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

FROM GLOBAL COMMITMENT TO NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION

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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

President of ECOSOC

H.E. Ambassador Lazarous Kapambwe (Zambia)

Vice-Presidents of ECOSOC

H.E. Ambassador Abulkalam Abdul Momen (Bangladesh)

H.E. Ambassador Jan Grauls (Belgium)

H.E. Ambassador Gonzalo Gutiérrez Reinol (Peru)

H.E. Ambassador Miloš Koterec (Slovakia)

Substantive Session 2011

High-level Segment 4 - 8 July

The [2011 High-level Segment](#) of the Economic and Social Council (4-8 July, Geneva) was conducted under the chairmanship of the President of the Council, H.E. Ambassador Lazarous Kapambwe, Permanent Representative of Zambia. Numerous ministers, together with other high-level officials, prominent speakers — notably Mr. Gordon Brown — several heads of UN organization and a record number of participants (over 1,400) from civil society and the private sector attended the meeting.

The High-level Segment focused on the [Annual Ministerial Review \(AMR\)](#) with the theme “Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to education”. The 2011 AMR emphasized the catalytic effect of education on the broader development agenda, including poverty reduction and the Millennium Development Goals. The High Level Segment also offered an occasion to galvanize political support for the fundamental role of education in support of sustainable development for the upcoming Rio+20 Conference.

The [2011 ECOSOC Ministerial Declaration](#) addresses educational access, quality, funding, partnerships and the considerable challenges in achieving the internationally agreed education objectives, as well as issues related to secondary and tertiary education, information technology and life-long learning. While not specifically reflected in the Declaration, several speakers (including Mr. Brown) expressed strong support



for establishing a global fund for education to mobilize resources, and strengthen the global partnership to accelerate progress towards the 2015 education goals, with a specific focus on educational access, equity and quality.

[National Voluntary Presentations](#) were given by the Ministers of Education from Bangladesh; Belarus, Germany; Mauritius; Mexico; Pakistan; Qatar; Senegal; Turkey; and Venezuela, offering valuable country-based information and experiences on success factors in working to achieve Education for All, quality education and other education objectives.

Several high-level interactive panel discussions were held on a broad range of education, economic and social development issues. An [Innovation Fair](#) ran throughout the week, offering a wealth of information and experiences on practical initiatives being piloted to advance education and development. The [United Nations postal administration](#) also launched at the opening of the Fair, the second series of six ECOSOC stamps on the theme, “Education for All”. A series of Ministerial roundtable breakfasts

and side-events organized by a broad range of development actors also took place.

Coordination Segment 11-14 July

The [coordination segment](#) focused on two main themes: the follow-up to last year’s Ministerial Declaration on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and the follow-up to the Conference on Financing for Development.

In the follow up to the 2010 ECOSOC Ministerial Declaration, the Council heard for the first time the views of the whole UN system on progress achieved in the gender field, a year after the decision by the General Assembly to establish UN Women. A panel discussion, moderated by Ms. Michele Bachelet and featuring the senior leadership of several UN agencies, funds and programmes, discussed the leadership role that UN Women is called to play in promoting coordination, coherence and accountability of the UN system in this field, which does not relieve other entities of their



commitments to gender equality goals. Another panel discussion focussed on combating gender-based stereotypes that contribute to perpetuate discriminations at all spheres of society.

The Council adopted two resolutions on gender issues: one on the mechanisms to promote system wide gender mainstreaming, both at Headquarters and at the country level, including a plan for an accountability mechanism that was called for by the CEB in 2006 but has not been implemented to date; a second resolution focuses on progress made by the system in the 8 cross-cutting issues identified by the Council in its 2010 Ministerial Declaration of 2010 as key to close the implementation gap in this field.

On Financing for Development, the discussions focussed on global economic governance, particularly the role and effectiveness of the UN system in this context and the need to forge institutional linkages between the G20 and the United Nations. The Council also addressed the specific needs of Least Developed

Countries and considered, in the post Istanbul context, how financial support mechanisms and South-South cooperation can contribute to tackling the development challenges of these countries. In addition, in a resolution entitled "Recovering from the World Financial and Economic Crisis: A Global Jobs Pact", the Council encouraged the full use of the Global Jobs Pact as a framework for enhanced and coherent policy measures in the area of decent work. The Council requested the Secretary-General to report on the implementation of the Pact by the UN system to the ECOSOC Annual Ministerial Review of 2012, which will be devoted to productive capacities, inclusive growth and employment.

In addition to the consideration of these two themes, the Council discussed the annual overview report of the UN system Chief Executive Board for Coordination (CEB). The Council also had a special meeting to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the adoption of the UN Declaration on the right to development. This meeting provided a welcome opportunity for the Council to interact with the

human rights pillar of the UN, as both the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the President of the Human Rights Council took part in this event-- an unprecedented encounter in the history of ECOSOC. The discussions showed how much the development agenda and the human rights agenda are interconnected and called for advancing on both agendas in a collaborated manner.

Operational Activities Segment 14-18 July

In the [2011 Operational Activities Segment](#) of ECOSOC, Member States and representatives of UN entities focused, in particular, on expectations for the 2012 quadrennial comprehensive policy review (QCPR) of the General Assembly; progress in strengthening the UN Resident Coordinator system; and ways to strengthen the funding architecture of funds and programmes through the definition of "critical mass" of core resources, as mandated in GA resolution 64/289. The Executive Heads of the funds and programmes also discussed the future challenges and opportunities facing their respective entities.

Member States adopted at the end of the Operational Activities Segment a resolution, calling, inter alia, for immediate action by UN entities to implement the Management and Accountability System of the Resident Coordinator system; strengthening of links between UNDAFs and agency-specific

programming documents; and review of existing funding modalities in support of the Resident Coordinator system. The resolution also provides guidance to the Secretariat for preparations for the 2012 QCPR of the GA.

The latest DESA report on funding of UN operational activities for development provides detailed analysis of core and non-core contributions and expenditures for the year 2009, as well as long-term trends. The report also includes reviews of several other important funding issues such as: (a) predictability of core and non-core resources flows, including the impact of exchange rate fluctuations, (b) support-cost recovery relating to non-core funding flows, (c) concentration and fragmentation of the UN development system at the country-level, (d) cost of coordination of the UN development system. Moreover, the report provides for the first time analysis of country programmable resources of the UN development system. Prior to the 2011 Operational Activities Segment of ECOSOC, DESA released a funding update on estimated core and non-core contributions for the year 2010.

Humanitarian Affairs Segment 19-21 July

The [Humanitarian Affairs segment](#) - under the general theme of "working in partnership to strengthen coordination of humanitarian assistance in a changing world", consisted of two panels, one on ensuring the humanitarian financing system is predictable, effective, accountable, flexible and adequate humanitarian to meet the evolving needs and challenges for the



delivery of humanitarian assistance and the other on strengthening resilience, preparedness and capacities for humanitarian response. A total of twelve side-events were organised by various humanitarian and development partners, fostering further discussions on timely themes relevant to humanitarian affairs. The Council also decided to hold a special meeting on the humanitarian situation in the Horn of Africa. The main outcome was the adoption by consensus of a resolution which reaffirmed the importance of humanitarian principles and humanitarian coordination.

The resolution made other considerable normative progress, reaffirming the opportunities arising from continually engaging in inter-governmental discussions. A few of the important advancements include the reaffirmation of the importance of access and humanitarian principles, a reference to the cluster approach, the taking note of IASC guidance on needs assessment, a new paragraph on accountability, a new paragraph on acceptance as part of security risk management strategies, and a new paragraph on funding for preparedness.

Other issues of significance include the addition of language on commemorating 20 years of General Assembly resolution 46/182, calling for the ERC "to lead" efforts to strengthen coordination, encouragement to Member States to cooperate with OCHA, a reference to safe access to fuel and firewood and other basic humanitarian services, a revised paragraph on improving funding and several references on working with local and national levels in preparedness and response.

As in previous years, OCHA/PDSB organized two formal panel discussions and coordinated several informal side events. All discussions were well attended and featured presentations by high-level government officials, UN agencies, the International Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement, the private sector, academia and non-governmental organizations.

The first panel 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' stressed the need to systematically fund preparedness measures, and better address the transition from emergency relief to recovery and development. However, more emphasis should be put on mobilizing new and innovative resources, not least from the private sector. It was necessary to promote effective, predictable, flexible and adequate funding through enhanced partnerships and strengthened mechanisms.

At the session on "Strengthening resilience, preparedness and capacities for humanitarian response", discussants converged that there needs more to be done to improve support to regional, national and local partners in improving their preparedness levels so they can respond to humanitarian needs once they arise. While this needs the buy-in of national and local government, partnerships need to be built at the international level – including with UNDP, the World Bank, regional organizations, the private sector, as well as private individuals – to support these efforts. There was also a need identified to work on clarifying the roles and responsibilities of international actors.

Due to the growing humanitarian emergency in the Horn of Africa, the Emergency Relief Coordinator and the ECOSOC Vice-President for Humanitarian Affairs decided to hold an ad-hoc special event. After the presentations, appeals for solidarity and urges for swift action to address the humanitarian needs in the region by Valerie Amos, Cheik Diarra (Special Advisor on Africa), Antonio Guterres and Kristalina Georgieva (EU



Commissioner), Member States and UN agencies expressed solidarity, commitment and pledges and offered assistance to those affected by the crisis.

In the margins of the Segment - as part of the side-events programme - the Mid-Year Review of the Consolidated Appeals was launched, including 21 appeals, including three Flash Appeals. Accordingly, humanitarian funding requirements have increased by half a billion dollars since the start of the year, bringing the total 2011 target to \$7.9 billion. These appeals have been funded at 45%, or 3.6 billion dollars. This means that 4.3 billion dollars are still needed in order to fully respond to humanitarian needs this year.

General Segment 22-28 July

The resolutions adopted by the Council at its General Segment (22 to 28 July), which overviews the work of the ECOSOC's functional machinery, attested to the Council's effectiveness in responding to contemporary challenges efficiently. In its resolution on South Sudan, which built on the Council's joint informal event

with the Peacebuilding Commission on 13 June 2011, the Council decided to continue to monitor the development of the new country and its progress towards achieving the MDGs, in view of its special responsibility to ensure that the UN system support to the country is integrated and coordinated.

A significant achievement was the establishment of a new UN Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management, which will bring together, for the first time at the global level, government experts from all Member States to compile and disseminate best practices and experiences on geospatial information that is highly relevant in the context of sustainable development and humanitarian assistance.

On Haiti, the Council reviewed the report of its Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti, which is timely given the need to maintain a high level of international support to the country, while ensuring that political tensions do not hinder the reconstruction and development process.

On 28 July 2011, the President of the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB), Professor Hamid Ghodse, presented the Board's report for 2010 to the Council. In outlining the work of the Board in monitoring the implementation of the international drug control conventions, the President of the Board drew the Council's attention to a number of challenges in international drug control. The Board had devoted the thematic chapter of its Annual Report for 2010 to the problem of drug-related corruption, which is undermining international efforts to stem illicit drug production and trafficking, and called on the international community to continue to enhance its efforts to ensure the effective functioning of the international drug control system.

Concluding session 29 July

The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) ended its four-week substantive session last Friday. "We held this substantive session under the theme "Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to education" to underscore the importance of education to the attainment of all millennium development goals, and to the sustainable existence of humanity and the environment", Lazarous Kapambwe, the Council's President said. "We addressed issues of access to education, particularly of the girl child: the quality of education; the partnerships and financing needed; the need to ensure that education equips our youth with skills needed by our economies and the jobs markets; and we shared best practices and experiences through the National Voluntary Presentations".



Bringing the United Nations system together, ECOSOC organized its Coordination Segment on the theme of gender equality and women's empowerment. ECOSOC also convened the Operational Activities Segment which focused on the Comprehensive Policy Review of UN system operational activities for development in 2012 (the QCPR). Mr. Kapambwe said that the "QCPR will be the opportunity to reflect on how the UN system should respond to changes in the development cooperation landscape – such as the looming economic difficulties, the rise of new development cooperation actors and the ever growing focus on achieving results".

Echoing the comments of the President of ECOSOC, Mr. Nikhil Seth, Director of the Office for ECOSOC Support and Coordination, underscored the success of the substantive session and said that "it is time to boost ECOSOC's effectiveness and influence using all the tools at our disposal. Let's carry the momentum of Geneva on to the June 2012 Rio+20 Summit".