

Provisional

19 July 2011

Original: English

Economic and Social Council

Substantive session of 2011

Coordination segment

Provisional summary record of the 23rd meeting

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Monday, 11 July 2011, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. Momen (Vice-President).....(Bangladesh)

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In the absence of Mr. Kapambwe, Mr. Momen (Bangladesh), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

The President, opening the coordination segment, said that the 2010 Ministerial Declaration entitled “Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to gender equality and empowerment of women” would be the main topic of discussions. Promoting gender equality and women’s empowerment was not simply a matter of justice or human rights, but about tapping into the potential of one half of the world’s population and providing opportunities to reduce poverty, hunger, malnutrition, disease, environmental degradation and violence. In the light of the challenges ahead, strong leadership by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) and the support and cooperation of Member States, regional organizations, NGOs and the private sector were crucial. The 2010 Ministerial Declaration had reaffirmed Member States’ commitment to achieving the gender-related internationally agreed development goals by 2015. It had likewise highlighted the central role of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and requested the Council to promote and ensure effective and systematic gender mainstreaming into all areas of its work. The coordination segment would take stock of progress made in strengthening a coordinated approach by the United Nations system in that field and review how the system used the cross-cutting issues identified in the Declaration as leverage to accelerate progress on gender-related development goals.

The special event on “The right to development and global partnership for development”, to mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations Declaration on the Right to Development, would provide an opportunity to discuss how promotion of the right to development and the achievement of a global partnership for development were mutually reinforcing and how the United Nations system could use those synergies.

Implementation of and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits

(a) Follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development (E/2011/92)

Mr. Pursey (Director of the Policy Integration Department and Senior Adviser to the Director-General of the International Labour Organization (ILO)), introducing the report of the Secretary-General entitled “Recovering from the world financial and economic crisis: a Global Jobs Pact” (E/2010/92), said that, despite the recovery in GDP and world trade, the number of unemployed had remained virtually unchanged in 2010. There had therefore been little progress on one of the key aims of the Global Jobs Pact. Moreover, employment rates were not expected to improve significantly in the short term. There had been some improvement in the employment situation in most developing regions, but a growing number of workers were engaged in vulnerable employment. Currently, informal workers with no access to social protection, subject to low wages and difficult working conditions and unable to exercise fully fundamental labour rights accounted for some half the workforce in developing countries.

Youth had been particularly hard hit by the crisis. Over 12 per cent of persons aged 15 to 24 were unemployed; the incidence of informal employment was also disproportionately high in that age group. The situation was particularly worrying since experience had shown that youth employment was slow in returning to pre-crisis levels. Inclusive economic growth was essential to ensure social cohesion, and the evolving shape of the recovery reinforced the importance of the policies advocated in the Global Jobs Pact.

The Pact called for coordinated global action to ensure its successful implementation. The High-level Plenary Meeting on the Millennium Development Goals (MDG Summit) held in 2010, the Caribbean Development Bank and ILO Caribbean Tripartite Symposium, and the second African Decent Work Symposium were aimed at strengthening such action. The report highlighted the importance of the pledge to prioritize decent work and social protection policies made by world leaders at the 2010 summit of the Group of 20 (G-20) in Seoul.

The Oslo Conference on Challenges of Growth, Employment and Social Cohesion hosted jointly by the ILO, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Government of Norway in September 2010 represented a significant effort to integrate the policy contents of the Global Jobs Pact into the activities of international financial institutions and other relevant organizations. The ILO and IMF were currently examining sustainable financing of social protection floors and strategies for employment intensive growth. Cooperation was also under way in several countries on ways of ensuring a better linkage of employment and social policies with macroeconomic policies.

The Global Jobs Pact could also play an important role in national employment recovery efforts. A number of countries — with the support of ILO Global Job Pact country scans — had been able to avoid surges in unemployment and/or recover quickly by incorporating elements of the Pact. The ILO had also developed policy briefs to identify ways in which measures such as social protection floors, gender equality in employment and specific youth policies could support the labour market. An overarching element of all successful policies was full use of mechanisms for social dialogue with employers' and workers' organizations.

In pursuit of policy coherence within the United Nations system, ILO and the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) had organized in December 2010 an inter-agency technical meeting on building employment and decent work into sustainable recovery and development. The meeting had produced suggestions to strengthen the plan of action under the second United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty and had provided an overview of current thinking and action within the United Nations system on key development challenges. On another level, world leaders at the 2010 MDG Summit had recognized the importance of forward-looking, macroeconomic policies that promoted sustainable development and equitable economic growth. The 2010 United Nations Climate Change Conference held in Cancun had likewise stressed the importance of ensuring a just transition of the workforce and the need to create decent work opportunities as an element in addressing climate change.

Understanding the root causes of the crisis was essential to rebalancing the global economy to promote strong, equitable, job-rich, sustainable growth in future. The Global Jobs Pact looked beyond policies designed to encourage a speedy recovery and strove to put employment back at the centre of the policy agenda. Frustration at the course of globalization and its impact on decent work opportunities and sustainable livelihoods had pre-dated the crisis. Long-standing imbalances in work opportunities, income and labour and social policy must be corrected in order to reverse the effects of the crisis on employment and create the 440 million new jobs needed over the next decade to absorb new entrants to the labour market. Rebalancing required a much closer correlation between macroeconomic targets and employment, social and environmental policies. A shift must take place from a debt-driven to an income-led model of development to improve both the quantity and quality of jobs. In that context, strong labour market institutions were crucial to manage the job crisis without eroding labour standards.

Uneven recovery in the labour market underlined that economic growth did not automatically lead to employment growth. Targeted efforts by all partners in the United Nations system were needed to ensure decent work for all. The resolution before the

Council (E/2010/L.9/Add.1) and the theme of the 2012 Annual Ministerial Review would provide an opportunity to review the process and other persistent challenges in the labour market.

Mr. Suárez Salvia (Argentina), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that it was important to strengthen the coherence, coordination and cooperation of financing for development. The Group welcomed the discussions held in the context of the 2011 High-level Segment of the Council with the Bretton Woods institutions, WTO and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). The Group was deeply concerned about the adverse impact of the global financial and economic crisis on development, including developing countries' capacity to mobilize resources for their own development. While global growth was returning, there was a need to sustain the recovery. An effective response required timely implementation of all development commitments. National commitments should be complemented by supportive global programmes, measures and policies, taking into account national conditions and respecting national ownership.

Mr. Henczel (Poland), speaking on behalf of the European Union (EU), the candidate countries Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Iceland, the countries of the stabilization and association process and potential candidates Albania, Serbia, as well as the Republic of Moldova, reaffirmed the commitment of the EU to the Monterrey Consensus and the Doha Declaration. The European Union recognized the importance for development of financial flows other than official development assistance (ODA), and the need to look holistically at developing countries' overall revenue base for development in order to achieve sustainable progress towards the MDGs. All available financing for development must contribute to inclusive, sustainable economic growth and decent employment. However, each country must assume primary responsibility for its own development, on the basis of national policies and development strategies. The generation of domestic resources was a vital element in achieving sustainable development and growing out of aid dependency; it was crucial for the provision of public goods, wealth redistribution and the accountability of governments to their own citizens. It required a fair, effective and efficient tax system and commitment to address harmful tax practices and evasion. The EU encouraged the participation of developing States in international forums as a means to improve international tax cooperation between developed and developing countries.

Increased participation in world trade had the potential to be an engine for growth and poverty reduction in developing countries by generating revenues and employment, lowering prices on essential goods and promoting technology transfer and increased productivity. The European Union was committed to stepping up its support for regional integration processes in the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP Group) and would continue to work towards an ambitious, balanced and comprehensive outcome of the Doha Development Agenda.

The European Union provided duty-free and quota-free market access for all products from the least developed countries (LDCs). It had disbursed a combined 10.5 million euros in aid for trade in 2009 and overall trade-related assistance had likewise increased substantially, with Africa being the largest recipient. Foreign direct investment (FDI), remittances and international capital flows in general needed to be replenished progressively by renewing confidence in global markets. Blending grants and loans and other risk-sharing mechanisms was important to leverage further resources and thus increase impact.

The European Union continued to account for more than half of global aid, and in 2010 collective EU ODA reached a historical high of 53.8 billion euros. South-South cooperation corresponded to around 10 per cent of global ODA, although those amounts

were not officially reported as such. He encouraged donors that were not members of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) to report officially on their solidarity and assistance flows so that such aid could be quantified and its impact on development measured.

Aid effectiveness was a key pillar of development cooperation. The EU called on all donors to spend their ODA in line with the principles contained in the Paris Declaration and Accra Agenda for Action in order to maximize its impact. They must also work towards a successful outcome of the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness to be held in November 2011. Developing partners and donors bore a shared responsibility in that regard.

In order to achieve the MDGs, the European Union would examine innovative financing mechanisms with significant revenue generation potential to ensure predictable financing for sustainable development. Several European Union member States were already using such sources, which had thus far yielded 13 billion euros for development.

The European Union welcomed the role of the G-20 in implementing the global development agenda. The role of the G-20 in considering options to deal with emerging problems of food security, and the close involvement of relevant United Nations agencies, were particularly important. The European Union continued to support the ongoing United Nations reform process aimed at enhancing system-wide coherence and effectiveness.

Mr. Acharya (Observer for Nepal), speaking on behalf of the least developed countries, expressed support for the statement made by the delegation of Argentina on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

He said that sustainable global economic recovery would be hard to attain without a concomitant recovery in the labour market. Priority should go to: promoting labour market policies and institutions; training the unemployed; tackling youth unemployment, which was a major challenge for LDCs; building fiscal sustainability; developing a stronger framework for global economic cooperation and coordination; and cooperating with social partners to help prevent confrontation and social unrest.

A worldwide unemployment rate of 6.1 per cent (more than 200 million people) was predicted for 2011 and young people in particular were affected. The consequences of unemployment and underemployment were deeply felt in developing countries and LDCs because of the lack of social protection and the fact that many workers were engaged in vulnerable employment. The building of a social protection floor was therefore critical and post-crisis, job-rich growth had to be supported by greater innovation and technology transfers. LDCs had made strenuous efforts, within the limits of their capacity, to build their social protection floor in the wake of the recent economic and financial crisis and the Istanbul Programme of Action had identified social protection as a key area of intervention. The 2012 Annual Ministerial Review would provide a further opportunity to review that issue.

The impact of the crisis, which in 2009 had pushed an estimated extra 7.3 million people into extreme poverty, underlined the LDCs' need for regional and international support to build their resilience to economic shocks. LDCs had been affected by factory closures, especially in labour-intensive sectors, while women had suffered disproportionately from job losses in export-processing zones and tourism.

The Istanbul Programme of Action had highlighted the need for sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth and sustainable development in LDCs, for which they required financial and technical help. Development partners should continue to support schemes run by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and regional development banks to provide concessional lending and grants to LDCs.

The fulfilment by the international community of its commitments with regard to official development assistance (ODA), debt relief and trade, as well as measures to promote foreign direct investment (FDI) in LDCs, would contribute to the eradication of poverty through the generation of full and productive employment for all.

Mr. Nebenzia (Russian Federation) said that the Monterrey Consensus and Doha Declaration on Financing for Development provided the conceptual framework for multilateral cooperation to mobilize resources for sustainable socio-economic development. They provided instruments for dealing with systemic imbalances in the world economy and growing threats to global energy and food security, as well as the negative effects of climate change.

Decisions by the Council should not duplicate equivalent resolutions taken by the Second Committee of the General Assembly. It should strive for mutually beneficial coordination between the United Nations and financial and trade bodies in order to implement the international development agenda and ensure harmonization of the currency, financial and trade systems. The Council should also use its comparative advantage to develop links with such participants in the Monterrey process as NGOs and the private sector.

He welcomed the contribution by the Financing for Development Office of the United Nations Secretariat and urged it to maintain its support for the Council's work. The President of the Council should continue to attend meetings of the IMF and World Bank. Regular United Nations briefings that included those bodies to discuss key economic issues would be welcome.

The Council should establish a committee on financing for development, as set out in resolution 65/145 of the General Assembly (A/RES/65/145), bearing in mind the recommendations of the President of the General Assembly on the implementation of resolution 61/16 (A/RES/61/16) on strengthening the Council. The Russian Federation urged the Council to act quickly to draft a resolution on financing for development and to establish an ad hoc panel of experts on the world economic and financial crisis and its impact on development.

The temptation to seek simplistic solutions to the economic and financial crisis, such as lowering wages and pruning back social protection measures, should be resisted. Measures designed to stimulate demand should be tied to job creation, diversification and reorienting loss-making production.

Meeting social obligations to the most vulnerable sectors of society, such as young people, women and pensioners, should be a priority. In the Russian Federation, a national programme to deal with the effects of economic turbulence had been implemented to ensure that the burden of the crisis did not fall on the shoulders of young people. For that reason, Prime Minister Putin had proposed that an international conference on decent work should be held in 2012.

Ms. Nemroff (United States of America) said that the Monterrey Consensus had acknowledged the primary responsibility of States for their own development and that ODA was only one of many sources of development finance. Development of the world's poorest countries was a moral, strategic and economic imperative. The United States of America had disbursed US\$ 30 billion in ODA in 2010 and was meeting all its aid commitments.

ODA should be seen as only part of the development process, which should also include: policy development and coherence; job creation; decent work; and other forms of finance. A new approach was required, placing greater responsibility on the host nations and focusing on: science, technology and innovation; partnerships; new measures of

accountability; the mobilization of resources other than ODA; and renewed commitment to achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

In 2008, flows of private funding from the United States of America to developing countries had been more than five times greater than ODA. Developing countries were also being helped to increase tax revenue and address issues of transparency and accountability. New programmes had been put in place to promote enterprise funds, capital markets, trade opportunities, youth employment and gender equality.

The United States of America welcomed the growth in South-South cooperation and supported exploration of innovative sources of finance, which should be voluntary, cost-effective and results-based, to support development and accelerate achievement of the MDGs.

With regard to fragile and conflict-affected States, she said that no fragile State had achieved a single MDG. Together, such States lagged around 50 per cent behind other low- and middle-income countries in terms of MDG achievement. In addition to ODA, such States needed to focus on achieving peace and State-building. Coordination should be deepened between donor countries and leaders of fragile States through the G-7 Plus and the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and State-building.

The United States of America supported the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action. The Council, in partnership with the Bretton Woods institutions, and developed and developing countries, could ensure that financial flows from domestic sources, trade, FDI and other private sources, remittances, ODA, responsible lending and borrowing, and South-South cooperation led to economic growth, sustainable development and achievement of the MDGs.

Mr. Popov (Observer for Belarus) said that, although ODA around the world had increased in 2010, an increasingly disproportionate amount of it was offered by donors with conditions reflecting the pursuit of their own interests. That worrying imbalance made closer coordination between international organizations and donors imperative.

The principle of free trade should be paramount. Tariffs and other barriers should be eliminated to open trade markets to developing and medium-income countries and thereby help them to achieve the MDGs. Some States were especially vulnerable to politically motivated measures of economic coercion. Excluding States from economic activity could not fail to have an impact on the stability of the world economy.

Ms. Bahar (Observer for Indonesia) said that the recovery in some macroeconomic indicators was not being matched in the labour market. Youth unemployment, in particular, was growing in developed and developing countries. A new approach to growth, in which the ultimate goal was economic and social development, was therefore required. That meant coupling growth to policies for the generation of jobs and the provision of social welfare. Global and national policies should be geared to sustained, inclusive and equitable growth, with a view to eradicating poverty and achieving the MDGs.

Job creation policies and strategies could be linked to sustainability. Fostering entrepreneurship and self-employment in the green economy would enhance employment opportunities and, at the same time, contribute to sustainable development. Partnership at the national and global levels with the private sector would improve coordination among stakeholders and related international forums, as well as ensuring pro-business policies and thereby stimulating the private sector, which is where jobs were ultimately created.

In the wake of the 1998 Asian financial crisis, Indonesia had adopted strategies focusing on growth, job creation and the eradication of poverty, which had improved the balance between growth, employment and social development, and allowed the country to

weather the 2008 global financial crisis reasonably well. The Government's response to the 2008 crisis had in part been aimed at minimizing its impact on the labour market.

The Global Jobs Pact had provided Indonesia with important guidelines for its response to the crisis. They included: accelerating jobs recovery and creation; sustaining enterprises; building a social protection system; strengthening respect for international labour standards; and promoting social dialogue between the Government, corporations and trade unions. Indonesia had also launched its own jobs pact, which emphasized the need for social justice by ensuring decent work for all. Achieving a balance between the need to protect the welfare of workers, promote their democratic rights and underline their obligation to maintain performance and productivity would contribute to achieving the ultimate goals of full employment and decent work for all.

Mr. Romero (Observer for Cuba) said that Cuba supported the statements made by the delegations of Argentina and Nepal. The rich nations had inverted the idea of international responsibility for development by shifting the burden onto the developing countries themselves, demanding that they mobilize domestic resources, regardless of the structural distortions that prevented them from generating their own financial resources in order to catch up economically and ignoring the responsibility of the developed world, which historically had been the prime beneficiary of underdevelopment.

Cuba agreed that States were responsible for the fundamentals of their own economies and for taking all possible measures to ensure that domestic resources were mobilized and that the necessary conditions were created to manage development resources. Latin American countries had agreed on those principles at the 1984 Quito Conference. However, the design of economic policy for developing countries was largely determined by conditions imposed by the IMF and the World Bank. Every country should be free to adopt solutions appropriate to its particular problems, based on the principle of respect for its sovereignty and socio-economic system.

Developing countries were trapped in a complex web of international economic and financial mechanisms that perpetuated their dependence, channelled financial flows in favour of the rich and strangled any attempt by developing countries to augment their net external income and change productive structures. Quite clearly, their own efforts were insufficient and, as had been concluded in Quito, the international community shared responsibility for helping them to gain access to external sources of finance and aid from international financial institutions. All international development cooperation should be based on the firm principle of unconditional respect of the right of governments to determine their own national development priorities and needs.

Beyond poverty reduction and emergency aid, international development cooperation needed to be a more effective tool for positively restructuring international relations. Donor countries had to show the political will to increase available financial resources and make ODA more effective by ceasing to use it as a tool of foreign policy. Donor countries should fulfil the commitments that they had undertaken with the United Nations. South-South and triangular cooperation continued to be of key importance in the context of international development cooperation.

Cuba, which for almost 50 years had been the victim of the longest and most brutal economic blockade ever known, had shown how a country with limited resources could establish values founded on solidarity and real human feelings, in a spirit of cooperation with other countries and by placing the human being at the centre of development.

Mr. Souza Campos de Moraes Leme (Observer for Brazil) said that his delegation supported the statement by the delegation of Argentina. The challenges facing an increasingly integrated world could not be overcome without shared prosperity. The Monterrey Consensus and Doha Declaration were central to addressing those challenges.

The process of financing for development was unique in that it recognized the shared responsibility of developed and developing countries for the promotion of inclusive, equitable and sustained growth in the pursuit of poverty eradication and sustainable development.

Much had been achieved since the Council had adopted a resolution (E/2009/L.24) in 2009 to promote the Global Jobs Pact but, given the ongoing jobs crisis, which was affecting the developed countries in particular, efforts had to be redoubled to make the Pact a fully operational platform for action. The Council should adopt the resolution that had been tabled on the matter by the Group of 77, which called for the adoption of additional measures by financial institutions, funds, programmes and specialized agencies to ensure that decent work was at the heart of recovery.

The MDGs constituted the most visible element of the world development agenda and could be achieved by 2015 if the international community fulfilled its commitments, especially to the LDCs. Such a renewed global partnership for development would test the will of the international community, including the private sector and civil society organizations. States had to deliver on all development commitments, particularly with regard to financial assistance, as a matter of priority.

South-South and triangular development was no substitute for North-South cooperation and ODA. While it was tempting to start considering plans for the period beyond 2015, the United Nations should first concentrate its efforts on achieving the agreed MDGs.

Ms. Bing Liu (China) said that lack of financial resources was hampering the economic and social development of the LDCs. By adopting the Monterrey Consensus, the international community had pledged to establish a global partnership for development. The Consensus constituted a blueprint for addressing the financial aspects of development issues. Yet the Consensus was still not being implemented in full, and long-standing development gaps had not been bridged. Many developing countries, in particular LDCs, had been seriously affected by the global economic and financial crisis, and recent increases in food and energy prices had further aggravated the situation.

Developed countries must honour their promise to allocate 0.7 per cent of GDP to ODA. They should also increase technical assistance to developing countries, especially LDCs, and work to reduce those countries' debts, increase their market access, and promote direct investment. The Chinese Government believed that an important condition for improving the efficiency of assistance was to eliminate preconditions for ODA and provide genuine assistance to help recipient countries to implement their national development strategies and meet their development objectives.

The coordination of macroeconomic policies should be strengthened, and balanced, inclusive economic growth should be promoted. Developing countries had an important role to play in overcoming the global economic and financial crisis and moving forward towards economic recovery. The multilateral trading system should be protected, and market access should be guaranteed, particularly for LDCs. Political will was required to ensure the success of the current round of Doha trade negotiations.

The international financial system should be comprehensive, progressive, balanced and effective. Efforts should be made to increase the representation of developing countries in international financial institutions. Mechanisms and regulations on ODA distribution should be established and measures should be taken to ensure that international financial institutions increased their support for developing countries.

China was committed to providing development assistance through South-South cooperation and would continue to participate actively in international efforts to provide financing for development.

Mr. Pintado (Mexico) said that all chapters of the Monterrey Consensus and the Doha Declaration were equally important, since they were interrelated and represented the international community's joint commitment to development. While there were signs of economic recovery, the effects of the global financial crisis were still being felt, particularly in financing for development. The crisis had affected the mobilization of internal and external resources, as well as the capacity for national investment and private flows of remittances. It had also distorted debt servicing schemes.

Mexico was committed to complying with the Monterrey Consensus in order to mobilize financial resources, promote economic growth and attain the MDGs. To meet the ODA commitments set out in the Consensus, financing for development must be supported by innovative voluntary mechanisms to complement stable and predictable resource flows. Cooperation for development should be made more effective through better use of financial and human resources and by promoting positive synergies between the different types of technical and scientific cooperation, including South-South and triangular cooperation, thereby helping to mitigate the effects of the global financial crisis. It was essential to counter protectionist trends and promote the financing of trade, recognizing the right of developing countries to use safeguarding mechanisms in line with WTO agreements, and to readjust the scale of subsidies to agriculture by developed countries.

There was a need for an international economic and financial system that took full account of the views and requirements of developing countries, which should have a greater voice and representation in international financial institutions. South-South cooperation had an increasing role to play, not as a replacement for North-South cooperation, but in the context of a broader development agenda.

The current coordination segment of the Economic and Social Council provided an opportunity to consider how to strengthen the role of development financing in the United Nations system. The Council's annual special high-level meeting with the Bretton Woods institutions, WTO and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) was particularly important in that regard. The Council must be a forum for the development of social and economic policy, rather than for mere academic discussion. Optimum use should be made of the synergies between the Council and bodies such as the G-20 so as to learn the lessons from the current crisis and lay the basis for the future. The current review of General Assembly resolution No. 61/16 (A/RES/61/16), on strengthening the Economic and Social Council, was particularly timely. The recommendations contained in that resolution, particularly those on development cooperation, should be put into practice immediately, with special regard to the way development financing was addressed in the coordination segment of the Council.

The 2011 substantive session of the Council should be an opportunity to share experiences and lessons learned with regard to development cooperation, as well as to consider the future of the Council in relation to the global economic and social agenda. The United Nations and the Council in particular should be at the forefront of efforts not only to maintain international peace and security but also to promote development, whose shortcomings were often the cause or catalyst of conflict.

Ms. Guilarte (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) expressed concern that the labour market had not developed equally in all countries, and that high levels of unemployment remained in certain areas, since job recovery had been low. Venezuela had achieved unprecedented progress in employment, despite the global economic and financial crisis, by taking specific non-neoliberal measures, such as increasing the minimum wage above

inflation, reducing the State budget while preserving social spending, almost doubling the number of persons receiving pensions, bringing pensions into line with the minimum wage level, and keeping unemployment in single figures. The Government was committed to changing the existing economic model and pursuing policies based on the principles of solidarity, reciprocity and equity.

Ms. Bloem (Observer for Civicus) said that her organization agreed that a comprehensive approach to development was required. The Council, as the third pillar of the United Nations, should be strengthened through an alignment with the G-20. Such an alignment would not only highlight the work of the G-20, but would also give it greater legitimacy under the aegis of the United Nations.

Mr. Pursey (Director of the Policy Integration Department and Senior Adviser to the Director General, ILO) said that the debate had raised a number of issues, including the difficulties, at the national and international levels, of ensuring that effective employment generated savings and financing, which would in turn generate productive employment. That virtuous circle must be promoted. The social protection floor would be the subject of a report that was due to be published in the near future, and would be discussed at the forthcoming 101st International Labour Conference. Social protection floor rights should be included in national priorities and should contribute to economic and social sustainability. The Council had a key role to play in increasing policy coherence. ILO was conscious that while the adoption of the Global Jobs Pact had been significant, it alone could not ensure the achievement of decent work for all. In order to address interconnected policy issues, information from all relevant stakeholders should be collated in a comprehensive manner. Organizations and institutions should work together: the world of work required national collaboration in the form of social dialogue, while at the international level inter-ministerial dialogue was crucial for ensuring policy coherence.

The President said that system-wide coherence was essential for meeting internationally agreed targets. The Council's role must therefore be enhanced in order to improve coordination and cooperation.

The meeting rose at 11.50 a.m.