



Check against delivery

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Martin Sajdik,
President of the Economic and Social Council,
at the 58th session of the Commission on the Status of Women**

12 March 2014

Mr. Chairperson,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,

It is a great pleasure for me to address the Commission on the Status of Women at its fifty-eighth session in my capacity as President of the United Nations Economic and Social Council.

The Commission on the Status of Women continues to play a catalytic role in shaping global policy on gender equality and women's empowerment, as well as ensuring that the work of the Economic and Social Council incorporates a gender perspective. This year's theme of "Challenges and achievements in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls" is very timely, as the United Nations system as a whole is geared towards accelerating the implementation of these goals.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Much has changed since last year's 57th session of the Commission. Last September, the General Assembly adopted by consensus resolution 68/1 in which it strengthened the role of the Economic and Social Council, particularly with respect to the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development.

There are four aspects of the UN General Assembly resolution that I would like to highlight.

First, ECOSOC will lead the system through an issues-based approach, where the Council will select annual themes. The annual theme should be addressed by the entire ECOSOC system.. Each subsidiary body is invited to contribute to the annual theme by addressing it from its own perspective and thus provide substantive input to the Council.

In 2014, the main theme will be the same as the theme of the Annual Ministerial Review which is "Addressing on-going and emerging challenges for meeting the Millennium Development Goals in 2015 and for sustaining

development gains in the future". ECOSOC's focus and the priority theme of this Commission are almost identical and I am therefore confident that the Agreed Conclusions which are currently being negotiated will provide an important contribution to the high-level segment of ECOSOC this summer. This is also an excellent opportunity to enhance coherence and complementarity in our work, as this Commission will naturally bring the perspective of women and girls to the Council's main theme.

Secondly, the Council has established an integration segment aimed at consolidating inputs from various sources, including subsidiary bodies, on how best to ensure a balanced integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development. This Commission has an important role to play in that respect as it is expected to bring a cross-cutting gender perspective to the theme under consideration.

The Council has recently decided that its first integration segment would be devoted to "sustainable urbanization" and would be held at the end of May this year.

While we are aware of the time constraints to provide inputs at such a short notice for this year's segment, we would like to invite the Commission to include the theme of the Integration Segment in its future programmes of work.

I recognize that synchronization of the agenda setting process of ECOSOC and the entire system is needed and may not always be easy. We hope to work with the Bureau and the members of the Commission to continue our discussions how - also in the future - the Commission's program of work can be aligned with the ECOSOC's work, and in particular its annual theme and integration segment.

The Commission will have to identify the best ways to consider the ECOSOC themes. The fact that this Commission has a specific agenda item devoted to the follow-up to the ECOSOC resolutions and decisions can greatly facilitate the process. But, the Commission may wish to review its agenda to identify opportunities for addressing ECOSOC issues and providing targeted contributions that will allow for a gender perspective to appear fully in the Council's deliberations.

Thirdly, the Council is expected to conduct action-oriented reviews of the activities, reports and recommendations of its subsidiary bodies. To facilitate this process, resolution 68/1 requests all ECOSOC subsidiary bodies to include in their reports an executive summary and to clearly identify recommendations and substantive issues that require further attention by the Council. I am confident that this Commission will adopt an appropriate format for its report to the Council.

Fourthly, the annual report of this Commission will now be considered at one of the Council's Coordination and Management Meetings (CMM), which are held at various times in the course of the year. The Commission is scheduled to report to the Council at its June CMM. This will provide an opportunity for a direct engagement of the Chair with the Council on the outcome of the current session. At the same time, the Council would like to encourage more exchanges among functional commissions which can lead to cross-fertilization of ideas and more comprehensive policy responses.

Mr. Chairperson, distinguished delegates,

The Council will also convene the High Level Political Forum on sustainable development (HLPF) in July. All subsidiary bodies are invited to contribute to the work of the forum. I believe that this Commission has a special responsibility to ensure that gender equality and women's empowerment receive due attention in the deliberations of the Forum.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Before concluding allow me return to my remarks at the beginning of my intervention about the whole UN system being geared to accelerate the implementation of the Millennium Development goals. You, Ladies and Gentlemen, you are part of this system - the implementation of the MDGs is clearly in your interest. So I urge you to undertake every effort possible to speed up, improve and intensify the MDG's implementation. Don't hesitate to remind the political strata in you respective countries of their obligations and that the 21 months or so left before we all shift to the SDGs must reflect our dedication to the cause of sustainable, inclusive development.

As President of the Economic and Social Council and as the Permanent Representative of a country for which the work of this Commission means a lot, I am particularly keen in making sure that the reform process leads to an increased consideration of gender dimensions in the UN sustainable development machinery and to the promotion of thematic coherence in support of the post-2015 development agenda.

I count on our common determination to translate this vision into reality.

Thank you very much for your attention.