### $Volume\ 4 - Number\ 2$

# News from E C O S O C

#### Newsletter on the work of the United Nations Economic and Social Council

ECOSOC -- The 54-member Economic and Social Council serves as the central forum for discussing international economic and social issues, and for formulating policy recommendations addressed to Member States and to the United Nations. It makes or initiates studies and reports; makes recommendations on international economic, social, cultural, educational, health and related matters; and promotes respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms. Subsidiary bodies, commissions and committees of ECOSOC carry out its year-round work. ECOSOC strengthens cooperation within the UN system, coordinates the work of the specialized agencies and consults with non-governmental organizations. A substantive session of the Council is convened annually in July, and supplementary formal meetings as well as informal panels on topical issues are held throughout the year.

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President of ECOSOC: H. E. Ambassador Munir

Akram (Pakistan)

Vice-President of ECOSOC: H. E. Ambassador

Ali Hachani (Tunisia)

Vice-President of ECOSOC: H. E. Ambassador

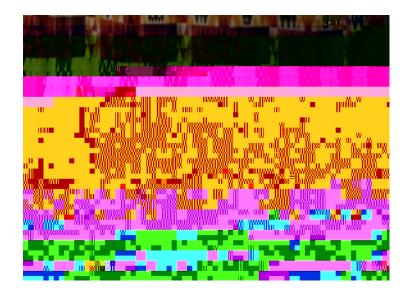
Agim Nesho (Albania)

Vice- President of ECOSOC: H. E. Ambassador

Luis Gallegos (Ecuador)

Vice-President of ECOSOC: H. E. Ambassador

Johan C. Verbeke (Belgium)



2005 ECOSOC High-Level Segment

as well as triangular cooperation and regional initiatives in the achievement of the development goals. The importance of sound macroeconomic, structural and sectoral policies laid the foundation for harnessing the benefits of foreign direct investment and private sector activity as strengthening institutions and the establishment governance and predictable legal and regulatory frameworks. In addition to good governance, there was a need for the respect of human rights, the rule of law and strong democratic processes based social iustice. Without these. development could not be broad based and all-encompassing.

It was emphasized that reducing poverty and hunger is a precondition for the majority of the remaining MDGs, but that on the current trajectory, the hunger goal could only be met as early as 2050, well beyond the 2015 deadline. Speakers underscored that hunger had devastating impact on the lives and livelihoods of people suffering from it: it reduced productivity and working capacity, making people susceptible to disease and preventing children from learning. It thus compromises growth of entire economies. Alleviating hunger is therefore a pre-condition for poverty reduction. In the area of human rights, empowerment of women through protecting their basic human rights was a key concern for many member States as was the social dimensions development and adequate health systems.

## II. The Role of ECOSOC and the United Nations System

Delegations expressed strong support for a central role for ECOSOC in the follow-up to and the implementation of the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social, environmental and related fields and the achievement of the MDGs. It should provide policy guidance to the United Nations system on these issues and be an institutional platform for their integrated analysis and mainstreaming. Some representatives

(E/2005/56). They also welcomed the report of the Chief Executive Board for Coordination entitled "One United Nations: Catalyst for Progress and Change — How the Millennium Declaration is changing the way the United Nations system works".

The work of the United Nations Chief Executives Board (CEB) for Coordination, in ensuring a better coverage of the MDGs in the system was commended by several delegations. It was also recognised that the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) had proven useful in supporting the implementation of the MDGs.

During the debate, speakers identified implementation as the key challenge ahead. It was generally recognized that the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals goes hand-inhand with the implementation of the development goals agreed by international community at the major United Nations conferences and summit in the economic, social, environmental and related field during the past 15 years. One delegation said that the MDGs were a veritable "locomotive" of the global development agenda.

There was a general agreement that ECOSOC should play a central role in the follow-up to and the implementation of the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits, as well as in the achievement of the MDGs. It was noted that because of the breath of its mandate and its convening power, ECOSOC is especially well placed to serve as a platform for systematic and

comprehensive monitoring of overall progress in the implementation of the United Nations development agenda, as well as for holding continuous dialogue, and for generating new ideas on the most conducive national and international environment for development, as highlighted in the report of the Secretary-General.

Several speakers said that the functional commissions, in accordance with their mandates, should continue to have primary responsibility for the review and assessment of progress made in implementing outcomes of United Nations conferences and summits in their respective areas of competence. While speakers agreed that the working methods of the functional commissions should be further improved. delegation favoured a harmonization of the functional commissions' multi-year programmes of work and their periodic cycles. Other delegates, in line with General Assembly a resolution 57/270B, did not deem it appropriate to apply a uniform approach. Several speakers noted that by bringing more predictability and certainty to its own programme, the Council would enable the functional commissions to better prepare their contributions to the work of the Council and stressed importance of a multi year programme of work in this regard. Moreover, the Consolidated Report on the work of the functional commissions should be used more effectively in the work of ECOSOC.

The proposal put forward by the Secretary-General for a High-Level Development Cooperation Forum found

the general support of delegations, though there were some divergent views on the details of the mandate. Various views were also expressed with respect to the modalities of the meeting, in particular with regard the segment during which the meeting should be held. Options proposed during the debate included holding the Forum during the High-Level Segment or for the High-Level Segment to be replaced Forum. With the regard participation, delegations said that the Forum could bring together member states, international organizations, the private sector and civil society and that it should make use of the work of the and the functional regional commissions. Several delegations supported the proposal of a voluntary peer-review mechanism. The idea of an initial pilot process of voluntary peer reviews as a way of evaluating their value added and of the costs involved was mooted.

There was general support for the proposal of the Secretary-General to hold timely meetings to respond to natural disaster and other threats to development and for an important role ECOSOC in reconstruction and of rehabilitation in countries in postconflict situations. However, the need to further consider how ECOSOC could contribute to post-conflict situations and humanitarian crises and to ensure that its role remained at the level of policy coordination and review, rather intervening directly operational management of specific situations was stressed. It was felt that the realization of these new initiatives did not require a radical revision of the structure and timing of the current

which featured a special presentation from the Special Envoy for Tsunami Recovery, former US President Mr. Bill Clinton. Key issues highlighted by the panelists included the importance of response coordination, particularly with the providers of military assets; the need to build regional and national response capacity and preparedness; transparency importance of and accountability in the sources and uses of tsunami funds: and the need for investment in reducing future disaster risk.

On July 15, the Council adopted a resolution by consensus that endorsed a broad package of humanitarian reforms, many of which reinforce the Secretary-General's proposals in the *In Larger Freedom* report, including:

- 1. There was broad support for improving international, regional and national response capacity, particularly in those humanitarian sectors where capacity is less well-developed.
- 2. The resolution also called for improvements in response coordination, including improving by stand-by arrangements, engaging more systematically with the providers of military assets. and strengthening resident/humanitarian support to coordinators and United Nations country teams.
- 3. Member States recommended that the General Assembly improve the Central Emergency Revolving Fund (CERF), including through the possible

inclusion of a grant facility. To this end, they requested the Secretary-General to report to the 60<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly clarifying the criteria and management of an expanded CERF.

- 4. Member States also requested the General Assembly to ensure respect for humanitarian principles and interests in the mandate, design and implementation of integrated missions.
- 5. The issue of state sovereignty and the responsibility to protect continued to be of concern to some delegations and, as a result, Member States could not agree on an appropriate reference to humanitarian protection work in the resolution.

## 2005 NGO Contributions to the High Level Segment

Once the theme for the 2005 High-Level Segment of ECOSOC was adopted, the ECOSOC began to assist NGOs in preparing their contributions. This included capacity building workshops, advisory missions and the dissemination of information on preparatory activities at the regional level throrCsc5 Tc0.80ain



and quickly in times of violence, crises and conflict.

3. The Secretary-General is invited to explore enhancing the implementation mechanisms and to follow up on the Declaration on a Culture of Peace and its Programme of Action, and the Global Agenda for the Dialogue Among Civilizations of 2001 adopted by the General Assembly and other initiatives on the dialogue among cultures and civilizations.

For more information: www.un.org/ docs/ ecosoc/ meetings/ 200 5/22June2005.html

## Conference on Sustainable Urban Growth and Architecture

A conference on sustainable urban growth and architecture co-sponsored by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, and the United Nations Fund for International Partnerships, took place on 6 June 2005, in the Economic and Social Council Chamber.

The event mobilized all stakeholders with regard to planning sustainable urban growth and sustainable architecture, and feeds into discussions in a) the 14<sup>th</sup> Commission on Sustainable Development on energy in 2006, and b) the Meeting of the World Urban Forum in Vancouver, Canada, that also coincided with the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of HABITAT II Conference in 2006.

The conference was presided by H.E. Mr. Munir Akram, Permanent Representative of Pakistan, President of ECOSOC. H.E. Ms. Sonia Tschorne, Minister of Housing and Urban Development of Chile; and Mr. Ken Yeang, renowned architect, also participated in the discussions on sustainable growth and architecture. Member States of the United Nations. representatives of agencies organizations of the UN system, the World Bank, the IMF, intergovernmental organizations, society, civil governmental organizations, the private sector, academia, and others also attended the meeting.

For more information: www.un.org/ docs/ ecosoc/ meetings/ 200 5/6June2005.html

## Conference on the Critical Role of Nutrition for Reaching the Millennium Development Goals

An event on the Critical Role of Nutrition for the Millennium Reaching Development Goals was held in the ECOSOC Chamber on Tuesday, 7 June 2005 (10.00 a.m. to 12 noon). It was cosponsored by the Department Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) and the United Nations System Standing Committee on Nutrition (SCN). The topics that were covered included Nutrition and Povertv Reduction: Nutrition and Child Health; Nutrition, Women's Health and Gender Equality; Nutrition and Education; and Brazil's Zero Hunger Programme and MDGs.

The event made an important contribution in enhancing awareness and mobilizing all stakeholders with regard to the issues of Nutrition and MDGs. Participants at the meeting included Mr. Patrus Ananias. Minister of Social Development and the Fight Against Hunger, Brazil, Ms. Catherine Bertini, SCN Chair and Ambassador Kirsti Lintonen, Permanent Representative of Finland to the United Nations. Member States United of the Nations. and representatives of agencies organizations of the United Nation system, the World Bank, the IMF, intergovernmental organizations, civil non-governmental society, organizations, private sector, the academia and others also attended the meetina.

For more information: www.un.org/ docs/ ecosoc/ meetings/ 200 5/7June\_am2005.html

## ICT Task Force Working Group on Enabling Environment

The United Nations ICT Task Force Working Group on Enabling Environment organized a two day workshop in Maputo, Mozambique (11-12 May 2005). The "

applications related to the United Nations Millennium Development Goals in terms of creating partnerships and improving the health of citizens worldwide. Topics incluh TD0.qJT\*4.s.1(d 7T)

#### Publications for sale:

Publication on the High-level Segment theme of 2005: Achieving the Internationally Agreed Development Goals

Publication on funding for United Nations Development Cooperation: challenges and Options, United Nations ICT Task Force series 8: WSIS: Moving from the past into the future

Publication on United Nations ICT Task Force series 9: Village Phone Book

#### Future events:

- 13 September: High-level roundtable on "Innovation and investment: Science and 0.0004 1819 (Publicedevee) 6.2001-6 (UnfurJITJT technology to meet the Millennium Development Goals
- 15 September: The role of ECOSOC in the follow-up to the World Summit
- 7 October: Economic Policy and Challenges faced by developing countries to effectively integrate into the global economy
- 27 October: Globalization and Interdependence
- 12 October: Panel discussion on External Debt
- 3 November: Panel discussion on sustainable development challenges
- 17 November: The role of the private Sector in Achieving the MDGs