



## Working together for inclusive growth, productive jobs and healthier planet

*Welcome to the Substantive Session 2012*

**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.

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## The Members of the Bureau of ECOSOC for 2012

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## Substantive Session 2012

### High-level Segment 2 - 9 July

The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) will hold its [High-level Segment](#) in New York from 2 to 9 July 2012. This year's High-level Segment opens with the [Annual Ministerial Review \(AMR\)](#), from 2 to 3 July, which will turn the spotlight onto the theme of "promoting productive capacity, employment and decent work to eradicate poverty"

The focus of the 2012 AMR is particularly timely. The global economic and financial crisis has exacerbated pre-existing challenges to the achievement of full employment and decent work in both developing and developed countries. While unemployment and labour market inequity remain high in developed countries, workers in developing countries must contend with high rates of underemployment, vulnerable employment and informal work. Many economies are simply not generating sufficient work opportunities to reduce poverty or absorb growth

in the working-age population. This is exacerbating the risks of social exclusion, political instability and conflict.

The 2012 AMR will examine global labour market trends and assess progress toward meeting employment and decent work-related goals. It will highlight the catalytic effects of productive capacity and jobs on poverty eradication and prospects for achieving the MDGs. It will result in a ministerial declaration, to be adopted on 9 July that reflects the international commitment prioritise job creation in the development agenda. The ministerial declaration will also convey an agreement on the key policies that are necessary to enhance productivity and the quality and quantity of employment opportunities.

On 2 and 3 July, as part of the national dimension of the AMR, eight countries – Algeria, Brazil, Ecuador, Kenya, Mauritius, Qatar, Russian Federation and Ukraine – will make National Voluntary Presentations (NVPs). They will share experience in terms of the progress that has

been accomplished and the remaining obstacles with respect to productive capacity and employment.

On 3 July, representatives from the international financial and trade institutions will convene for a high-level policy dialogue on recent developments in the world economy. This will be followed by a thematic roundtable on 9 July, which will highlight "macro-economic policies for productive capacity, employment creation, sustainable development and the achievement of the MDGs". The roundtable discussion will draw attention to practical examples of macroeconomic policies that have proven successful for job creation.

On 5 and 6 July, the High-level Segment will continue with the third biennial [Development Cooperation Forum \(DCF\)](#). As a true multi-stakeholder global platform for interactive debate on the effective and coherent use of development cooperation, the 2012 DCF will bring together a large number of diverse participants. These include ministerial-level and senior representatives

of Planning, Finance and Foreign Affairs Ministries and aid agencies from Member States; multilateral actors including the UN system; parliamentarians; advocacy and grassroots groups from national and international civil society organizations; local authorities; and the private sector and private philanthropic organizations.

In today's development cooperation landscape, the DCF has an ever more important role to play. The growing number and diversity of actors in international development cooperation can benefit from such an inclusive global platform to discuss experiences. Innovative development partnerships are gaining traction. They increasingly coordinate and regroup around common goals. Yet, to release their full potential, efforts need to be more coherent and better coordinated.

A continued focus on turning pledges and commitments into implementation is urgently needed to scale up development efforts led and owned by programme countries. With limited resources and competing demands, any type of development assistance must show tangible results at national and local level.

These challenges are aggravated by political uncertainty and economic hardship that continue to dominate development prospects. Such deep changes call for practical solutions that are built around sustainable development and designed to work in the long run for the benefit of all people. The post-2015 UN development agenda needs to build on this premise.

Against this backdrop, the 2012

DCF aims to promote solutions to enhance development cooperation, improve its quality and maximize its impact to accomplish national and international development priorities in the context of sustainable development. It will explore emerging drivers of change that will shape the future of development cooperation.

In the spirit of global accountability, the frank and interactive discussions are expected to encourage all actors to live up to promises made on aid issues, including its allocation, coherence, transparency and effectiveness in support of sustainable development results. Special emphasis will also be placed on South-South Cooperation and the evolving role of private philanthropic organizations and decentralised cooperation.

In view of the evolving post 2015 UN development agenda, the 2012 DCF will also provide a unique opportunity for the universal membership of the UN and other stakeholders to discuss international efforts to promote development cooperation and to further promote the role of the DCF as a multi-stakeholder and inclusive forum for addressing emerging challenges and acting as global apex for accountability on development cooperation.

A series of side events will also be held at the margins of the DCF, organized by representatives of different stakeholder groups.

The High-level Segment will be chaired by H.E. Mr. Milos Koterec of Slovakia, President of ECOSOC.

**Coordination Segment  
10-12 July**

The 2012 [Coordination Segment](#) will be organized from 10 to 12 July 2012 in New York and will focus on two main substantive areas:

- Follow up to the 2011 Ministerial Declaration on "implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to education"; and
- Follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development.



During the segment, there will be a dialogue with the Executive Secretaries of the Regional Commissions on the theme of "Regional perspectives on youth and development", during which the report of the Secretary-General on regional cooperation in the economic, social and related fields will be presented to the Council. In addition, the annual overview report of the United Nations system Chief Executive Board for Coordination (CEB) will be presented to the Council.

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

The Secretary-General's report on "the role of the United Nations system in implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to education" will provide the background analysis for the debate on that issue. The discussion will focus on the work of the United Nations system in the field of education through the angle of coordinated and/or joint initiatives, as well as partnerships with other stakeholders aimed at accelerating progress towards MDG2, Education for All and related goals. The report of the Secretary-General also provides food for thought on emerging trends in education development and their potential consequences on the international education agenda, which the Council may wish to discuss as well.

Under the financing for development agenda item, the Council will have before it the Summary by the President of the Council of the special high-level meeting of the Economic and Social Council with the Bretton Woods institutions, the World Trade Organization and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, held in March 2012.

The work of the Coordination Segment will be complemented

by the following panels:

- Mobilizing partnerships for development, including in the field of education
- Addressing the challenges of the education/skills and job mismatch
- Innovative mechanisms of financing for development

The Segment will be chaired by H.E. Mr. Mootaz Ahmadein Khalil of Egypt, Vice President of ECOSOC.

### **Operational Activities Segment** **13-17 July**

The 2012 ECOSOC [Operational Activities Segment](#) will take place from 13-17 July at United Nations headquarters in New York. Segment proceedings will be guided and informed by the findings presented in the two of the reports of the Secretary-General for the 2012 Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR) and the report of the independent evaluation of the Delivering as One programme. In addition to the main analytical report on the implementation of the 2007 triennial comprehensive policy review, another analytical report on funding of operational activities for development of the United Nations system for the year 2010 will also be before the Council.

The QCPR is the mechanism by which the General Assembly assesses the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence and impact of the UN system's development work. Through the QCPR, the General Assembly also establishes system-wide policy orientations for the development cooperation and country-level modalities of the UN system in response to the evolving

development landscape.

The two Secretary-General reports on the 2012 QCPR are the result of extensive and substantive preparations for the 2012 QCPR process. These analytical preparations comprise 9 in-depth issue studies, 4 global surveys of stakeholder perspectives and a comprehensive funding analysis of UN operational activities for development. The Secretary-General reports touch upon key features and challenges posed by emerging issues in international development cooperation; development effectiveness in relation to transition countries, South-South Cooperation, capacity development, gender equality and results-based management and evaluation; and the functioning of the UN development system, particularly in relation to the Resident Coordinator System, the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and the simplification and harmonization of business practices at country level.

The Segment will bring the perspectives of national policy makers on all these critical QCPR issues, complemented by the operational experience of senior UN officials. The Segment will feature a dialogue with the Executive Heads of UN funds and programmes, as well as with the Chairs of the Executive Boards of UN funds and programmes to consider the strategic priorities and enhanced coherence of the UN development system in light of the 2012 QCPR analytical process. There will also be panel discussions on the functioning of the UN develop-

ment system, with the participation of senior government officials. Members of the UN Evaluation Management Group will present the findings of the Delivering as One independent evaluation and the Chairs of the Tirana and Montevideo intergovernmental conferences on Delivering as One will discuss the achievements and remaining challenges of this UN pilot initiative. Prior to the Segment, a half-day workshop will bring together national focal points for operational activities to discuss key development topics emerging from the 2012 QCPR process, which will be shared with the Council and used to enrich Segment deliberations.

The Segment will be chaired by H.E. Mr. Desra Percaya of Indonesia, Vice President of ECOSOC. As 2012 involves a QCPR process, the Segment will not result in any outcome resolution. However, the debates of the Segment will serve to complement and inform the negotiations of the General Assembly in its 67<sup>th</sup> session in the adoption of a QCPR resolution which will provide policy directives on UN operational activities for development for the 2012-2016 cycle.

**Humanitarian Affairs Segment  
18-20 July**

The ECOSOC **Humanitarian Affairs Segment** will take place in New York on 18 – 20 July. The Segment provides Member States, humanitarian organisations including UN and NGO staff with an opportunity to discuss opportunities and challenges, related to strengthening the coordination of emergency

humanitarian assistance.



The ECOSOC organizational session for 2012 has decided that the theme for the humanitarian affairs segment in 2012 will be: “Working in partnership to strengthen coordination of humanitarian assistance in a changing world”; and that two panels will be convened as follows:

- Improving capacities for evidence-based humanitarian decision-making;
- Partnerships for effective humanitarian assistance in support, of national, regional and international efforts.

Each panel will feature high-level representation from Member States, Regional Organisations, UN and NGOs and will be moderated by the Emergency Relief Coordinator Valerie Amos.

The panel on *improving capacities for evidence-based humanitarian decision-making* will feature prominent speakers from the academic and practitioner world, in addition to a Minister from an affected country. Speakers will include Professor Hans Rosling Chairman of the Gapminder foundation and noted TED Speaker. This panel will focus on how to strengthen the evidence-base for humanitarian decision-making, particularly decisions about who, when and how to assist. It will also highlight the role of new technologies in strengthening the link bet-

ween affected people and humanitarian response decisions; and will recommend measures to strengthen information and data platforms for humanitarian decision-making.

Scheduled for 20 July at 10:00am, the panel on *partnerships for effective humanitarian response* will highlight examples of innovative partnerships in humanitarian response, including those which bring new resources and expertise to address humanitarian needs. The panel will also explore how such partnerships can strengthen local resilience and national level capacities to respond to new emergencies. The panel will recommend steps that stakeholders can jointly take to strengthen preparedness, resilience and response. Panel participants include representatives of regional organisations, affected member states and civil society.

As in previous years the ECOSOC Vice Presidents for Operational and Humanitarian Affairs will co-host an informal ECOSOC event on “Humanitarian needs in the Sahel and the importance of building resilience”. This event will shed light on the food and nutrition crises in the Sahel region, including efforts by national governments, civil society and international humanitarian actors to address the mounting humanitarian needs and building resilience of local communities to these recurrent crises.

On the margins of the ECOSOC panels and the joint event, Member States, UN

organisations, Red Cross/Red Crescent and NGOs will host fifteen side events on various issues including: history of humanitarian coordination; youth in urban crises; humanitarian response in urban contexts; civil-military coordination; transitional solutions initiatives; partnerships and twinning in the provision of humanitarian assistance; humanitarian access; ten year anniversary of INSARAG; and how affected members states can better manage and facilitate international assistance. The Global Humanitarian Assistance report 2012, which is an independent attempt to capture the international humanitarian financing, will be launched on the margins of ECOSOC.

The Emergency Relief Coordinator will host the launch of the Mid-Year Review of the Consolidated Appeals Process for 2012 on 19 July at 13.15-14.30. The event is significant as it will raise the profile of key emergencies and will encourage member states and partners to support humanitarian multilateral efforts.

As the substantive Secretariat supporting the ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment, OCHA this year will mount a booth that will feature humanitarian publications, to enable ECOSOC guests and visitors to collect some additional information and material. Additionally, this year the panels will be more publicised and interactive using social media fora such as Facebook and Twitter. Users on these platforms will be able to participate in the discussion and pose questions to the panelists.

The Segment will be chaired by H.E. Mr. Fernando Arias of

of Spain, Vice-President of ECOSOC.

### General Segment 23-27 July

At the [General Segment](#), to be held from 23 to 27 July 2012 in New York, 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.

At the general segment, the Council also reviews the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries (LDC) and considers the recommendations made by the Committee on Development Policy on the inclusion in and graduation from the LDC category. This year, the Council is expected to take action on the follow-up to the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries.

The Council will review a number of system-wide thematic issues. Among them, the mainstreaming of a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system is an annual exercise for the Council. The work of the United Nations inter-agency task force on tobacco control and the follow-up to the World Summit on Information Society will also be reviewed.

A series of events will be held during the General Segment. A briefing by the Members of the Committee for Development Policy will take place. A briefing by the Chairperson of the Peacebuilding

Commission and a panel event on "Integrated, coherent and coordinated support to South Sudan" will be organized on 24 July as part of the Council's broader discussion on "African countries emerging from conflict". The panel event will provide an opportunity to examine more closely some of the key elements of the first Secretary-General's report on "Implementation of integrated, coherent and coordinated support to South Sudan by the United Nations system", in particular in the areas of capacity-building and core governance functions. The economic and social situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the occupied Syrian Golan and the support to colonial countries and peoples are also considered by the Council at this segment.

The Segment will be chaired by H.E. Mr. Luis Alfonso de Alba of Mexico, Vice-President of ECOSOC.