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2011 ECOSOC SUBSTANTIVE SESSION
Opening of the coordination segment

Geneva, 11 July 2011, 10:00 am

Introductory remarks by
H.E. Mr. Abulkalam Abdul Momen, Vice-President of the Economic and Social Council

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to open the 2011 coordination segment, which will take place for three and a half days starting from today.

This year's segment will focus on three main issues, a) the Follow-up to the Ministerial Declaration of 2010; b) the Follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development; and c) the presentation of the report of the Chief Executives Board (CEB).

In addition, a special event on "The right to development and global partnership for development" will be organized on Tuesday, 12 July, to mark the 25th anniversary of the adoption of the UN Declaration on the Right to Development.

I would like to start with a few words on this year's main theme, namely the role of the UN system in promoting the implementation of the Ministerial Declaration of 2010, the consideration of which will start on Wednesday. Promoting gender equality and women's empowerment is not simply a matter of justice or human rights. It is about tapping into the potential of one-half of the world's population and providing opportunities to reduce poverty, hunger, malnutrition, disease, environmental degradation and violence. While the task ahead of us is indeed challenging, we are counting on the strong leadership of

UN Women and the support and cooperation of all partners, including Member States, regional organizations, NGOs and the private sector.

The 2010 Ministerial Declaration reaffirmed Member States' commitment to achieving the gender-related internationally agreed development goals by 2015. The Declaration called for integrated, comprehensive, multisectoral and gender-responsive approaches to the MDGs, which are based on strong coordination and cooperation across all sectors.

The central role of ECOSOC is highlighted in the Ministerial Declaration, which requested the Council to promote and ensure effective and systematic gender mainstreaming into all areas of its work, including in its subsidiary bodies.

In the course of its deliberation on the matter, the Council will take stock of progress made in strengthening a coordinated approach by the UN system in this field, one year after the decision by the General Assembly to create UN Women. The Council will also review how the system uses the cross-cutting issues identified in the 2010 Ministerial Declaration as leverage to accelerate progress on gender-related development goals. Although the issue of gender mainstreaming is traditionally considered in the general segment, this year, it will be considered in the coordination segment for thematic coherence. Due to the nature of the issue, particularly the increasing need for coordination among the relevant actors, we may wish to continue to consider gender mainstreaming in the coordination segment in future years.

I would now like to say a few words about the special event to mark the 25th anniversary of the United Nations Declaration on the Right to Development. The event will be co-moderated by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms. Navanethem Pillay and the Under-Secretary-General For Economic and Social Affairs, Mr. Sha Zukang. The event will provide an opportunity to discuss how the promotion of the right to development and the achievement of a global partnership for development can reinforce each other and how the UN system can use these synergies. The President of the Human Rights Council will be one of the panelists for this event, allowing a new and welcome interaction between the two Councils.

Also, tomorrow afternoon, the Council will hear a presentation of the annual overview report of the CEB by Assistant Secretary-General Thomas Stelzer, which will be followed by an interactive discussion on the matter.

This year's segment will appraise three reports of the Secretary-General, and include five panel discussions. The panel discussions will focus on the issues of a) global economic governance and development, b) financial support for the development efforts of LDCs, c) gender equality and women's empowerment, and d) gender discrimination and gender stereotypes. I look forward to active discussions on these important issues.

Under this Segment, the Council is expected to adopt a number of resolutions, including on the main theme of last year's annual ministerial review, namely on the coordinated work of the UN system on gender equality and the empowerment of women, on gender mainstreaming, on Financing for Development, on the Global Jobs Pact and on the Ad Hoc Panel of Experts on the world financial and economic crisis and its impact on development.

I thank you.

