



Opening remarks by H.E. Ms. Sylvie Lucas

**Meeting of the ECOSOC Bureau with the
Chairpersons of the Functional Commissions**

27 January 2009

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is for me a great pleasure to welcome you to today's meeting which I sincerely hope will help us to collectively consider measures for further enhancing coherence and synergy in what we commonly call "the ECOSOC family".

Last July's substantive session of the Council witnessed the successful holding of its second Annual Ministerial Review (AMR) and the very first Development Cooperation Forum (DCF), two new functions of ECOSOC mandated by the 2005 World Summit. These new mandates hold the promise of becoming central to the success of our efforts to achieve the internationally agreed development goals, in particular the Millennium Development Goals, by the 2015 deadline. But our ability to come together and act in concert as one ECOSOC family is an important condition for effectively discharging the Council's new, wider responsibilities. We must look for opportunities to strengthen our support to these new mechanisms.

The Council's adoption of a multi-year programme of work for its AMR provides the needed predictability so that preparations can begin on a timely basis and effectively draw on the expertise that is available from its subsidiary machinery. As you know, this year's AMR is focusing on global public health, the themes for 2010 and 2011 respectively being "Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments

in regard to gender equality and empowerment of women” and “Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to education”.

The Council Bureau looks forward to hearing your views today on how each of you can contribute to the AMR theme this coming July.

Within this context, the challenge lies in how to better align the work programmes and priorities of the functional Commissions in a more systematic and balanced way to the core priority areas as contained in the UN Development Agenda. I am hopeful that if this is achieved, Commissions will be better placed in building stronger linkages among themselves and reinforce their valuable contributions to the work of the Council.

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Our meeting today presents us with an excellent opportunity to exchange ideas on possible measures that could be undertaken to enhance contributions to ECOSOC’s work, in particular, to its AMR and DCF. To help stimulate an interactive and meaningful discussion this morning, I would like to propose that we focus on some key issues and challenges facing us in our efforts to bring more cohesion to our work. These include:

- *What are some concrete ways in which the functional Commissions and expert bodies can collaborate in supporting this year’s AMR theme on global public health?*
- *More broadly speaking, how can the new functions of ECOSOC be better supported by the work of the functional Commissions? What specific measures could be taken to strengthen this support?*
- *Looking ahead, how can the Council and its subsidiary bodies operate as a unified system around the single framework of the internationally agreed development goals in order to drive and review their implementation?*

These are some of the questions I would like to address today. I am hopeful that today’s discussion will show that this sort of interaction can be of great benefit to us as we strive towards the common goal of helping to advance the UN’s Development Agenda.

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