the global quest for 600 million new jobs, Africa must have its fair share.
- Making dignity and prosperity the norm in labour markets is not just ethically right; it is also good for business.
- Trade unions play a crucial role in promoting decent work. For effective social dialogue, respect for the fundamental rights of freedom of association and collective bargaining is essential.
- New innovative forms of social dialogue—drawing on the participation of trade unions, civil society, governments and businesses—are needed to adequately address evolving labour markets and consequent challenges in the 21st century. ECOSOC should consider launching such a dialogue.
- We need to formalize the informal economy through provision of social protection and job security.
- We must increase women's participation in the labour market, because women can be engines of growth.
- We need to provide our youth with the right skills and education that are in demand in today's job market.
- We do not have to choose between environmental sustainability and job creation; they are rather mutually reinforcing. Transitioning to more environmentally sustainable approaches can have a positive impact on job creation, quality and productivity. We must ensure that transition to a green economy is a just transition for workers.

- Governments need to promote policies which provide incentives for investment in sustainable development and job creation, and should partner with the private sector, development banks, entrepreneurs and multilateral organizations to advance progress.
- Creating the environment for inclusive growth requires transparency, a just and efficient tax system, as well as international cooperation and smarter aid that can spur investment and create an enabling environment.

I am confident that this integration segment has provided countries and regions with the opportunity to learn from one another regarding the issue at hand. Here, I would like to thank all of you again for sharing your experiences.

So what happens next? How do we make sure that there is a follow-up to the outcome of the Integration Segment? I am pleased to inform you that I and the Director-General of ILO are working towards launching a Global Network of Stakeholders on Employment Creation and Decent Work for Sustainable Development. We are holding consultations with the potential members of this network. This network will be ECOSOC's contribution towards addressing this global challenge of monumental proportions.

The invaluable discussions and recommendations from the three days of the integration segment will be compiled into a Vice-President's summary and will be made available on the ECOSOC website. This outcome will serve as an important contribution to the high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council, including the high-level political forum on sustainable development, convened under the auspices of ECOSOC.

Ladies and Gentleman,

I would also like to acknowledge the proposal made today that the 2016 Integration Segment should focus on "harnessing the power of digital technologies for achieving the SDGs". This is indeed a welcome proposal that the Bureau will consider.

I take this opportunity to thank ILO and UNDESA for their excellent support in organizing this segment. They truly delivered as one.

With that, I hereby declare closed the integration segment of the 2015 session of the Economic and Social Council.

Thank you.