

Breakfast meeting of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Bureau at the Head of State and Government Level

The role of ECOSOC in the implementation of the United Nations Development Agenda, including the implementation of the decisions made by the 2005 World Summit in the areas of social and economic development

15 September, Conference Room 7, United Nations Headquarters

President's Summary

Summary

1. The main objective of this meeting, held at the level of Head of State and Government, was to discuss the crucial role of ECOSOC in the implementation of the United Nations Development Agenda as well as the outcomes of the High Level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly at its 60th Session. At the meeting, participants were unanimous in their support for the decisions made on the role and reform of ECOSOC in the outcome document of the HLPM. They agreed that over the years, the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations has undergone changes, aimed at revitalizing and improving its method of work and this should continue. Yet, some were concerned that the ECOSOC was unable to live up to its full potential and responsibilities as highlighted in the charter of the United Nations. They hoped that the ongoing reform within the United Nations should seek to enhance the role of ECOSOC to provide and promote system-wide coordination, coherence and cooperation between the various entities of the United Nations system, including the Bretton Woods Institutions and the WTO.
2. Participants also supported the Council's role as a High Level Development Cooperation Forum, where global, regional and national strategies and policies for social and economic development cooperation can be reviewed. To that end, participants believed that the Council needs to enhance its effectiveness, flexibility and coherence and that it should strengthen its supervision and management role over its subsidiary bodies. At the same time, participants felt that the Council should intensify its efforts to engaging NGOs, the academic community as well as the private sector. On engaging with the Security Council, most felt that the Council should strengthen its interactions with the Security Council and agreed that the Peace Building Commission was a step in the right direction.

Statements

3. **H.E. President Pervez Musharraf (Pakistan)** stated that the main purpose of this meeting was to examine how ECOSOC can advance implementation of the development agenda, on which broad agreement already exists. He stressed that it was imperative for the Council to create effective mechanisms to oversee and ensure implementation of commitments and decisions by all concerned--developing countries as well as development partners. At the same time, he pointed out that the primary responsibility of implementing policies to achieve the internationally agreed development goals including the MDGs lay squarely with countries themselves. However, the UN system should stand ready to assist nations in implementing country driven strategies to enable them achieve their developmental activities. It was therefore imperative to create effective mechanisms to oversee and ensure implementation of commitments and decisions by all concerned--developing countries as well as their development partners.
4. **President Musharraf** stressed that the basic implementation international commitments must be at the level of individual countries/at the domestic level. Assistance from the UN system, in particular ECOSOC was critical. Envisaging a vital role for ECOSOC, **President Musharraf** highlighted the unique qualities of the ECOSOC and outlined some **specific proposals**:
 - a. A mechanism of inspections and checks on the actions of individual countries should be established and assistance from the UN system should be awarded according to their merit.

b. The HLPM reinforced that ECOSOC is the central institution to promote the agreed development goals. The summit emphasized ECOSOC's role as an effective forum for promoting policy dialogues, development co-operation and peace through development. To that end, strengthening role of the GA and ECOSOC was essential for the overall reform of the United Nations.

c. ECOSOC has unique assets to advance the implementation of the development agenda. It has a broad mandate and can convene at short notice. It can invite the participation of all the concerned stakeholders. Such a forum could therefore create an important mechanism for coordinated action in the area of development at the ministerial level. In an informal setting, all major stakeholders including civil society and the private sector could come together periodically to review the implementation status of the agreed development agenda. Each country, developed and developing and each institution could provide data and information to a central data bank on the status of its own implementation of the agreed development goals.

d. The Council could also ask the United Nations and other institutions to build the proposed system for tracking implementation either by individual countries as well as by specific agreed international development goals. Such annual ministerial meetings of ECOSOC along with the participation of other stakeholders to review and monitor for implementation, could be institutionalized in the future.

5. **Mr. José Antonio Ocampo, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, on behalf of the Secretary-General of the United Nations** stated that the greatest contribution of the United Nations in the economic and social field has been its series of conferences and summits, with the Millennium Summit prominent among them. Together, they have generated the UN development agenda. The power of the UN development agenda derives from its comprehensiveness—covering economic, social, and environmental aspects— and from its central commitment to equity. The Monterrey Conference has secured another crucial asset: unprecedented global agreement on development cooperation as a partnership among developing and developed countries.

6. Yet the Agenda suffered from an “implementation gap.” In that regard, it was crucial in this regard to mobilize not only the Council rather, the entire ECOSOC system, including the functional commissions, regional commissions, and its expert bodies. He was confident that the HLPM would strongly reaffirm ECOSOC's role as the principal intergovernmental body for coordination and for making recommendations on development policy and issues.

7. Highlighting the six areas of action identified in the outcome document of the HLPM, **Mr. Ocampo** stressed that the Council needed to carry forward those decisions in these and other areas. Thus ECOSOC also needed to strengthen its role in the area of development and security, linking in particular with the new Peace Building Commission. In doing so, ECOSOC should build on the innovative mechanisms it has created for post-conflict reconstruction and development. He stressed that the Council at present confronts comparatively fewer structural or legislative obstacles to deep change. The missing ingredient is a critical mass of political will to genuinely put ECOSOC and its extensive system of machinery to work. This opportunity must be seized to generate the momentum to take a quantum leap forward in reinventing the ECOSOC.

8. **H.E. President Alfredo Palacio (Ecuador)**, pointed out that Ecuador while being a small country comes from a vast region of 400 million people and 8 billion square kilometers in area. At present, the country was facing twin concerns of economic crisis and re-democratization which he hoped would be short-lived. Highlighting the economic situation in Ecuador, **President Palacio** pointed out that Ecuador lagged behind its neighbours in the areas of infant mortality and life expectancy. In education, Ecuador was still unable to ensure its poor children social equality. Thus, Ecuador needed to invest in its people, through health and education as well as science and technology. Simultaneously, to ensure sustainable development Ecuador needed to pay attention to its environment, while creating jobs and attending to its problem of external indebtedness. Acknowledging the responsibilities of small countries, **President Palacio** urged for the cooperation of the international community to address the challenges faced by countries such as Ecuador and emphasized the role of ECOSOC in such vital issues.

9. **H.E. President Alfred Moisiu (Albania)** stressed that in an inter-connected world, the Council needed to consider the fact that development, collective security and human rights are interlinked and inter dependent. They constitute also the very core pillars of the United Nations system. Unless these inter-linkages were addressed adequately, and the approach to finding solutions to developmental challenges, were unsustainable, Albania believed that the progress towards the implementation of the internationally agreed goals will be impeded. To that end, he highlighted the essential role of good governance, sound policies, rule of law, strengthening of democratic institutions and processes, ambitious national poverty reduction strategies in achieving sustained development. In this respect he strongly recognized the very substantial role of ECOSOC in the process of implementing the internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs, in eradicating poverty, promoting sustained economic growth, sustainable development and global prosperity for all.

10. Albania recognized the Council's role as a High Level Development Cooperation Forum, where global, regional and national strategies and policies for social and economic development cooperation can be reviewed. In that context the President believed that the Council needs to enhance its effectiveness, flexibility and coherence. It should strengthen its supervision and management role over its subsidiary bodies. The Council should also engage more with the Security Council. To that end, he felt that the Peace Building Commission was a step in the right direction. Moreover, the Council should also enhance participation of other stakeholders in development, such as NGOs, the civil society as well as the private sector and the academic community. Such interactions will only help improve the working methods of the Council.

11. **H.E. Prime Minister Guy Verhofstadt (Belgium)** stressed that given its broad mandate ECOSOC should be a main body of the UN charter. This "governance" mandate, while very solid on paper, was unfortunately pretty irrelevant and impractical in the real world. The voice of ECOSOC was not being heard in international economic and social debates. He added that in this world of globalized issues, there was a need for a universal and global vision on some of the pressing challenges of our time. That global debate must take into account the opinions of our world citizens, our society.

12. What was essential was a legitimate and democratic United Nations that can arbitrate the debate on the most pressing economic and social challenges of the current era. Belgium strongly believed that the debate on global governance must remain within the United Nations to retain its legitimacy. This debate could not be left to the diplomats and technocrats, rather, has to be brought back to the political level. Mr. Verhofstadt pointed out that Belgium in cooperation with Germany had initiated a reform process of the ECOSOC. Following are the main thrust of the joint **Belgian and German proposals**:

- a. At the moment, ECOSOC does not meet on a permanent or regular basis, but only during the month of July. ECOSOC therefore, does not have the means to tackle urgent problems. ECOSOC, owing to its bureaucratic constraints, remains confined to general thematic debates.
- b. There should be more interaction between ECOSOC and Security Council. These two main organs of the charter have interacted very little, despite the universal recognition of the fact that the link between economic, social and environmental issues and security issues is of great importance. ECOSOC and the Security Council should develop formal joint meetings and consultations on specific situations.
- c. Also, such interactions should not be limited to just the Security Council. ECOSOC should become the forum where other major institutions, the World Bank, the IMF, and WTO can come and participate in discussions. This outreach should be extended to the NGOs as well as the private sector.

13. **H.E. President Mathieu Kerekou (Benin) on behalf of the Least Developed Countries (LDCs)** stated that the Council's decisive mission should be in the mobilization and follow-up of the implementation of actions and initiatives taken at the international level in the field of development. This is why it must ensure that there is implementation of the Programme of Action adopted for the LDCs for the decade 2001-2010. The Ministerial Declaration that came was adopted in support of the LDCs in 2004 called upon international community to take urgent measures to reach the objectives undertaken. President Kerekou proposed that ECOSOC henceforth draw up a chart of progress which has been achieved on the Brussels Programme of Action so that it can identify the emerging challenges call on each stakeholder to act

in their area of competence in their particular domain. He called on the Council to take targeted decisions which will yield visible and tangible results to the benefit of LDCs.

14. **H.E. President Olusegun Obasanjo (Nigeria) on behalf of the African Union** stressed that the ongoing reform within the United Nations should seek to enhance the role of ECOSOC to provide and promote system-wide coordination, coherence and cooperation between the various entities of the United Nations system. Some promising results have already been achieved. The ECOSOC annual spring meeting with the Bretton Woods Institutions, the WTO and UNCTAD has served as a follow-up forum in the implementation of the outcome of the Monterrey Consensus. Its annual High-Level segment brings together key political players from diverse backgrounds and has generated a holistic response to the implementation of the Millennium Declaration as well as the outcomes of other major United Nations conferences and summits. ECOSOC has also contributed to conflict prevention efforts in a comprehensive and integrated manner. In this regard, its mechanism of Ad Hoc Advisory Group on African countries emerging from conflict has served to bring to the fore the linkage between post-conflict peace building and development. It was important therefore, to take this into account in deciding the mandate of the proposed Peace Building Commission. He added that more should be done to enhance ECOSOC's contribution to post conflict peace building and reconstruction as well as its management of United Nations funds and programs.

15. He stressed that it was also imperative for ECOSOC to play an effective role in addressing the economic and social challenges of today. For ECOSOC to fulfill its charter mandate, the Council should be revamped and empowered to assume greater responsibility in providing policy guidelines on global economic and financial matters. The capacity of ECOSOC should thus, be further strengthened to promote coherence, coordination and cooperation of development efforts, both within and outside the United Nations system.

16. **H.E. Prime Minister Navinchandra Ramgoolam (Mauritius) and Chair of AOSIS** focused on issues pertaining to Small Island Developing States (SIDS). He noted the commitment made in the outcome document of the High Level Plenary Meeting of the GA under the paragraph on financing for development which promised to undertake measures to promote and sustain adequate and stable capital flows to developing countries including SIDS. **Prime Minister Ramgoolam** stressed that this commitment should be turned into reality and asked ECOSOC and all other stakeholders to ensure that this goal was achieved.

17. He pointed out that many SIDS by virtue of their development levels are not eligible for concessional loans and are not able to benefit from specific financial mechanisms for developmental projects. The international community also cannot ignore that there are inherent vulnerabilities and structural constraints for SIDS, which further impede their ability to implement socio economic programmes. In this regard ECOSOC as well as the BWIs should give more attention to the problems faced by the SIDS. Likewise the BWIs should also give special attention to the SIDS. Some of the countries in SIDS find it difficult to integrate into the global trading system. SIDS are heavily dependent on external trade to market their few and somewhat limited products in a highly liberalized and competitive global market. Preferential access for mainly agricultural products from most countries within SIDS, have been very advantageous in the past. But this erosion of preferences is adversely affecting these countries. In some cases the standard of life is falling with heavy loss of jobs and revenues which may lead to serious social consequences. The Prime Minister therefore appealed to the ECOSOC to address this issue and urged the Council to take into account the special needs of SIDS in development and trade as well as some of the middle income countries who have made similar efforts.

18. **H.E. Mr. Abdelwahab Abdallah, Minister of Foreign Affairs (Tunisia)** emphasized that in order to optimize its role in implementing the decisions of the High Level Plenary Meeting, ECOSOC had to fully exercise its mandate under the charter as the central organ for managing issues relating to economic and social development. ECOSOC does not yet have sufficient control or power relating to certain issues pertaining to development, e.g., trade, debt management, mobilization of investment, ODA and therefore, ECOSOC was unable to play the central role it should be playing to ensure a better structured and strategic approach towards development hand in hand with the International Financial Institutions (IFIs), WTO and UNCTAD. In order to contribute to the better implementation of the Meeting's decisions, ECOSOC must make its structures more

effective and efficient. ECOSOC subsidiary bodies including its functional commissions and regional commissions must be able to act more effectively. To that end, he urged for greater encouragement to civil society to work for development, which had already proven effective in many countries. Finally he stressed that the Council must its support for Africa, particularly those emerging from conflict and those with specific needs.

19. **Mr. Rodrigo de Rato, Managing Director, International Monetary Fund** stated that the proposed development cooperation forum would be a very good addition to the Council's efforts. The IMF welcomed the envisaged role of ECOSOC in the Peace Building Commission, and which will continue to enhance collaboration in post conflict cases in recent years in which both the UN system including ECOSOC and IMF have worked together such as in the Adhoc Advisory Groups in Guinea Bissau, Burundi and Haiti in which the mutual exchange of positions and collaboration had been extremely useful contributing to the well-being of the citizens of those countries.

20. **Mr. de Rato** stressed that the implementation of the Monterrey Consensus at all levels is key to meeting the MDGs. The IMF believed that ECOSOC should continue to monitor progress, but monitoring should be a broad-based, rather than any narrow focus on individual countries or individual policies. He stressed that sustainable growth is intimately related to the reduction of poverty, for which, economic and financial stability was critical. At the same time countries needed institutional soundness. No country has been able to cope with the challenges of globalization without them. Countries need **efficient and transparent institutions, clear functions of markets and flourishing private sector activity**, both in terms of employment in medium and small-sized enterprises as well as in terms of investment through the private sector. The IMF supports low-income countries traditionally through actions that promote growth and institutional building, but at the same time, the IMF is also discussing new instruments to help countries deal with external shocks that are beyond their control and also to help low-income countries that need advice and support from IMF but do not need financial loans. **Trade** is a very strong instrument, and the IMF believed that completion of the Doha round of negotiations is critical. A lot of growth potential was to be gained if trade barriers among developing countries were reduced and if there was an increase in liberalization and harmonization in procedures pertaining to trade. **On aid, Mr. de Rato** stressed that doubling of aid is essential, as was better quality and better use of aid. The BWIs can certainly help countries, both donors and recipients in this aspect. He added that **debt relief** is also a powerful tool and increases the capacity of countries to release resources for their social sectors but this has to be part of a comprehensive approach for development and the IMF is working intensively lending its support to the recent G8 proposals and commitments.

21. **Mr. Paul Wolfowitz, President, World Bank** stressed that one of the biggest challenges in the development field and to achieving the developmental goals was the problem of harmonization. He pointed out that at present there were too many actors working in similar areas leading to inefficiencies and costs. Agreeing with Mr. Ocampo's statement he urged development partners to work together as a team on country driven strategies for development. Each agency/institution should work in its own area of responsibility/competence. In this was the development community would be able to work together as an effective group towards accomplishing the international development goals.

22. **Mr. Supachai Panitchpakdi, Secretary-General of UNCTAD** agreed that the UN system needed more coherence, consistency and harmonization. And that ECOSOC should take the lead in accomplishing this task. ECOSOC is the right body to look at a coherent assessment of outcomes of summits and conferences as well as a coherence of policies, between the UN system and those that are outside such as the WTO. To that end, ECOSOC should advocate mutually strengthening and cost saving strategies. Moreover, ECOSOC needs a better and decisive management system to be able to respond to effectively to crisis situations, in particular, at post-conflict management.

Interactive Dialogue

23. **H.E. Mr. Tang Xiajuan** stressed that as major UN body dedicated to promote economic and social progress, ECOSOC bears weighty responsibilities for the attainment of the MDGs and boasts unique advantages in promoting international development cooperation. It should seize the opportunities and overcome difficulties to give full play to its coordinating, guiding and facilitating role, and make greater contribution to the cause of human development. In specific terms, we suggest that it step up its work in the following aspects.

a. Better coordinate the efforts to provide organizational guarantee for the attainment of the MDGs and the realization of the MDGs in a systematic project involving various fields. ECOSOC should fully exploit its own advantages and further consolidate its resources for better synergy and mobilize all positive factors to join in the cause of human development. China supports ECOSOC's efforts to establish dialogue mechanisms with organizations such as Bretton Woods System and the World Trade Organization. ECOSOC also needs to consider and explore specific "means of implementation" and lose no time in establishing a comprehensive, fair and reasonable framework to evaluate the progress towards the MDGs. On the one hand, evaluation should be made on the progress of each individual country. On the other, international cooperation and the fulfillment of development assistance pledges should also be supervised and evaluated to ensure that the international community channels necessary resources to the development agenda.

b. Deepen policy exchanges and guide international economic and development cooperation. The development of economic globalization has made the current international financial and trading systems seem outdated. The reform and readjustment of important institutions such as the World Bank, the IMF and the WTO has aroused the interest and attention of various parties. ECOSOC should promote policy dialogue between countries, especially between developed and developing countries, put forward policy suggestions on the macroeconomic policy, trade and finance, and give guidance to relevant international organizations and institutions in their discussion and decision-making in the afore-mentioned areas, so as to provide a fair, stable and favorable external environment for the accelerated development of developing countries.

c. Reform institutional functions of ECOSOC and improve its capacity in dealing with new challenges such as humanitarian aid and post-disaster reconstruction. Recent years have seen frequent natural disasters and armed conflicts, which give rise to a growing need for humanitarian cooperation. A comprehensive approach to tackle such problems as conflict prevention, relief, reconstruction and economic development is of great significance to promoting common development. ECOSOC needs to improve the promptness and capacity of its response in the area of humanitarian aid and help disaster-stricken countries to quickly move from relief dependence towards new development. It should work closely with the UN Security Council to assist the countries concerned in post-war or post-conflict reconstruction to ensure lasting peace and development. The Ad-hoc Advisory Group on African Countries Emerging from Conflict has made useful experiments in this regard, which we appreciate.

24. **H.E. Mr. Paul Robertson, Minister of Development, Jamaica** agreed with the main thrust of the Belgium German proposals and that ECOSOC needs to ensure greater policy coordination within the UN system. He stated that he supported the Nigerian and UNCTAD points of view. He pointed out that there are a number of policy contradictions within the system and this is where ECOSOC could play a vital role. ECOSOC in its coordinating role should bring various institutions together, in the area of finance, monetary policy, trade, etc., to help work out such policy contradictions.

25. **H.E. Mr. Nobutaka Machimura, Foreign Minister, Japan** supported the reform of ECOSOC as highlighted in the outcome document. In particular, Japan believed that ECOSOC needs to be the principal body responsible for achieving the MDGs. He highlighted three main areas that deserve more of the Council's attention:

a. Natural disasters—ECOSOC should continue to lead international discussions on disaster reduction based on the Hyogo Framework for 2005-2015.

b. Infectious disease—HIV/AIDS, avian influenza constitute and other communicable disease constitute trans-border threats that impact the entire international community

c. Peace and security and development are interlinked. ECOSOC should therefore be actively engaged in the work of the Peace Building Commission.

26. **EU Commissioner, Mr. Louis Michel**, stated that he fully supported the position of Belgium on this subject. The Council needed much better representation in all the geo-strategic areas making up the world. The UN bodies are functioning today with concerns which are those of powers, but which don't take into account the aspirations and needs of others. He agreed with the Managing Director of the IMF that there can be no development without growth. However, growth does not necessary to lead alleviating poverty. Thus, he urged ECOSOC look at the link between growth and poverty reduction.

27. He also expressed concern regarding fiscal issues. He pointed out that some middle income countries that have a great deal of poverty and also have a 40 % income tax rate. ECOSOC should also focus on this issue so that it can offer advice on this to Members States.

28. **H.E. Ambassador Sichan Siv, USA** commended the development section of the outcome document, which stressed the rule of law, anti-corruption and sound economic policies at the national level. He stressed that emphasis should be given to the health and education sectors as well as to women and children. He pointed out that while development assistance is a catalyst for growth, the primary engine for economic expansion was sound economic policies and accountable government. The United States of America is willing to assist developing countries through free trade by eliminating tariffs, subsidies and all other barriers to the free flow of goods and services, within a multilateral framework. The United States also proposed an international partnership on avian-influenza to improve the global readiness. Finally, the Economic and Social Council should reinforce the topic of the High Level segment themes in its own work.

29. **H.E. Ambassador Thomson, United Kingdom** stressed that ECOSOC should work in cooperation with the Bretton Woods Institutions and not in competition. It should therefore focus on its core area of work, including reform in the United Nations' development assistance system. The effectiveness of ECOSOC could also be improved by providing more analysis on reform issues of the United Nations as well as more evidence based policy options for consideration of Member States. The United Kingdom was unsure what the annual ministerial meetings would add. Finally, ECOSOC should not only focus on the Millennium Development Goals, but also on the goals set-out in the Johannesburg Summit in 2002 as one of its functional commissions is responsible for the implementation of the outcomes of this conference.

30. **H.E. Alexander V. Yakovenko Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russian Federation** stated that The Russian Federation supports the leading role of ECOSOC in the implementation of the decisions of 2005 World Summit in the field of development. ECOSOC is already playing an important role in the discussion and adoption of decisions on all these issues. However, there remains the need for continued dialogue on a whole number of issues, and ECOSOC is the optimal platform for such dialogue.

31. Implementation of the Summit's decisions will undoubtedly require a comprehensive, integrated and coordinated approach, alignment of the policy and programs of the UN system organizations with national priorities and strategies, the goals and targets of the development agenda, coordinated and integrated intergovernmental oversight and monitoring of the implementation of the development agenda. To that end, he emphasized that ECOSOC was the key coordination mechanism within the UN system which bears particular responsibility for fulfillment of these tasks. By virtue of the breadth of its mandate, and its convening capacity the Council is especially well placed as a platform for systematic and comprehensive monitoring of overall progress in implementing the UN development agenda, as well as for holding a continuous dialogue on development policy issues.

32. Mr. Yakovenko further stressed that Russia was satisfied with the character of the Summit 2005 decisions related to ECOSOC, which had created new possibilities for the further strengthening of the political importance and role of the Council. Russia supported the proposal for a biannual High-level Development Cooperation Forum to conduct regular dialogue on global policy and trends in the economic, social, environmental and humanitarian fields. The Forum must serve as a platform for engagement of

member-states, international organizations, in particular the Bretton Woods Institutions (BWIs), the World Trade Organization and UNCTAD, as well as the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the private sector and civil society into the high-level discussion of global economic problems, assessing and promoting response to emerging challenges and threats in the economic, social environmental and humanitarian fields. No less important would be the ministerial-level substantive reviews to assess progress in the follow-up of the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits, including the internationally agreed development goals. However, he suggested that ECOSOC undertake these reviews on a biennial rather than annual basis.

33. Russia also supports the important role of ECOSOC in the strengthening of international response to humanitarian emergencies through ensuring more effective and coordinated actions of the UN system as well as possibilities for strengthening the potential of ECOSOC in the field of transition from relief to long-term development in the context of natural disasters and in post-conflict peace building. In this regard, reform of ECOSOC should be aligned with the consideration of establishing of the Peacebuilding Commission. He stressed that Russia was convinced that realization of these initiatives did not require a radical revision of the structure and timing of ECOSOC sessions. Russia believed that disintegration of the current segment configuration of the ECOSOC substantive sessions will have most negative consequences for its political role and efficiency of its work. All these initiatives, aimed at focusing the Council's agenda around the major themes of the Millennium Declaration, should not weaken the core coordination function of ECOSOC with regard to the UN system program activities in the social and economic fields.

34. The 2005 World Summit decisions confirmed that the proposals for the further strengthening of the substantive role of the Council are fully attainable within the principal parameters of the current work format of ECOSOC, tested in practice and proved their effectiveness. Many possibilities do exist for the further improving of the effectiveness of the Council's work (for example, through optimizing the agenda of the general segment of the substantive sessions). At the same time there was no need for a review of the format and working methods of ECOSOC. In particular, Russia could not support the proposals that could in one form or another – lead to the fragmentation or shortening of the substantive sessions of ECOSOC as that might adversely affect the political importance of this principal organ of the United Nations.

35. Russia also urged participants to be cautious with regard to the ideas of creating within ECOSOC a variety of “executive committees” or “steering groups” of an uncertain composition and with unclear mandates, not provided for by the existing rules of procedure, which may lead only to a duplication of the Council structures already in existence. Russia hoped that with the realization of the reform initiatives ECOSOC will become a more dynamic and efficient body of the UN and receive a new additional impetus as an important mechanism for elaborating and agreeing upon major political decisions in the field of development.

36. **Mr. Kim Hak Su, Executive Secretary, ESCAP on behalf of the five regional commissions of the United Nations** stated that the regional commissions were coordinating all UN system activities at the regional level and hoped that the regional perspective would continue to be reflected in the work of the Council

37. **Mr. Mourad Wahba, on behalf of Mr. Kemal Dervis, UNDP Administrator** highlighted the following avenues for reflection in the context of reform of ECOSOC:

- a. Strengthening the role of ECOSOC in a global forum along with WTO and the BWIs.
- b. Strongly supported the biannual Development Cooperation Forum
- c. Link normative and operational activities of the UN system
- d. Follow-up of the review of UN conferences and summits, including the MDGs.