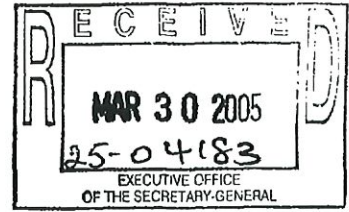


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Note to the Secretary General

Subject: Preparatory events for the 2005 ECOSOC High Level Segment

Two key preparatory events were held for the 2005 ECOSOC High Level Segment on the theme "Achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, as well as implementing the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits: progress made, challenges and opportunities":

- DESA Development Forum on "Integrating economic and social policies to achieve the UN Development Agenda" (14-15 March 2005)
- ECOSOC Preparatory Meeting (16-17 March 2005)

**DESA Development Forum**

The Development Forum, the first of its kind, was designed to give strong intellectual content to the discussions leading up to the ECOSOC High-level Segment and the High-level Review of the Millennium Declaration in September 2005. To achieve this, the Department invited a number of eminent economists<sup>1</sup> to participate in panels on various aspects of economic and social policies, approaches and perspectives for realizing the UN Development Agenda. Based on reactions from Member States and other stakeholders who attended, the experiment seems to have been successful, with panelists engaging Member States in policy debates on ways to integrate social and economic development policy to further the UN Development Agenda. The panels, chaired in large part by members of the Bureau of ECOSOC and a selected number of Observer States, including the President of ECOSOC, were well attended, including by a significant number of Permanent Representatives.

The Forum's main message was the need to fully integrate economic and social policies into a cohesive whole, and not to see social policies as an add-on or afterthought. Noting the central role of social, gender and environmental dimensions in the UN Development Agenda, the Forum called for the complementarity of economic growth with social policies to improve living conditions. Confirmed by the preliminary findings of a World Bank study on the relationship between distribution and development, the Forum was of the view that the promotion of equity is good development policy. In this context, there was also consensus that financial and trade policies should support the pro-poor policies of governments and the development process in general. There was a strong plea from a number of participants that the MDGs needed to be complemented by a strong focus on employment in the productive sector and on building infrastructure to ensure that globalization maximizes generation in world economic welfare on a sustainable basis.

**ECOSOC Preparatory Meeting**

This meeting, organized by UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes and coordinated by DESA's Office for ECOSOC Support and Coordination, consisted of 7 Roundtables on thematic clusters related to eradication of poverty and hunger, education and literacy, health and mortality, global

<sup>1</sup> Giovanni Andrea Cornia, University of Florence; Francisco Ferrerira, World Bank; Sanjay Reddy, Columbia University; Graciela Kaminsky, George Washington University; Jayati Ghosh, Jawaharlal Nehru University; Eddy Lee, Chief Economist, ILO; Alan Winters, World Bank; Manuel Montes, UNDP; Lance Taylor, New School University; Roberto Frenkel, University of Buenos Aires; Alessandro Prati, IMF; Stephanie Griffith Jones of DESA; Erik Reinert, University of Oslo; Judith Tendler, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Frances Stewart, University of Oxford; Gustav Ranis, Yale University; Albert Berry, University of Toronto; Oscar Ugarteche, Pontifical Catholic University of Peru; Thandika Mkandawire, UN Research Institute for Social Development, Nanak Kakwani, UNDP Poverty Centre.

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cc: JGG  
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partnerships and financing development, gender equality and the empowerment of women, environmental sustainability, and decisions needed to implement recommendations on an MDG-based approach to poverty reduction. The Roundtables were chaired by the Bureau of ECOSOC, including the President, and moderated by high-level representatives from the UN system.

The meeting was opened by the President of ECOSOC, who played an active role in the process, chairing 3 of the 7 Roundtables. Ambassador Eduardo Sevilla Somoza (Nicaragua), made a statement on behalf of General Assembly President Jean Ping, who was unable to attend, linking the ECOSOC preparatory process with that of the General Assembly. Keynote addresses were delivered by Professor Jeffrey Sachs, Director of the Millennium Project, and by Mr. François Bourguignon, Chief Economist and Senior Vice-President of the World Bank. The sessions were well attended, including Roundtable 7, which featured a number of Permanent Representatives<sup>2</sup>, on how to advance recommendations on an MDG-based approach to poverty reduction.

Conclusions from the meeting involved the need for bold and urgent action, that the technologies required to help achieve the MDGs are available but must be shared, and that rethinking is needed on how resources are allocated. In this connection, investment in global public goods was seen as key. The conclusions from each roundtable clearly demonstrated strong interlinkages among all the goals and that meeting some goals will have positive spillover effects on others. In this regard, investment in women and girls was seen as central to meeting the key goals. Many also agreed that improving access to basic services and its quality, prospects for scaling up, sustainability and accountability required good governance at the national, regional and international levels. The meeting also welcomed a number of Quick Wins identified by the Millennium Project Report.

Overall, it was noted that important progress is seen in some of the large countries but progress elsewhere is uneven. The special needs of Africa and the least developed countries were acknowledged as was the need to address the challenges of fragile states and economies. The resolution of conflicts, the building of public administrative capacities and the contributions of all stakeholders were seen as important opportunities for achieving the goals. The discussions also revealed that there are still some important gaps to address, such as reproductive health and rights, especially in the context of the health-related MDGs, and the role of humanitarian action in achieving the MDGs.



José Antonio Ocampo  
29 March 2005

cc: Deputy Secretary-General

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<sup>2</sup> The Permanent Representatives of Barbados, France, Lao's Peoples Democratic Republic, Kenya, Yemen and the Minister Plenipotentiary of Brazil were featured in Roundtable 7.