

**Statement by
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PRESIDENT OF ECOSOC**

**Fifth High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development
New York, 7 December 2011**

Mr. Vice-President of the General Assembly,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to address this fifth High-level Dialogue of the General Assembly on Financing for Development on the overall theme: “The Monterrey Consensus and Doha Declaration on Financing for Development: status of implementation and tasks ahead”.

It has been almost ten years since the adoption of the landmark Monterrey Consensus. We are here today to discuss what has been achieved and what remains to be done. Undoubtedly, there have been many important achievements. But it is also clear that much more work lies ahead. Let us have an open and frank discussion on how to address the pressing development challenges in this time of crisis.

Achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) remains our primary objective. It requires the full and speedy implementation of the commitments and agreements contained in the Monterrey Consensus and Doha Declaration on Financing for Development. The success of our efforts rests strongly on a vibrant and functioning global partnership for development, drawing on the comparative advantages and contributions of all stakeholders.

The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) has a central role to play in promoting the global partnership for development. This year, ECOSOC held a number of important discussions with a view to advancing the Financing for Development agenda.

In March, ECOSOC convened its annual high-level meeting with the Bretton Woods institutions, the World Trade Organization and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, utilizing innovative and more inclusive modalities. In July, the substantive session of ECOSOC adopted a series of resolutions on the strengthening of the follow-up process to the Monterrey and Doha International Conferences on Financing for Development, as well as the outcome of the 2009 Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and Its Impact on Development. High-level Symposia were held in Bamako, Mali, in May and in Luxembourg in October, to launch the preparatory process for next year’s Development Cooperation Forum. In November, ECOSOC retreat explored ways of how to further enhance the Council’s role and effectiveness in addressing global development challenges.

Allow me to highlight a few key points emanating from these important meetings of the Council that are most relevant to our gathering today.

It is imperative that developed countries fulfill all their commitments regarding official development assistance (ODA). Commitments made must be commitments kept. Ensuring sufficient and reliable ODA flows is essential for many developing countries, in particular the least developed countries (LDCs).

A major challenge in achieving long-term growth in LDCs is investing from public and private sources in their productive capacities and in the creation of decent jobs. In this regard, ECOSOC is determined to build on the outcomes of the Istanbul Conference on LDCs and to mobilize political support for the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action.

It is also important to address the development needs of middle-income countries and to better align international support to their national priorities of sustainable development. Given the slow recovery, economic growth of this numerous and diverse group of countries largely depends on their domestic demand, supported by sound monetary, financial, income and employment policies.

South-South cooperation should be an important element of the international development strategy, including infrastructure and industrial projects. Innovative financial mechanisms have the potential to raise additional resources to supplement traditional sources of development finance.

In the area of trade, we need to intensify efforts to achieve the development-oriented outcome of the Doha round of multilateral trade negotiations, to eliminate agricultural subsidies in developed countries, to further strengthen aid for trade and to avoid “green protectionism”. It is essential that LDCs be able to gain an “early harvest” regarding the duty-free and quota-free access for all their products in international markets.

Debt sustainability remains a serious development challenge. There are concerns about potential spill-over effects on developing countries from the European debt crisis and other risk factors, such as volatile energy and food prices and exchange-rate instability. There have been calls to re-examine debt sustainability frameworks and to explore new international instruments and mechanisms to better deal with debt distress.

In order to overcome systemic impediments to financing for development, international efforts to reform the international monetary and financial system need to continue. Improving financial regulation, addressing sovereign debt problems in advanced economies, and managing volatile short-term capital flows are among the most pressing issues. There are also calls for further reforming the governance structures of the Bretton Woods institutions to better reflect current economic realities and ensure full voice and participation of developing countries.

In the aftermath of the world financial and economic crisis, there is an urgent need for inclusive, transparent and effective multilateral approaches to managing global development challenges. The UN system is uniquely placed to promote the international development agenda

and serve as a major forum for global economic governance. System-wide coordination remains crucial to realizing internationally agreed development goals and enhancing the coherence and consistency of the international monetary, financial and trading system in support of development. ECOSOC, as the central charter body for policy dialogue and coordination, has a prominent role to play in this regard.

The biennial Development Cooperation Forum (DCF) was designed as the focal point within the United Nations system to review trends and progress in international development cooperation and promote greater coherence among the activities of different development partners. The next DCF is particularly important as it comes at a time of many uncertainties. Fiscal austerity weighs on aid prospects, while the multiple crises make it all the more necessary. Institutional arrangements at the global level are changing, and new actors and approaches make development cooperation ever more complex.

The DCF process can help enhance development cooperation and financing for development in various ways. It should encourage stakeholders to come up with a roadmap and concrete steps for meeting existing commitments. It can be instrumental in leveraging aid to mobilize other kinds of development finance. There is also a need for an on-going global process to address policy coherence for development. Moreover, the multi-stakeholder nature of DCF and its links with the Financing for Development process make it a natural centre of gravity, around which solidarity with developing countries can take concrete shape.

It is also necessary to further explore practical solutions to increase the impact of aid on people's lives. The Fourth High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, held just a few days ago in Busan, proposed a new global partnership for effective development cooperation. The DCF will take up this momentum. Eventually, the DCF is the platform to share good practices, explore innovative approaches and promote mutual accountability in development cooperation.

Mr. Vice-President,

As the deadline of the MDGs is fast approaching, we must reinvigorate the global partnership for development and carry on with the formulation and implementation of post-2015 development agenda. I am confident that many important issues on the Financing for Development agenda will be addressed today and tomorrow by the participants to this meeting.

I wish all of us fruitful discussions in a cooperative and productive spirit.

Thank you.