

**Statement by the President of ECOSOC on the introduction of the Report of
ECOSOC to the General Assembly**

Madame President,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

I thank you for this opportunity to introduce the 2006 report of the Economic and Social Council.

Development -- together with peace and security, human rights and strengthening the United Nations -- was a central concern of world Leaders at the 2005 World Summit. And they placed ECOSOC at the centre of efforts to monitor and advance implementation of the United Nations Development Agenda, in a unified and coherent way. Thus the common thrust of the Council's session this year was the follow-up to the commitments made at the Summit.

I will briefly highlight some of the key outcomes of the Council's work during the past year and then focus on the future, including the new responsibilities assigned to ECOSOC by the Summit.

This year's **Special High-Level Meeting** of the Council with the Bretton Woods institutions, WTO and UNCTAD helped keep the momentum of the Summit for accelerating progress towards the agreed development goals. Advancing the realization of the Monterrey Consensus was seen as a critical element to that end. This meeting represents the centerpiece of our dialogue on the global partnership for development. As I proposed at the conclusion of the meeting, I intend to start exploring how to enhance the impact of the dialogue and to initiate consultations with all stakeholders in this regard.

ECOSOC's **high-level segment** put squarely productive employment and decent work at the forefront of the development agenda. In particular, the Ministerial Declaration adopted at the end of the segment pertaining to Employment Generation and Decent Work for all, identifies a number of concrete steps to make the goal of full and productive employment and decent work a central objective of national and international policies. The need to fulfill this pledge -- to which leaders committed at the Summit -- cannot be overemphasized. Widening gaps between skilled and unskilled workers and between the formal and informal economies have contributed to persistent and deepening inequality worldwide. The General Assembly may wish to build on the work of ECOSOC on this central issue.

The Council's **coordination segment** dealt with another aspect of the on-going efforts to push the development agenda forward: how to translate economic growth into effective social development, including eradication of poverty and hunger. The debate showed that we do not have definite answers. The Council, therefore, asked the UN system to continue to study this question. An important feature of the coordination segment was the follow-up event on **Avian Flu**, which took place in the presence of a number of high level representatives from Governments and relevant international and non governmental organizations. Discussions during this panel demonstrated the importance of ECOSOC's coordinating role and its ability to shape responses to emerging challenges of this nature.

The Council's work on the **operational activities** for development was of special significance this year. For the first time, ECOSOC launched the triennial review of funding for development cooperation. The debate on the subject highlighted the diverging trends between core and non-core resource flows, the increasing complexity of funding mechanisms and the challenges associated to the financial sustainability of UN system's development cooperation efforts. The Council evaluated how far the UN development system has gone in implementing your guidance during the last Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review. And for the 2007 Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review expectations are high given the unprecedented focus on the UN's role in development cooperation and on the need for greater coherence and impact in its work.

During the **humanitarian affairs segment**, the Council gave guidance on how to reinforce the coordination of the humanitarian activities of the UN system and of others. It gave strong support for the humanitarian reform agenda and made several proposals for dividing the work of ECOSOC and the General Assembly on humanitarian policy issues.

ECOSOC is vested with the authority to promote an **integrated approach to peace and development**. The call to address the root causes of the world's threats and challenges involves unlocking and strengthening the implementation of the UN development agenda. And ultimately, development and security can only come from integrated policies that promote poverty eradication, sustainable development and human rights of our societies. The Assembly may want to draw upon the work of the Council in this area especially for its deliberations on Prevention of Armed Conflict.

In the **general segment**, the Council focused on consolidating and coordinating the work of its subsidiary bodies. This role of the Council is becoming all the more important as we proceed to implement the development agenda. To this end, ECOSOC had invited the functional commissions and other relevant subsidiary bodies to examine their methods of work and, this year, several commissions have given renewed attention to their working methods.

Moreover, the agreement to extend the ECOSOC's **Ad Hoc Advisory Groups** on Guinea-Bissau and Haiti is a clear recognition of the useful contribution the Council can

make by promoting an integrated approach in this area. We now need to ensure that the lessons learnt during the Council's experience benefit the future work of the Peace-building Commission through continuous engagement between the relevant bodies. It is also noteworthy that the Council adopted a resolution on promoting youth employment, in which it urges Governments to consider youth employment as integral to their overall strategies for development and collective security, and encouraged mainstreaming youth employment in Poverty Reduction Strategies.

The Council achieved another major breakthrough in crystallizing its own role and the role of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development in the follow-up to the **World Summit on the Information Society**. Agreement on a clear and well-defined intergovernmental process, including the additional new tasks for the Commission, together with broad multi-stakeholder engagement in the Global Alliance for ICT and Development – recently launched– carry the potential to make a strong and far-reaching contribution to strengthening UN's role in this area and putting ICT in the service of the UN development agenda.

Madame President,
Distinguished delegates,

The 2005 World Summit placed important responsibilities on ECOSOC for reviewing and monitoring the implementation of the UN development agenda. Responding to this call will be an important tenet of the Council's work in the coming years. So let me share with you what I personally see as the opportunities the new functions of the Council offer, especially for the Assembly. Obviously, the resolution you are finalizing will give more detailed guidance on the operationalization of ECOSOC's new mandates.

Firstly, the **annual ministerial-level substantive review** provides a new mechanism for the review of progress and for promoting implementation of the outcomes of the UN conferences and summits, including the internationally agreed development goals. In my view, the AMR, owing to its ministerial participation, can identify implementation deficiencies at the global, regional and national levels and their linkages, and help the international community visibly to keep under scrutiny and adjust policies in support of the agreed development goals. I hope the Assembly could draw upon the work of the Council for the specific meeting focused on development to be held annually during its debate on the follow-up to the Millennium Declaration and the 2005 World Summit Outcome, as decided upon in its resolution 60/265.

Secondly, the **high-level biennial development cooperation forum** provides a unique opportunity for Member States to keep global development aid cooperation issues high on the agenda of the international community. It should have a real impact in promoting international development cooperation and gearing it to support the realization of internationally agreed development goals. The Forum brings together all development cooperation for a dialogue on key policy issues. Thus it will scale-up actions to increase

the link between normative and operational work of the UN, and help translate what we've learned into improved policies, strategy and practice at all levels.

Within the “**implementation architecture**” for the development agenda, on the normative side we have a three tier structure: the General Assembly; ECOSOC; functional commissions, and number of funds and programmes. The World Summit has challenged these bodies to organize their work so as to maximize their individual contributions to the effective realization of the goals captured in the development agenda.

Do the current agendas of both the Assembly and the Council respond adequately to the priorities set out in the UN development agenda? And if not, could the respective work be streamlined so that the 2nd and 3rd Committees and ECOSOC could have a real discussion on key issues and get an integrated overview of them? While the recurrence of certain topics in various intergovernmental fora illustrates their importance and urgency, Member States might, for instance, better utilize ECOSOC for initiating work on some topics and make the most of its new monitoring and review function for the implementation of some of the UN legislation. Each body should have maximum value added and approach issues from a unique angle.

In this regard, we all are, of course, anticipating the report of the High-Level Panel, which will lead, I hope, further discussion of ways for increasing coherence in the work of the United Nations in these areas. We have already taken important strides towards a strong and more broadly capable ECOSOC. On the basis of your deliberations on the Panel's recommendations, we must also make the UN a better tool for development activities on the ground.

Many other outcomes of the Council are of key relevance to the work of the General Assembly – such as on **human rights, social development, gender mainstreaming**, to mention only a few. They will help, I am sure, the second and third committees in their work.

Madame President,
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Ladies and gentlemen,

My experience as President of ECOSOC has shown me the potential of ECOSOC in meeting many of the critical concerns of the international community. The profile, the convening power, the consensus building that has been the trademark of the UN conferences of the last decade and a half can be captured in ECOSOC. This inclusive spirit of UN international conferences actually permeated this year's session of the Council. Especially the high-level segment showed that ECOSOC can effectively address cross-cutting issues in a comprehensive manner, with the participation of a significant number of ministers and high-level officials, carrying diverse portfolios, as well as development partners and organizational decision-makers. The Consultative status that ECOSOC offers to the NGO community allowing it to contribute in its work, is another unique feature of this charter organ, a feature that should be strengthened.

Finally, I believe that in order to fully operationalize ECOSOC's old and new functions, it is important to support them with sufficient funding, and to give the Bureau of ECOSOC the means to carry out its duties.

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The adoption of the resolution on the follow-up to the development outcome of the Summit was an important development. Hopefully, the on-going consultations will be completed soon and lead to the adoption of a resolution on strengthening of ECOSOC. These two resolutions will serve as guiding posts in our efforts in accelerating implementation.

I would like to close with the recognition that a more substantive and interactive relation is developing between the Assembly and the Council. This relationship should help in providing meaningful and practical orientation to the international community in the implementation of the UN development agenda. In this process, key new functions given to ECOSOC must play a central role and enable ECOSOC to serve as the bridge between policy-making and its implementation in the area of economic and social development.

Thank you, Madame President.