

**Summary of the Closing Session of the  
Economic and Social Council's (ECOSOC)  
High-level Segment of the 2012 Substantive Session**

**Tuesday, 10 July 2012**

**H.E. Mr. Miloš Koterec, President of the Economic and Social Council**, said the 54-member body had “come a long way” in the preparation and adoption of the Ministerial Declaration (document E/2012/L.10\*) “Promoting productive capacity, employment and decent work to eradicate poverty in the context of inclusive, sustainable and equitable economic growth at all levels for achieving the Millennium Development Goals”. The President stressed the importance of the international community focusing specifically on youth unemployment and underemployment. The Bureau was keen on adopting the Declaration because it dealt with a subject of utmost importance. The President stated that he was aware that some delegations still wanted more time to consider the Declaration. However, he felt that more time would not have helped in this case. He instead urged Members to record their reservations if necessary.

The Ministerial Declaration was then adopted by consensus.

Several delegations then took the floor to clarify their positions or note reservations to the text. The representative of the **United States** said her delegation was pleased to join consensus on the Ministerial Declaration, which rightly highlighted the importance of shared commitment to overcoming hurdles to decent employment for all in the twenty-first century. She wished to clarify, however, that her delegation understood paragraph 10 of the text to relate only to those obligations and commitments already undertaken by States. Further, all the elements of the Declaration should be interpreted in a manner consistent with international law and with the United Nations Charter.

The representative of **India** stated that his delegation had joined the consensus in the spirit of constructive engagement. However, he regretted that the Declaration did not underline the importance of employment as strongly as his delegation would have liked. He clarified that India understood that paragraphs 27 and 46 did not refer to matters of compliance with International Labour Organization (ILO) resolutions, but instead meant that States were to undertake their own measures.

The representative of **Ireland**, speaking on behalf of the **European Union**, recognized that achieving consensus had not been an easy process. Less than three weeks ago, Rio+20 had reaffirmed the overarching role of the three pillars of sustainable development. It had highlighted the importance of green economy, and the fact that each country should implement such policies in their own way. The European Union regretted that more specific measures pertaining to the green economy did not make it into the final Declaration. He stated that the green economy is critical for poverty eradication, decent job creation, food security and ecosystem resilience.

The representative of **Bolivia** stated that his delegation would have liked to have had a few more hours to “fine-tune” the document. More time would likely have changed operative paragraph 5, stressing that it would also have been important to pay homage to the Rio conference and its conclusions. Bolivia was opposed to the way the paragraph was put forward. Rio+20 had already reached conclusions on its themes, therefore it was not appropriate to say that the Council would

“address” those issues. Instead, the paragraph should have read in the past tense and not reconsider what was already accomplished in Rio. It should have further mentioned that countries had the sovereign right to choose their own approaches and tools for sustainable development.

The representative of **Ecuador** expressed reservations with regard to paragraph 5, which reflected the content of paragraph 2 of the Rio outcome. He agreed that the themes of Rio+20 had already been dealt with. Ecuador had hoped instead for an outcome dealing with the follow-up to the conference. Furthermore, he stated that there had been a number of attempts to reinterpret the section on the green economy, which was one of the tools available to countries, but stressed that each country should take its own approach in achieving sustainable development.

In his closing statement, **Mr. Sha Zukang, Under-Secretary-General, Department of Economic and Social Affairs**, highlighted the new global challenges that have emerged since he assumed his post in 2007. These included weakening economic growth, rising joblessness and increasing environmental degradation. He congratulated the Economic and Social Council on adopting a strong Ministerial Declaration that could serve as an international “jobs roadmap”. He also pointed to the success of the Annual Ministerial Review and Development Cooperation Forum as evidence of ECOSOC’s natural role for shaping the Rio+20 follow-up and post-2015 development framework.

**H.E. Mr. Miloš Koterec, President of ECOSOC**, closed the high-level segment by urging delegations and participants to join the Bureau in discussions on how the ECOSOC system could be strengthened and effectively utilized in processes related to the Rio+20 follow-up and the post-2015 development framework. Specifically, he proposed the need to re-examine the format and staging of ECOSOC’s work with a view toward taking a more clustered approach that linked the work of the substantive session with that of the functional commissions and subsidiary organs. To improve the effectiveness of the ECOSOC system, the Council could convene substantive meetings on specific themes and issues throughout the year. These initiatives would guarantee coherence, while building on the strengths of existing structures.

The High-level Segment formally ended at approximately 2:00 p.m.