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ECOSOC -- The 54-member Economic and Social Council

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Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States.

Roundtable D, on the theme of "Unleashing entrepreneurship: the role of partnerships in mobilizing resources for LDCs", was chaired by Mr. Poul Nielson, Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid of European Commission. The consensus was that credit risk assessments should be strengthened so that credits can flow to domestic entrepreneurs. A model in South Africa, where a non-profit organization managed HIV/AIDS risk for borrowers in the banking system, was presented and received with interest. The importance of public private partnership such as the Global Compact Initiative were emphasized. The event was hosted by United Nations Fund for International Partnership and the UN Development Programme.

Roundtable E, on the theme of "Investment in Urban Water, Sanitation and Sustainable Human Settlements", was chaired by H.E. Dr. Shekou M. Sesay, Minister for Presidential and Public Affairs Office of the President of Sierra Leone. The issue that could contribute to sustainable development included expanding regional cooperation, promoting private sector involvement and strengthening the role of civil society and governance through decentralization. The roundtable was hosted by UN-Habitat.

In addition to the Investment Promotion Forum, fourteen roundtable breakfasts were organized on 29-30 June 2004. These roundtables highlighted key issues of concern for policymakers and were appreciated by all participants.

The High-level Segment concluded with the adoption of a Ministerial Declaration that reaffirmed the commitments contained in the Brussels Programme of Action and called for the world's 50 poorest nations to translate their goals into specific measures within their national development frameworks and poverty-eradication strategies. At the end of the session, the Council decided

cooperation in addressing and supporting the empowerment and the specific needs of rural women. ECOSOC also invited the UN system to further assist developing countries in their efforts to enhance access by the rural poor to productive assets, especially land and water.

The second theme of the coordination segment reviewed the implementation of agreed conclusions adopted in 1997 on mainstreaming gender perspectives into all policies and programmes in the UN system. Additionally, they explored ways to align the framework of the 1997 agreed conclusions with the outcomes of other conferences held since 1997, including the Millennium Summit. At the conclusion of the session, the Council decided that the theme of its 2005 Coordination Segment would be "Towards achieving internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration." The Council also decided to continue consultations on a multi-year work programme for the coordination segment, with a view to finalizing the programme before the next substantive session.

On adopted text concerning "Protection against products harmful to health and the environment," ECOSOC requested the Secretary-General to continue updating the electronic version of a consolidated list of banned or restricted products and printing the new data for those who may not have access to the e-version, particularly those in developing countries. The Council also urged governments to: participate fully in the process of developing a strategic approach to international chemical management by 2005; support developing countries in strengthening

their capacity for the sound management of chemicals and hazardous wastes by providing technical and financial assistance; and ratify and implement the Prior Informed Consent (PIC) and the Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) Conventions.

The Council deferred action on certain issues to its resumed substantive session, among them: the Programme of Action for the LDCs for the Decade 2001-2010; international cooperation in tax matters; reports of coordination bodies; proposed strategic framework for the biennium 2006-2007; the Committee for Development Policy report; and a draft resolution in the Commission on Science and Technology for Development report.

The operational activities segment was held 7-9 July, and included three panels which alternated with the general debate.

The first panel, moderated by Mr. José Antonio Grom, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, focused on the international development agenda and the improvements of the operational activities of the UN system at the country level, highlighting in particular the main challenges affecting the effectiveness of the operational activities for development of the UN system.

The second panel also moderated by Mr. José Antonio Grom figured the dialogue with the Executive Heads of the UN Funds and Programmes (United Nations Development Program, United Nations Children's Fund, United Nations Population Fund and World Food Program). A series of issues were highlighted including follow-up to the Greentree Report, CCA/UNDAF process, greater involvement of the UN country

team in the national processes as reflected by a clearer linkage between MDGs and national priorities.

The third panel addressed the role of the CCAs and UNDAFs in country level coherence and coordination. The panel was moderated by Mr. Massimo D'Angelo, Chief of the Development Cooperation Policy Branch/OESC. The panel highlighted number of issues affecting the successful use of these instruments, among others, differences in the level of understanding and commitments among UN system agencies and alignment with national planning, processes, and priorities, including the MDGs.

Overall, there was general recognition of the efforts and progress made by the system in implementing the reforms since the last TCPR, especially in terms of coordination, coherence and effectiveness of the UN system in supporting national development efforts within the overall framework of the MDGs and the other internationally agreed development goals. Among the

encourages the Office to continue to organize, with the participation of all stakeholders, consultations and workshops on issues related to the mobilization of resources for financing for development and poverty eradication, and to organize workshops, panel discussions and other activities to promote best practices and exchange information on the implementation of the commitments and agreements made. Further, it encourages the regional commissions, with the support of regional development banks, and in cooperation with the UN funds and programmes, to continue to strengthen their efforts in addressing regional and interregional aspects of the ICFFD follow-up and to provide inputs to the high-level dialogue and the to the Spring meeting of ECOSOC. Finally, the resolution requests the Secretary-General to submit a report on financing for development pertaining to the role of the private sector, taking into consideration the report “Unleashing Entrepreneurship” for consideration by the General Assembly under the relevant agenda items at its 59th session.

Under Item 7: Coordination, programme and other questions the Council took note of the reports under this item, including the report of the CPC on its 44th session contained in document A/59/16. The Council also took note of the proposed strategic framework for the biennium 2006-2007 contained in relevant fascicles of document A/59/6.

Under Item 13: Economic and environmental questions - Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, ECOSOC took note of and referred to the General Assembly a short report of the Secretary-General (E/2004/83) which invited the General Assembly to

consider whether it wishes to continue undertaking a quinquennial review of the implementation of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, as called for in Article 34 of the Charter. The report suggests that monitoring the implementation of the Charter could be considered implicit in the overall framework of the review of the integrated and coordinated implementation of the outcomes of, and follow-up to, the major United Nations Conferences and summits, in particular the Monterrey Consensus. The report of the Secretary-General on this matter was before the ECOSOC because it is entrusted with the task of undertaking preparatory work for the General Assembly’s consideration of this matter.

Highlights of the work of the Ad Hoc Advisory Groups

The Ad Hoc Advisory Groups were established by the Economic and Social Council, following the recommendation of General Assembly and its Open-ended Ad Hoc Working Group on the Causes of Conflict and the Promotion of Durable Peace and Sustainable Development in Africa. Under this mandate two Ad Hoc Advisory Groups have been set up, on Guinea-Bissau and Burundi.

In June 2004, there was a joint mission to Guinea-Bissau by the Security Council and the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Guinea Bissau. The joint mission underscored the nexus of development and security issues. The mission highlighted the promising developments in the economic, social and political situation of the country following legislative elections in March 2004, including improvement in the

management of public finances and a strong commitment to the partnership approach endorsed by the Economic and Social Council in 2003.

The Council also carried out an assessment of the work of the Ad Hoc Advisory Groups (E/2004/82). Delegations noted that the Ad Hoc Advisory Groups were an innovative and non-bureaucratic mechanism to support countries emerging from conflict. As such, the Ad Hoc Advisory Groups can be considered another step forward in the United Nations endeavor to address postconflict situations in a comprehensive manner. The active participation of the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Security Council on Conflict po.

discussion and proposals of the NGO forum held during the High-Level Segment of ECOSOC next July in Geneva.

Economic, Social and Cultural Importance of the World's Rice Consuming Population

During the DPI/NGO Conference "Millennium Development Goals: Civil Society Takes Action" Hanifa Mezoui, the Chief of the NGO Section within the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, aided in the presentation on the Economic, Social and Cultural Importance of the World's Rice-Consuming Population. This presentation was sponsored by The International Shinto Foundation.

The event highlighted the economic, social and cultural issues that impact the world's rice-consuming population. This workshop also addressed how successful promotion and cooperation requires engaging all aspects of society. Through this enhanced engagement, the link between NGOs and the progress of the UN Millennium Development Goals is strengthened.

The Benin Initiative: "Turning Assets into Useable Capital"

The High Level Segment 2004 substantive session of ECOSOC focused on the issue of resources mobilization and enabling environment for poverty eradication in the Least Developed Countries. The issue of domestic resource mobilization was also highlighted during this preparatory process for the High Level Segment. The government of Benin in collaboration

with Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations Development Program, ILC and other organizations decided to launch an initiative for generating resources.

The President of Benin launched this initiative on "Turning Assets into Useable Capital" during the 2004 substantive session of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). The overall objective is to increase security and access to land, generate greater income and wealth for the citizens of Benin, by linking the reform process to register land and property, with efforts to improve the financial and regulatory enabling environment, explore the usefulness of tilting to obtain increased domestic resources for local growth. The President of Benin has invited Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) and private sector to join the initiative.

The Government of Benin has established an Inter-Ministerial Committee. And an inter-agency meeting of all the partners is due to take place in Benin, either in mid October or early November, most specifically to: (i) define the parameters for this initiative, including whether the initial focus will be on urban property or rural, especially agricultural land; (ii) identify the limits of the parallel activities; and (iii) an opportunity for all the partners to meet and agree on the roles and concrete actions.

The meeting on wireless internet, held in Monterrey, Mexico on 8-9 September, is part of a series of fifteen conferences that over the next year will take place throughout the world under the title 'Wireless Internet Opportunities for Underserved Areas and Local Communities.' The series, undertaken by the Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) Task Force and the Wireless Internet Institute (W2i) in cooperation with UNITAR and underwriters such as Intel and IBM focuses on how wireless Internet can help countries in the region to define clear and attainable local objectives, establish consensus on favorable policies and regulations, build sustainable business models and share best practices among field practitioners, fostering universal connectivity in support of economic, social and educational development.

During the two days of deliberations panelists discussed the following topics: The panel on "*Ecology of Internet Distribution in Mexico*" examined the underlying barriers to universal connectivity and helped participants understand existing delivery methods, bandwidth cost components, infrastructure economics, and regulatory and competition issues. The second panel, "*Promises of Wireless Internet Technologies: new Generation of Products and Services*" included a general outline by W2i of available

enhanced cooperation and coordination among the international community in the area of development as well as peace and security. Heads of State and

the global recovery and addressed their implications for the development goals. In an innovation this year, the floor was then opened for an informal and lively Question & Answer session, which helped us in better understand the various views on this issue. This new format was broadly welcomed.

Following are some of the main issues highlighted during the debate.

Combined with a renewed support of multilateralism by smaller countries, there was strong articulation by the most marginalized countries of their concerns and perspectives.

It emerged from the debate that the follow-up process for the International Conference on Financing for Development, follow-up to the Brazil-Chile-France and Spain Initiative for “Action against Hunger and Poverty,” preparations for the 2005 High-Level event, preparations for the Barbados+10 and the 2004 Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review (TCPR) would require special attention of the Committee.

Strong commitment was expressed to the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals and of the overarching goal of poverty reduction. There was also a broad consensus on the need for the Second Committee to promote concrete measures during this session to achieve progress towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

However, the continued imbalance in the distribution of the benefits of globalization, the widening income gap between and within countries, worsening economic conditions in several countries, weak employment generation and the

related adverse effects on the environment were highlighted as major obstacles towards the achievement of the MDGs.

In this context, it was emphasized that the 2005 High Level Event must be effective in pushing implementation and it should give new impetus to the realization of the MDGs. Several delegations called for a special focus on development. It was also emphasized that the Meeting should have a negotiated consensus outcome.

With globalization, the movement of people across borders has increased and it is critical to address the issue of migration in a comprehensive manner. Hence, several speakers welcomed the General Assembly’s decision to convene a high-level dialogue on migration in 2006 and Peru’s initiative to host an international conference of developing countries with important migration flows next year.

Speakers emphasized the need to strengthen the FFD follow-up process and keep it focused on achieving results in all areas of the Monterrey Consensus. Many recent initiatives and studies on Innovative Sources of Financing need to be carefully examined by the Second Committee so as to decide during the 2005 Event which of them could be implemented. The initiative undertaken by Brazil, Chile, France and Spain “Action against Hunger and Poverty”, which strives to devise and implement viable financing mechanisms received broad support and there were many calls for undertaking measures to promote its implementation.

While welcoming the recent agreement reached at WTO on a framework for

future negotiations, the need for greater market access, Special Differential and Preferential Treatment and removal of subsidies and other harmful barriers as envisioned in the I2132 Tha Agendaa

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For more information on the Economic and Social Council, please visit:
<http://www.un.org/esa/coordination/ecosoc/>

For further information on the work of the UN Secretariat in economic and social affairs see DESA News online at:
<http://www.un.org/esa/desanews.htm>

Please note that there will be a reformatted webpage available soon. Additionally, it will provide access to ECOSOC resolutions and decisions from 2001 through the most recent session.

Publications currently for sale:

Publication on the high-level Segment theme of 2003: *An integral approach to Rural Development*

Publication on the high-level Segment theme of 2002: *Human Development, Health and Education*

Publication on the high-level Segment theme of 2001: *Supporting Africa's efforts to Achieve Sustainable Development*

Publication on harmful products: *the consolidated list of Products Whose Consumption and/or Sales have been Banned, Withdrawn, Severely restricted or not approved by Government* (seventh and eight editions)

Upcoming Events on Economic and Social Issues for 2004:

Please verify event in the UN Daily Journal

General Assembly Plenary:

17 November: Lecture by Professor Talat Halman on “Culture and Peace” Conference Room 6: 1:15-2:45 p.m.

7 December: Event on sports and development during the Launch of the Year of Sports organized by United Nations for International Partnerships with Department of Economic and Social Affairs

Second Committee:

22 October: Panel Discussion with Executive Secretaries of the Regional Commissions “A regional perspective of the MDGs” organized by the Office of ECOSOC Support and Coordination with the Regional Commission New York Office
10 a.m.-1 pm

27 October: Lecture on “Trade and Development” by Thomas Friedman coordinated by Office of ECOSOC Support and Coordination
10 a.m. -12 noon

29 October: Lecture by Professor Amartya Sen “Forging coherence to achieve the MDGs in the context of globalization” organized by Office of ECOSOC Support and Coordination

10 a.m.-12 noon

1 November: Hearings on Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review, with the participation of executive heads of UN organizations, on “United Nations Development Cooperation: Reforms, Resources and Results”

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2 November: Country team panel on Triennial Comprehensive Policy

Upcoming Events on Economic and Social Issues for 2004 (continue):

18 November: Launch of the International Year of Microcredit organized by United Nations Capital Development Fund and Department of Economic and Social Affairs

12 November: Initiative D 21 Annual Convention, Bremen, Germany
The Initiative D21 is Germany's largest Public Private Partnership. It is an economic initiative with almost 300 members from all spheres of business, politics and society. The ICT Task Force will host a booth at this event with the purpose of strengthening its relationship with the private sector.

19-20 November: Seventh Meeting of the United Nations ICT Task Force, Berlin, Germany *The ICT Task Force of the United Nations will hold its Seventh Meeting on 19-20 November in Berlin, Germany. There will be a*