



THE PRESIDENT
OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

6 December 2018

Excellency,

I have the honour to transmit herewith a memo from my meeting on 27 November 2018 with the President of the Economic and Social Council, Her Excellency Ms. Inga Rhonda King, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to the United Nations in New York, as part of my commitment to strengthen collaboration and coordination between the principal organs of the United Nations.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'MFUSANDSA'.

María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés

All Permanent Representatives and Permanent Observers
to the United Nations
New York

Meeting between the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Economic and Social Council Tuesday November 27, 2018

The President of the 73rd session of the General Assembly (GA), H.E. Ms. María Fernanda Espinosa met with the President of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), H. E. Ms. Inga Rhonda King, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to the United Nations on Tuesday November 27, 2018. The meeting focused on the following matters:

Joint Briefing by the Presidents of the GA and ECOSOC

Both Presidents discussed the importance of making the scheduled joint briefing interactive for Member States. The briefing is being proposed for the last week in January or the first week in February. The meeting will focus predominantly on alignment.

Joint Meetings on Multilateralism – NYU series

The Presidents discussed the reactions to the first multilateralism joint high-level meeting and noted that the feedback indicated momentum to build upon the first event for a series of dialogues.

ECOSOC presence at COP24

The President of the General Assembly noted that the best possible outcome from the negotiations for COP24 is the finalization of the Paris Agreement Work Programme. While informing that she would be present during the Opening Ceremony, the President of the General Assembly highlighted the importance of an ECOSOC presence in Poland to cover the work programme and noted how the leadership of the ECOSOC President could contribute to maintaining authority of Member States at the meeting.

Coordination of High-Level Event on Decent Work and the ECOSOC Youth Forum

The President of the General Assembly commended the President of ECOSOC on her flexibility in facilitating a change in dates for the back-to-back scheduling of the ECOSOC Youth Forum and the High-Level Event on Decent Work. The Youth Forum would now take place on April 8-9, 2019. The Presidents discussed specific approaches to be undertaken to engage with youth on the PGA's strategy

on “Youth, Peace and Security”. The President of ECOSOC advised of the proposal for an interactive session of the Youth Forum in a town hall format, which was welcomed by the President of the General Assembly and agreed to in principle with details to be worked out. There was consensus that the International Labour Organization (ILO) and DESA could collaborate on the preparation of some key messages/statement, on SDG 8 from the Youth Forum discussion, to be delivered by youth representatives at the opening session of the High-Level Event on Decent Work.

High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development

Noting that the ECOSOC Financing for Development (FfD) Forum will be convened in 2019, and the full schedule of the High-Level Week 2019 that requires the HLPF and the High-Level Dialogue on FfD to be convened back-to-back (FfD outcome to be included in the Political Declaration of the HLPF), both Presidents outlined their strategies to ensure coherence across the processes:

- The President of the General Assembly noted that she would be convening a joint meeting with the co-facilitators for the HLPF and the High-Level Dialogue on FfD in December
- The President of ECOSOC advised that invitations had been extended to the co-facilitators for the High-Level Dialogue on FfD to attend the FfD Retreat to be convened on December 9-10, and the ECOSOC Bureau’s annual visit to Washington to meet with the IMF/World Bank on December 17.
- The President of ECOSOC informed of the one-day ECOSOC Retreat scheduled for January 11, 2019.

A proposal was made for a possible high-level dialogue with the President of the General Assembly, President of ECOSOC and the Deputy Secretary-General on the HLPF with member states. Both Presidents committed to pursuing the proposal and identifying a convenient date and time.

High-Level Week Schedule

The Presidents acknowledged the concern expressed by Small Island Developing States (SIDS) on the timing of the Mid-term Review of the SAMOA Pathway on the agenda. However, it was noted that there existed a window of opportunity for SIDS to address the issues during the Climate Summit.

High-Level Meeting on Middle-Income Countries

The President of the General Assembly advised the President of ECOSOC that plans have advanced for the High-Level Meeting on Middle-Income Countries scheduled for Tuesday, December 4. The ECOSOC President underscored her commitment to the process and advised of the participation of the Permanent Representative of Belarus, Vice President of ECOSOC for the Opening Segment of the meeting as the President would be out of state on another engagement.

Improved engagement with the United Nations Office of Geneva

Both Presidents recalled their official visits to the United Nations Office of Geneva (UNOG) and noted that the objectives of their visits were successfully met. The Director General of the UNOG has expressed a keen interest in the alignment process and the inclusion of the UNOG with ECOSOC. The President of ECOSOC underscored some limitations due to resolution 68/1, but expressed a high degree of willingness to test out compromise solutions as far as possible within the mandates of ECOSOC to facilitate the inclusion of the UNOG. The Presidents discussed the possibilities for opening the door for inclusion of the UNOG. The President of ECOSOC outlined the following options that could be pursued:

- Hosting one of three ECOSOC presidential dialogues on emerging issues in Geneva under a theme, for example the debt crisis to maximize on the presence of UNCTAD in that location
- Videoconferencing of ECOSOC meetings to Geneva using new technology that would allow interactive participation; this would be restricted to the morning sessions in light of the time difference
- Explore different avenues to engage with thought leaders in Geneva to reflect on the HLPF and the SDGs under review in July.