

ECOSOC News

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Newsletter on the work of the United Nations Economic and Social Council

The [54-member Economic and Social Council](#) serves as the central forum for discussing international economic and social issues, and for formulating policy recommendations addressed to Member States and to the United Nations. It makes or initiates studies and reports; makes recommendations on international economic, social, cultural, educational, health and related matters; and promotes respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms. Subsidiary bodies, commissions and committees of ECOSOC carry out its year-round work. ECOSOC strengthens cooperation within the United Nations system, coordinates the work of the specialized agencies and consults with non-governmental organizations. A substantive session of the Council is convened annually in July, and supplementary formal meetings as well as informal panels on topical issues are held throughout the year.

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The Members of the Bureau of ECOSOC as elected on 17 January 2007

President of ECOSOC:

H. E. Ambassador Dalius Cekuolis (Lithuania)

Vice-Presidents of ECOSOC:

H. E. Ambassador Youcef Yousfi (Algeria)

H. E. Ambassador Léo Mérorès (Haïti)

H. E. Ambassador Hjálmar W. Hannesson (Iceland)

H. E. Ambassador Lauro L. Baja, Jr. (Philippines)



UN Photo/Eskinder Debebe

2007 ECOSOC Organizational Session:
[H.E. Mr. Dalius Cekuolis](#) (Fourth from left), President of ECOSOC for 2007, delivers his opening statement, 17 January 2007-ECOSOC Chamber

I - Past Events

A - ECOSOC

Adoption of General Assembly resolution 61/16, “Strengthening the Economic and Social Council” - 20 November 2006

On 20 November 2006, the General Assembly adopted [resolution 61/16](#) entitled “Strengthening the Economic and Social Council”. The resolution builds on the World Summit outcome and decides on ways to strengthen the Council as a principal Charter body.

Key ways to strengthen the Council’s role are:

- the holding of substantive *Annual Ministerial Reviews* on the implementation of the internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs;

- the holding of biennial high-level *Development Cooperation Forum* in order to enhance the implementation of international development cooperation issues;
- the convening of ad hoc meetings on *specific humanitarian emergencies* in order to raise awareness and promote the engagement of all stakeholders in support of international relief efforts aimed at addressing those emergencies;
- the interaction with the newly established *Peacebuilding Commission* on the economic and social dimension of post-conflict recovery and peace building.

Meeting of the Bureau of the Economic and Social Council with the Chairpersons of the functional commissions 15 January 2007

On 15 January 2007, a meeting of the Bureau of the Economic and Social Council with the Chairpersons of the functional commissions took place under the Chairmanship of the President of the Council, H.E. Mr. Ali Hachani. The meeting served as an excellent opportunity for the Council to provide guidance to its subsidiary machinery with a view to enhancing policy coherence.

Discussions mainly revolved around how the reform of ECOSOC would impact on the working methods of the functional commissions; what guidance and actions were expected from the Council in order to improve policy coherence and help the functional commissions to better target their contributions to the Council’s work; and how increased interaction might be achieved amongst the functional commissions so as to enhance coherence and synergy in the overall work in promoting the United Nations’ Development Agenda.

The Chairpersons all voiced readiness on the part of their respective commissions to

readjust their work programmes in support of the new architecture of the Council, particularly the Annual Ministerial Reviews and the Development Cooperation Forum. Several mentioned that the process of realigning their work programmes accordingly had already begun. The need for clarity in terms of the methodology in the implementation of these new mechanisms was stressed so as to effectively enable this adjustment. Some also proposed the establishment of a common theme which all subsidiary bodies could consider and provide an input on a regular basis to the Council.

The President concluded by urging the commissions and others to strengthen their interconnecting links, and declared that ECOSOC would endeavour in the future to hold similar meetings with its subsidiary machinery in an effort to further strengthen cooperation and collaboration.

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New Economic and Social Council President Dalius Cekuolis of Lithuania takes office with four Vice-Presidents, 17 January 2007



The Members of the ECOSOC Bureau as of 17 January 2007 (From left to right)

Vice-President of ECOSOC:
H. E. Ambassador Hjalmar
W. Hannesson (Iceland)

Vice-President of ECOSOC:
H. E. Ambassador Youcef
Yousfi (Algeria)

President of ECOSOC:
H. E. Ambassador Dalius
Cekuolis (Lithuania)

Vice-President of ECOSOC:
H. E. Ambassador Lauro L.
Baja, Jr. (Philippines)

Vice-President of ECOSOC:
H. E. Ambassador Léon
Mèrorès (Haiti)

UN Photo/Mark Garten

[H.E. Mr. Dalius Cekuolis](#) of Lithuania was elected 63rd President of the United Nations Economic and Social Council on 17 January 2007. The other members of the bureau include the Permanent Representatives of Algeria, Haiti, Iceland and the Philippines representing their respective regional groups. The new bureau of ECOSOC will oversee the launch of its new functions as agreed by the 2005 World Summit and endorsed by the General Assembly in November 2006 ([A/RES/61/16](#)). These functions will include, among others, the holding of Annual Ministerial Reviews (AMR) and a biennial Development Cooperation Forum (DCF) which will be launched during the High-level Segment of the Council's substantive session, to be held in Geneva in July 2007.

During the meeting, Mr. Ban Ki-moon delivered his [first address](#) to the Council as Secretary-General of the United Nations. Mr. Ki-moon highlighted his vision for ECOSOC and stressed that the "Council is on the cusp of renewal. The opportunity to revitalize its original vision is within reach. I hope that new leadership at both the Secretariat and the Council can work together to seize this moment, and

advance our common development goals."

Ambassador Cekuolis, in his [opening remarks](#) to the Council reiterated that the "spirit of cooperation for achieving the development goals is very well captured in the global partnership for development. I believe that the Economic and Social Council has an instrumental role in making this partnership work effectively and efficiently".

The new President of ECOSOC, H.E. Mr. Dalius Cekuolis also participated at a United Nations [press briefing](#) on 18 January 2007. Ambassador Cekuolis spoke about his plans for carrying out reform of ECOSOC, especially to track and promote progress on the Millennium Development Goals and other UN-development objectives.

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Resumed Substantive session of 2006 and Organizational session of 2007

The Council took several decisions on the organization of its substantive session for 2007, which will be held at the Palais des Nations in Geneva from 2 to 27 July 2007. The dates for the various segments are as follows:

High-level Segment	2 to 5 July 2007
Dialogue with the Executive Secretaries of the regional commissions	6 July 2007
Coordination Segment	6 to 10 July 2007
Operational activities Segment	10 to 13 July 2007
Humanitarian affairs Segment	16 to 18 July 2007
General Segment	19 to 26 July 2007
Conclusion of the work of the Council	27 July 2007

The High-level Segment will include the new Annual Ministerial Review and Development Cooperation Forum, in accordance with the World Summit outcome and General Assembly [resolution 61/16](#). Contributions from the Council’s functional and regional commissions and the organizations of the UN system have been solicited for these two events (decision 2006/274). The Council also decided to devote its coordination segment to the theme “The role of the United Nations system in promoting full and productive employment and decent work for all” ([decision 2006/274](#)), which will provide a follow-up to the High-level Segment of 2006 and to the Ministerial Declaration adopted on the same topic.

As for the operational activities segment, it will be devoted to the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the UN system and implementation of the [GA resolution 59/250](#) and [ECOSOC resolution 2006/14](#).

The Council took a decision on the distribution of the ten new seats on the Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD) ([decision 2006/267](#)). Three of those seats are allocated to the Group of African States, two to the Group of Asian States, one to the Group of Eastern European States, two to the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States and two to the Group of Western European and other States. In its [resolution 2006/46](#), the Council had decided that CSTD should assist ECOSOC as the focal point in the system-wide follow-up to the World Summit on Information Society and that its composition would be enlarged by the inclusion of ten new members, namely 43 instead of 33 members.

The Council decided to grant special consultative status to the following non-governmental organizations: the Danish National Association for Gays and Lesbians, the International Lesbian and Gay Association – Europe and the Lesbian and Gay Federation in Germany (decisions [2006/259](#), [2006/260](#) and [2006/261](#)).

ECOSOC President speaks at the Security Council and General Assembly on the issue of Peacebuilding

31 January, 6 and 20 February 2007

In recent statements, the President of ECOSOC, Ambassador Dalius Cekuolis, before the General Assembly and the Security Council has emphasized the economic and social aspects of peacebuilding in the debate on the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) and on security

sector reform (SSR).

In his statement on 31 January 2007 at the open debate of the Security Council on the Peacebuilding Commission, the President stressed the strong correlation between low levels of development and violent conflict,

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noting that nine out of ten countries with lowest human development indicators have experienced conflict at some point or other since 1990. Because of the linkage between development, peace and security, Ambassador Cekuolis said that more focused efforts should be made to advance and oversee the implementation of internationally agreed goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. The President also cited a number of lessons learned from the experience of the Ad Hoc Advisory Groups on African countries emerging from conflict, which could be further discussed and brought to bear on the future work of the PBC.

In his statement on 6 February 2007 to the General Assembly on the Peacebuilding Commission, the President welcomed the emerging consensus that interaction between the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council would enhance the effective functioning of the Peacebuilding Commission. In this connection, Ambassador Cekuolis pointed to the new roles of ECOSOC as being highly relevant. He said that the annual ministerial reviews of progress made in the implementation of the internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs, will strengthen its capacity to contribute in the area

of peacebuilding as it will give the Council the opportunity to continually assess how conflict is affecting the implementation of the development agenda. Similarly, the high-level biennial development cooperation forum can also provide a unique opportunity for the Council to examine how development cooperation can best support countries in conflict or emerging from it.

In his statement to the Security Council on 20 February 2007 during the open debate on “the role of the Security Council in supporting security sector reform,” the President said that lack of progress on security sector reform in post-conflict countries will continue to contribute to political instability and uncertainty and thus hamper development. Moreover, he noted that progress on poverty reduction will make the task of security sector reform easier as demobilized soldiers and ex-combatants will be more willing to give up the gun. For this reason, the President suggested that special attention must be given to demobilized soldiers and ex-combatants in national poverty reduction strategies and also within the context of development cooperation activities of the donor community.

B- ECOSOC Subsidiary Bodies

Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations

The Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations met at United Nations Headquarters from 22 to 31 January 2007. The Committee had before it 140 applications for consultative status with ECOSOC, including applications deferred from previous sessions. Of those applications, the Committee recommended 92 applications for consultative status and deferred 42 organizations for further consideration at a later date. In addition, the Committee reclassified five organizations and took note of 100 quadrennial reports of organizations in general and special status.

The Committee did not recommend to grant consultative status to the organization World Sindhi Institute and to the Coalition gaie et lesbienne du Quebec.

The Committee also closed consideration of the following four organizations for not having responded to the questions posed by Committee members: Angel Foundation, Association Wadelbarka pour la prospérité des familles mauritaniennes, Conflict Management Group and Religious Freedom Coalition. The Committee took note of the withdrawal of the request for consultative status by the Swiss-based organization Geneva Call.

The Committee heard the Chief of the NGO Section/DESA reporting on the responsibilities and activities of the Section under the agenda item on the Strengthening of the NGO section and report on the activities of United Nations Non Governmental Organizations

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Informal Regional Network ([UN-NGO-IRENE](#)) and the related Trust Fund established by [ECOSOC decision 2002/225](#). Ms. Mezoui made special mention of Turkey's \$10,000 contribution which has helped UN-NGO-IRENE to invite 240 NGOs to participate in high-level consultation meetings in Turkey. A report on these meetings was submitted to the Turkish government on 16 January 2007.

Ms. Mezoui reaffirmed that the focus of the capacity building programmes is to benefit developing countries in Africa and Asia, including reaching out to NGOs through the establishment of regional coordinators. She stressed the important contributions that the NGOs in consultative status, including the UN-NGO-IRENE network, could make to the new functions of ECOSOC, particularly the Annual Ministerial Review (AMR) and the Development Cooperation Forum (DCF). A major deliverable of the outreach efforts carried out by the NGO Section have been the increased involvement of NGOs in consultative status in the work of the Council.

The committee reaffirmed its support to the Section and its strengthening. It also expressed its satisfaction with the savings in meetings costs made possible by the Paperless Committee which contributed to the efficiency of the Session Committee and enabled it to complete its work two days ahead of time. These two days will be added to the May session of the Committee which was considered too short by some members of the Committee.

The 19-member Committee chaired by Colombia will resume its 2007 session on 14-18 May 2007.

The membership of the Committee includes: Angola, Burundi, China, Colombia, Cuba, Dominica, Egypt, Guinea, India, Israel, Pakistan, Peru, Qatar, Romania, Russian Federation, Sudan, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and United States of America.

**Commission for Social Development,
45th Session
7-16 February 2007**

The [forty-fifth session](#) of the [Commission for Social Development](#), held in New York from 7 to 16 February 2007, focused on employment, youth and ageing. The Commission devoted the review segment of its two year implementation cycle to the promotion of full employment and decent work for all. It discussed youth unemployment as its emerging issue and reviewed and supplemented the World Programme of Action for Youth by addressing new important dimensions.

On the issue of ageing, the Commission adopted a resolution on the modalities of the first review and appraisal of the International Plan of Action on Ageing adopted in Madrid five years ago. Other issues discussed during the session included the social dimensions of the New Partnership for the Development of Africa (NEPAD), the report of the UNRISD and the latest report of the Special Rapporteur on Disability.

**Intergovernmental preparatory meeting for the 15th Session of the
Commission on Sustainable Development
26 February-2 March 2007**

The [Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting \(IPM\) of the Commission on Sustainable Development](#), held in New York from 26 February to 2 March 2007, culminated in a lively discussion on policy options for energy, industrial development, air pollution, climate change and cross-cutting issues. The week-long

meetings were scheduled in preparation for the Commission on Sustainable Development's fifteenth session, to be held from 30 April to 11 May 2007. The draft Chairman's negotiating document issued at the end of the IPM will serve as a basis for discussions at CSD 15, which will adopt concrete policy decisions to

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reach the goals set in “Agenda 21” and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation in relation to the four thematic issues.

Beginning four years ago, the Commission agreed on a multi-year program consisting of different thematic clusters of issues in two-year cycles. The first cycle was from 2004-2005, addressing water, sanitation and human settlements. The next cycle (2008-2009) will address agriculture, rural development, land, drought, desertification and Africa.

The draft document called on Governments and the United Nations to work with major groups and stakeholders to take action on the four thematic issues of the current cycle. In regard to energy, it states that fossil-fuels will remain prominent sources of energy for many decades to come; however, renewable energy should be researched and expanded, giving access to the poor. Industrial development was

deemed crucial for sustainable economic growth, eradication of poverty and employment creation; thus, the draft document recommended more sustainable practices of production and consumption. Under air pollution, the draft recommended 33 policy options, stating that air pollution should be addressed at the national, regional and international levels. Climate change was address by the intergovernmental preparatory meeting with the understanding that the work of the CSD is meant to complement, but not duplicate, the work of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. Twenty-eight policy options were suggested, focusing on cleaner practices and more research and funding. A final section suggested follow-up and review of implementation of CSD decisions over the span of one- or two-days during the 2010-2011 and 2014-2015 cycles.

**Statistical Commission
38th Session
27 February-2 March 2007**

At the [38th session](#) of the Statistical Commission, which was held from 27 February to 2 March 2007, more than one hundred thirty representatives from national capitals, most of whom heads of national statistical offices, gathered in New York this year to celebrate the Commission's 60th anniversary. Against the backdrop of the anniversary, the Commission focused on education statistics as its main theme, among other issues.

The Commission made technical recommendations on the 2010 round of national population and housing censuses, and on the revision of the system of national income accounts planned for adoption in 2008; in addition, the Commission discussed development indicators and national statistical capacity-building. This latter theme further built on the Economic and Social Council resolution (2006/6) on strengthening statistical capacity; this resolution provides a fundamental set of criteria to make serious progress in this field.

The Commission also shared information on migration, energy and finance statistics, and held a joint panel discussion with the Commission on the Status of Women on the measurement of elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child.

The Commission adopted its report on 2 March for submission to the 2007 substantive session of ECOSOC at its general segment.

At the 60th anniversary of the Statistical Commission, special commemorative events were held including:

(i) a one-day seminar on 23 February on the evolution of national statistical systems, which included a keynote presentation on Evolution of national statistical systems - trends and implications, and two panel discussions, one on Changing the national statistical systems: driving forces and response, and the other on Prospects and risks for the future: how to manage uncertainties?

(ii) a high level forum on 26 February on the way forward for the Statistical Commission and the global statistical system. This half day event dealt with the impact of new information needs and featured a panel on the evolution of the global system, the role of the Commission and the challenges faced to move the global system forward;

(iii) a seminar on innovative information technology approaches, which had a session on 28 February in data collection and a

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session on 1 March on survey processing and data presentation; and

(iv) a dialogue on statistical development with international agencies on the afternoon of 1 March 2007.

C– Other Events

Friedrich Ebert Foundation Workshop on ECOSOC reform 18 January 2007

On 18 January 2007, the [Friedrich Ebert Foundation](#) New York Office hosted a workshop on ECOSOC reform. The workshop provided a valuable opportunity for Ambassadors and delegates to exchange views in an informal setting on next steps in the ECOSOC Reform.

In its [resolution 61/16](#) on the “Strengthening of the Economic and Social Council”, the General Assembly laid the

groundwork for the new ECOSOC architecture and served as a starting point of the discussion.

The discussion focused on how to ensure efficacy of ECOSOC’s two new functions, the annual ministerial-level substantive review (AMR) and the biennial Development Cooperation Forum (DCF). Delegates also discussed the implications of the two new functions for the overall architecture of the ECOSOC substantive session.

II - Noteworthy and Other Announcements

A - ECOSOC

Economic and Social Council approves themes for 2007 Thematic Discussion and Annual Ministerial Review 2 March 2007

➤ On 2 March 2007, the Economic and Social Council adopted the themes for debate at its High-level Segment of its annual substantive session to be held in Geneva from 2-5 July 2007. As proposed by H.E. Mr. Dalius Cekuolis, President of ECOSOC, the Council decided that its 2007 thematic debate would be devoted to “strengthening efforts at all levels to promote pro-poor sustained economic growth, including through equitable macroeconomic policies”; and that the theme for its Annual Ministerial Review would be “strengthening efforts to eradicate poverty and hunger, including through the global partnership for development”.

Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review-TCPR

➤ The Office of ECOSOC Support and Coordination (OESC) is currently preparing for the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review (TCPR) of UN system operational activities for development. The 2007 TCPR will evaluate to what extent and in what ways the UN development system provides efficient and effective support to developing countries to realize their national development strategies and achieve the internationally agreed development goals (IADGs). As part of the preparatory efforts, a series of country case studies are being conducted in February to gather information from key players engaged in the UN system’s operational activities for development at the field level. These country case studies will reinforce the 10 thematic analytical studies that are being conducted on issues concerning effectiveness and coherence of the UN operational activities. A global consultation meeting involving the UN system, Member States and the civil society will be held in Turin, 14-16 March 2007 to validate some findings from the preparatory work. The outcome of all these preparatory activities will feed in the policy debate on TCPR at ECOSOC and the General Assembly at its 62nd session.

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Annual Ministerial Review Global Preparatory Meeting 2 April 2007

➤ In July 2007, the AMR will hold its first annual ministerial-level substantive review (AMR). The objective of the AMR is to speed-up and scale-up implementation of the United Nations Development Agenda by serving as a high-level forum for policy debate and exchange of lessons learned and examples of best practice. In preparation of the July meeting, a half-day preparatory event will be organized on 2 April 2007 in New York on the theme of “Eradicating poverty and hunger – Joining forces to make it happen”. The meeting will bring together representatives of governments, academia, the private sector and civil society. The objective of the meeting is to identify the obstacles and challenges to progress in implementation of the United Nations Development Agenda and to identify innovative solutions. To help close the gap between the global policy debate and national policy making, representatives of the national ECOSOCs will also be invited to share their hands-on experiences as national policy makers in interactive roundtable sessions.

Development Cooperation Forum

➤ The 2005 World Summit mandated the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) to convene a biennial high-level Development Cooperation Forum (DCF) that would review trends in international development cooperation and promote greater coherence in the development activities of a diverse set of actors. Asserting DCF as an integral part of revitalizing ECOSOC, the General Assembly further decided that the Forum should exert a positive influence on the development system by providing guidance and recommendations on policy options to promote more effective development cooperation. The DCF is to be launched in Geneva in 2007 and held biennially in New York starting in 2008. Preparations for the 2007 and 2008 DCF will start in the Spring.

Special High-level Meeting of the Economic and Social Council with the BWIs, WTO and UNCTAD, 10th session 16 April 2007

➤ The Economic and Social Council will hold its [tenth special high-level meeting](#) with the Bretton Woods Institutions, the World Trade Organization and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development in New York, the day following the spring meetings in Washington of the International Monetary and Financial Committee and the Development Committee.

The Spring Meeting of ECOSOC has become a major forum to ensure coherence, coordination and cooperation in the implementation of the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development. This year’s meeting of the Council has special significance as it takes place at the beginning of preparations for a follow-up international conference on Financing for Development to review the implementation of the Monterrey Consensus, to be held in Doha, Qatar, in the second half of 2008.

The President of ECOSOC, Ambassador Dalius Cekuolis, will open the meeting. The Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon is expected to deliver the opening address. The meeting will feature a morning plenary session with a set of brief statements by heads of intergovernmental bodies and other senior officials, followed by simultaneous multi-stakeholder roundtable discussions. The afternoon will feature reports back to the resumed plenary by roundtable chairs, followed by informal dialogues on each theme and interventions by representatives of NGOs and the private sector. A President’s summary of the discussions will be circulated after the meeting.

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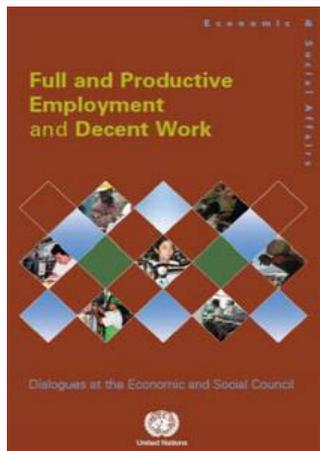
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B- ECOSOC Subsidiary Bodies

Commission on the Status of Women, fifty-first session
27 February-9 March 2007
(Ongoing Event)

➤ The [fifty-first session](#) of the [Commission on the Status of Women \(CSW\)](#) is taking place from 26 February to 9 March 2007 at United Nations Headquarters. In accordance with its multi-year programme of work for 2007-2009, the Commission is considering as its priority theme “The elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child”. In addition, in accordance with Council [resolution 2006/9](#) of 25 July 2006, the Commission is assessing the progress achieved in the implementation of the agreed conclusions from its 48th session on the role of men and boys in achieving gender equality.

III– ECOSOC Publication



“[Full and Productive Employment and Decent Work](#)” aims to present the key debates that took place in the Economic and Social Council on the theme of the High-level Segment of 2006. This publication also reviews the ECOSOC reform and follow up to the 2005 World Summit. For further information, please download the [entire publication](#) or you can also purchase it by visiting the [United Nations Sales Publication website](#)

IV– More Information

Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC): <http://www.un.org/docs/ecosoc/>

About ECOSOC: http://www.un.org/docs/ecosoc/ecosoc_background.html

UN Press Releases and Meetings Coverage on ECOSOC:
http://www.un.org/apps/pressreleases/ecosoc_press.asp

2007 Meetings and Events of ECOSOC and its Subsidiary Bodies:
<http://www.un.org/docs/ecosoc/meetings/2007/>

For further information on the Press Releases and Meetings Coverage of the Functional Commissions of ECOSOC, please visit <http://www.un.org/apps/pressreleases/index.asp>

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