



**WELCOME TO THE SUBSTANTIVE SESSION OF  
ECOSOC  
4-29 JULY 2011**





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Launch of the six ECOSOC stamps on the theme "Education" on 1 July 2011



**THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (ECOSOC)** serves as the central forum for the discussion of international economic, social, humanitarian and environmental issues, and for formulating policy recommendations addressed to Member States and the United Nations system. Through these discussions, the Council plays a key role in fostering international cooperation for development and in setting priorities for action.

The Council coordinates the economic, social and related work of the United Nations Funds, Programmes and Specialized Agencies, and holds throughout the year several short sessions, ad hoc meetings, round-tables and panel discussions with the participation of non-governmental stakeholders, to prepare for its four-week substantive session in July. The work of the Council is also carried out by the activities of its subsidiary and related bodies.

#### **The Members of the Bureau of ECOSOC**

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(Zambia)

##### **Vice-Presidents of ECOSOC**

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H.E. Ambassador Gonzalo  
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H.E. Ambassador Miloš Ko-  
terec (Slovakia)



#### **Substantive Session 2011**

##### **High-level Segment 4 - 8 July**

In 2011, the [High-level Segment \(4-8 July, Geneva\)](#) will focus on the [Annual Ministerial Review \(AMR\)](#) turning the spotlight on actions and progress made towards achieving the agreed education goals, within the framework of the Millennium Development Goals and the Education for All agenda. The Review aims at promoting practical strategies to increase access to and quality of education around the world as the basis for poverty eradication and sustainable development. The 2011 AMR theme is "Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to education". It emphasizes the catalytic effect of education on the broader development agenda, including poverty reduction and the transition towards more sustainable patterns of consumption and production.

The period since 2000 was initially

one of rapid progress towards universal primary education. During this time, some of the poorest countries dramatically increased enrolment, narrowed gender gaps and extended opportunities to disadvantaged groups. However, the current pace of progress is insufficient to ensure that the education MDGs will be met by 2015.

Although access remains a key issue, policymakers are called upon to look more closely at the issues of quality and equity in education. Poor learning outcomes are often exacerbated by the inequitable distribution of education between and within countries. Increasingly, evidence shows that the completion of a full cycle of primary education does not ensure the acquisition of basic literacy and numeracy skills. For example, a recent survey of 21 developing countries showed that young adults with five years of education had a 40 per cent chance of being illiterate.

For the opening ceremony of the ECOSOC High-level Segment, the President of the General Assembly, the Deputy-Secretary General, and Mr. Gordon Brown have all confirmed their participation. It is expected that President Dilma Rousseff of Brazil and President Micheline Calmy-Rey of the Swiss Confederation will also participate.

The High-level Segment will include [National Voluntary Presentations](#) from Bangladesh; Belarus; Germany; Malawi; Mauritius; Mexico; Pakistan; Qatar; Senegal; Turkey;

and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. Their national reports (presented by some Ministers of Education) offer rich information on success factors and experiences on sustainable development with a focus on education at the country level.

The Segment will benefit from the summary reports of four AMR regional consultations held in Qatar on “reaching women, girls and the marginalized”; Thailand on “education and the MDGs”; Togo on “reinforcing quality and equity in education”; and Argentina on “teachers, quality and equity”. In many of the regional meetings, the limited scope of the MDG goals and indicators for education has been emphasized. Many regions have also brought out the need for improving the quality of education.

There are several important panel discussions engaging Ministers from developing and developed countries, executive heads of UN System organizations, and representatives of academia, civil society and private sector. One of those will forge the link between education and sustainable development, while others will focus on the changing needs of education for the future, education in Africa and the LDCs and mobilizing resources and partnerships for education. The General Assembly mandate for ECOSOC to discuss the critical issue of promoting sustained, inclusive and equitable growth will be carried out through a panel discussion attracting high level resource persons.

As part of the events being organized, the second [Face to](#)

[Face debate on “Education, human rights and conflicts”](#) will attract experts who will highlight the challenges surrounding access to education, particularly in high-risk environments. It will also introduce new ideas about how to improve the educational system and achieve human rights and educational access, as a contribution to the Millennium Development Goal 2. This event will be broadcasted live on UN webcast and ECOSOC Facebook page.

An [Innovation Fair](#) on the theme, “Education For All” will also be organized. It will showcase innovative practices, approaches and projects in education from around the world. A wide range of institutions, NGOs and private sector companies will take part in the Fair.

### **ECOSOC Dialogue with the Executive Secretaries of the Regional Commissions 8 July**

In ECOSOC decision 2004/323, the Council decided to organize every year a dialogue with the Executive Secretaries of the Regional Commissions immediately after the High-level Segment of its substantive session. This interactive dialogue provides an important forum for the exchange of information between Member States and the Regional Commissions on issues related to regional cooperation and emerging development priorities for the different regions. This year, the ECOSOC Dialogue with the Executive Secretaries of the Regional Commissions is scheduled to take place on 8 July 2011 in the afternoon.

At its organizational session, the

Council decided that the theme of the interactive dialogue for 2011 will be “Regional cooperation as a catalyst for development: examples from the regions”.

During this dialogue the Executive Secretaries of the Regional Commissions will highlight key examples of regional cooperation that have provided a stimulus for development and accelerated progress towards the MDGs, including in areas related to education, in their respective regions. The presentations will also outline the actions taken and the role of the Regional Commissions in strengthening regional cooperation and in supporting South-South cooperation. High-level representatives from countries and key regional organizations will act as discussants and provide their perspective on the importance of regional cooperation and their expectations from the Regional Commissions.

For more information on the Dialogue with the Executive Secretaries of the Regional Commissions please contact Mr. Amr Nour, Director, Regional Commissions New York Office, at [nour@un.org](mailto:nour@un.org)

### **Coordination Segment 11-14 July**

The [2011 Coordination Segment](#), to be held at the United Nations Office in Geneva from 11 to 14 July 2011, will focus on two main substantive areas: -Follow-up to the 2010 Ministerial Declaration on “implementing the internationally agreed goals and com-



-mitments in regard to gender equality and the empowerment of women”

- Follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development



In addition, the annual overview report of the UN system Chief Executive Board for Coordination (CEB) will be presented to the Council.

A special event on “The right to development and global partnership for development” will be organized to mark the 25th anniversary of the adoption of the UN Declaration on the Right to Development.

In its consideration of these issues, the coordination segment provides an opportunity to identify areas where the UN system should promote more comprehensive and effective approaches and to recommend ways in which support by the UN system can be strengthened against the backdrop of current challenges.

On gender equality and the empowerment of women, the Council will take stock of progress made in strengthening a coordinated approach by the UN system in this field, a year after the decision by the General Assembly to create UN Women. The Council will review how the system uses the cross-cutting issues identified in the 2010 Minis-

-terial Declaration as a leverage to accelerate progress on gender related development goals. The issue of gender mainstreaming, traditionally considered in the general segment, will be considered under the coordination segment this year, for the sake of thematic coherence.

For more information on the Coordination segment, please contact Mr. Marc-André Dorel, Senior Economic Affairs Officer, ECOSOC and Interorganizational Cooperation Branch, Office of ECOSOC Support and Coordination/DESA, at [dorel@un.org](mailto:dorel@un.org), and Mr. Hazem Fahmy, Chief, Multi-Stakeholder Engagement Unit, Financing for Development Office, at [fahmyh@un.org](mailto:fahmyh@un.org)

**Operational Activities Segment  
14-18 July**

The [2011 ECOSOC Operational Activities Segment](#) will be held from 14 to 18 July. The segment will focus on progress in implementing the General Assembly 2007 resolution on the Comprehensive Policy Review of UN system’s operational activities (TCPR). Through this review, the GA assesses the relevance, coherence, effectiveness and efficiency of operational activities and gives a detailed set of guidance on how the UN system should work in developing countries.

The funding of operational activities, the functioning of the resident coordination system, and simplification and harmonization of business practices will be central to this year’s review. Four panel discussions on some of these key issues will support the debate (see the segment’s programme of

Work).

The reports of the Secretary-General show that the UN system has launched numerous initiatives to implement the GA guidance on operational activities. For example the UN Development Group (which brings together UN system organizations with operational activities) is working towards a coherent set of priorities to implement the TCPR and make UN system support more focused and coherent.

At the same time, some important reforms are not advancing fast enough. This is the case for the reforms aimed at improving the resident coordinator system and the accountability of its key actors (resident coordinators, UN country teams, regional directors, UNDG and its management etc). There are other issues. For example, the UN system does not assess systematically the sustainability of its capacity development work nor uses sufficiently national systems. Regarding funding of the UN system, there are concerns about the continued overwhelming share of non-core resources (66% of total funding for development-related operational activities in 2009) as well as about the predictability of resources and reliance on a limited number of donors.

The expected outcome is an omnibus resolution that will provide guidelines for the preparation of the next Comprehensive Policy Review which the General Assembly will conduct in 2012.

The Permanent Representative of Peru, who chairs this segment, aims to have the resolution adopted at the end of the segment.

For additional information on the operational activities segment, please contact Ms. Marion Barthelemy, Chief of Branch, Office of ECOSOC Support and Coordination/DESA, at [barthelemy1@un.org](mailto:barthelemy1@un.org)

### Humanitarian Affairs Segment 19-21 July

The [ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment](#), which will take place from 19 – 21 July 2011 in Geneva, provides an important forum where Member States and humanitarian organizations discuss the challenges, opportunities and activities related to the strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations.

At its organizational session for 2010, the Council decided: (a) that the theme of the Humanitarian Affairs Segment will be “Working in partnership to strengthen coordination of humanitarian assistance in a changing world”; and (b) that it will convene two panel discussions, of which the topics will be: (i) “Preparing for the future – predictable, effective, flexible and adequate humanitarian financing and its accountable use to meet the evolving needs and challenges for the delivery of humanitarian assistance”; (ii) “Strengthening resilience, preparedness and capacities for humanitarian response” (Council decision E/2011/L.7). Each panel will feature high-level participa-

-tion from Member States, relevant UN agencies, NGOs and experts.



The panel discussion on “Preparing for the future – predictable, effective, flexible and adequate humanitarian financing and its accountable use to meet the evolving needs and challenges for the delivery of humanitarian assistance” will take place on Wednesday, 20 July 2011. The discussion will focus on broader issues of humanitarian financing ensuring that the humanitarian financing system can support meeting humanitarian needs both in terms of ensuring rapid and well-coordinated response, as well as the ability to address emerging requirements amid a growing humanitarian caseload due to the combination of protracted complex emergencies, the increase in frequency and intensity of natural disasters, and increasing vulnerabilities due to global challenges. In this regard, investment in preparedness, funding tools to support the transition from humanitarian to sustainable development contexts, as well as aligning humanitarian funding tools and those of international financial institutions or regional and national mechanisms, will also be explored.

The panel on “Strengthening resilience, preparedness and capacities for humanitarian response,”

will take place on Thursday, 21 July 2011. The discussion will focus on improving the understanding of humanitarian role in preparedness, and how humanitarian can strengthen partnerships with governments, regional institutions and relevant development actors to develop response capacities. As data points to an increase in frequency and intensity of disasters, and the recent large-scale disasters demonstrating some of the limits of capacity of the international humanitarian response system, meaningfully strengthening the resilience of populations through better preparedness of countries and regions at risk is becoming urgent.

Scheduled for Tuesday morning, 19 July, in between the Operational Activities Segment and Humanitarian Affairs Segment, is the informal ECOSOC event on “The role of the United Nations and the international community in supporting the capacity of the Government of South Sudan to manage the transition.”

In the margins of the Segment, there will be also the annual ‘Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP) Mid-Year Review’ and several informal side events (a list of side-events will be posted shortly).

The Report of the Secretary-General on strengthening the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations will be presented at the Segment.

For more information on the Humanitarian Affairs Segment,

please contact Mr. Daniel Pfister, Policy Development and Studies Branch, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, at [ecosocinfo@un.org](mailto:ecosocinfo@un.org)

**General Segment  
22-29 July**

At the [General Segment](#), to be held from 22 to 29 July 2011 in Geneva, the Council will review, among others, the reports of its subsidiary bodies and of other United Nations entities working in the economic and social fields. The subsidiary bodies include the Council's functional commissions, regional commissions, expert and ad hoc bodies. It will also consider the report of its Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti.

A panel with members of the Committee for Development Policy (CDP) and a briefing by the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) will also be organized during the General Segment.

For more information, please contact Ms. Lotta Tahtinen, Program Officer, Office for ECOSOC Support and Coordination, (917) 367-2212, or at [ecosocinfo@un.org](mailto:ecosocinfo@un.org) and Mr. Marc-André Dorel, Senior Economic Affairs Officer, ECOSOC and Interorganizational Cooperation Branch, (212) 963-7204.