



Economic and Social Council

Provisional

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Provisional summary record of the 2nd meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 31 January 2001, at 4 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Belinga-Eboutou (Cameroon)

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The meeting was called to order at 4.25 p.m.

Statement by the Assistant Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs

1. **Mr. Civili** (Assistant Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs) said that, in his capacity as Secretary of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC), he wished to share some observations on its ongoing work and how it related to the work of the Economic and Social Council. From his experience, progress in improving the dialogue between ACC and the Council depended on four basic requirements: relating coordination to a clear and comprehensive policy framework; a strong sense of common purpose between those who made policy and those who implemented it; a system to translate policy into guidelines for action at the country level; and a shared commitment to monitor progress.

2. The participatory process which had characterized the global conferences of the 1990s had had a remarkable impact on bringing the system together in support of common objectives. The Millennium Summit and Declaration had built on those accomplishments and in many ways had been a turning point in engendering a system-wide commitment to common objectives and a shared sense of responsibility and accountability. Indeed, at the retreat for executive heads of the member agencies of ACC held in October 2000, there had been a sense that the Millennium Summit had offered the organizations of the United Nations system an unprecedented opportunity to make progress towards their ultimate objectives, provided that they were truly able to respond as a system.

3. Combating poverty had been a constant priority of the system and its inter-agency machinery, and the quantitative targets set by heads of State and Government in the Millennium Declaration had opened an important new phase of that work by challenging all agencies to place that effort at the top of their agendas. There was a strong consensus on the key concepts of partnership and country ownership of poverty reduction strategies, which provided a new basis for a common system-wide framework for country-level action. Such a framework would reflect a comprehensive approach to development, geared towards stimulating economic growth but encompassing structural, social and institutional reforms as well.

4. The other critical dimension of a poverty eradication strategy was the creation of a more supportive international environment, which required reinforcement of the role of the multilateral system in managing globalization and strengthening policy coherence within the system itself. Current efforts to build on the role of the Council as a forum where the competencies of different agencies could be drawn together and where their respective constituencies could engage in dialogue towards common objectives were strongly supported.

5. With the forthcoming sustainable development summit in view, discussions had also focused on a common strategy to restore the environment to the prominence it deserved in the global agenda. A main focus of the discussions on the issues surrounding the rule of law, human rights and peace and security was the system's advocacy responsibilities in those areas. Upcoming conferences and summits must be utilized in a systematic way to advance the goals and targets of the Millennium Declaration, particularly those relating to poverty eradication and sustainable development.

6. At the ACC session, the topic chosen for special consideration was the health and other social implications of globalization. The health sector provided many telling examples of both its positive and negative effects. The Committee concluded that the system should focus on those areas where the market alone could not deliver positive results and on identifying priorities in public policy interventions. In the health sector, it was increasingly important for the system to work closely with civil society and the private sector, and system-wide initiatives were essential in order to meet the many challenges facing the international community. The discussions had also covered the forthcoming conference on the least-developed countries and the high-level event for financing for development. Both conferences must build on each other and have mutually reinforcing outcomes.

7. Two other topics of discussion bore mentioning. First, the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) was leading the United Nations response to the need for long-term food security and agricultural development in the Horn of Africa. Secondly, ACC had conducted a review of its own functioning and the structures of its subsidiary machinery, which had led to the establishment of two new high-level committees to assist ACC in overall

policy and programme coordination on the one hand and management on the other.

8. In conclusion, he noted that both the Council and ACC had recently undergone an intensive process of self-examination, and both could claim significant advances. Their agendas were increasingly related to one another, a sign that the intergovernmental and inter-agency machinery was responding to clear priorities, which were shared.

Adoption of the agenda and organizational matters
(E/2001/2, E/2001/4; E/2001/L.1 and L.3)

Basic programme of work of the Council (E/2001/1 and E/2001/3)

9. **The President** drew the Council's attention to the draft proposals submitted on the basis of informal consultations, as contained in document E/2001/L.3.

Draft decision I: Provisional agenda for the substantive session of 2001 of the Economic and Social Council

10. *Draft decision I was adopted.*

Draft decision II: Basic programme of work of the Economic and Social Council for 2002

11. *Draft decision II was adopted.*

Draft decision III: Working arrangements for the substantive session of 2001 of the Economic and Social Council

12. **The President** read out the following new text of draft decision III as it had been agreed in the informal consultations:

“The Economic and Social Council decides that:

(a) The high-level segment of its substantive session of 2001 should be held from 16 to 18 July;

(b) The operational activities segment of the substantive session of 2001 should be held from 5 to 10 July;

(c) The coordination segment of its substantive session of 2001 should be held from 2 to 4 July;

(d) The humanitarian affairs segment should be held from 11 to 13 July;

(e) The general segment should be held from 19 to 25 July.”

13. *Draft decision III was adopted.*

Draft decision IV: Theme for the operational activities segment of the substantive session of 2001 of the Economic and Social Council

14. *Draft decision IV was adopted.*

Draft decision V: Theme for the humanitarian affairs segment of the substantive session of 2001 of the Economic and Social Council

15. **Ms. Kelley** (Secretary of the Council) read out the following new text of draft decision V, which had been agreed during informal consultations:

“The Council decides that the theme of the humanitarian affairs segment will be ‘Strengthening the coordination of the emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations’.

“The Council also decides to hold panel discussions during the segment. The details on the organization of the segment and the panel discussions will be worked out during intersessional informals on the understanding that various challenges, including gender perspective, will be considered in the panel discussions.”

16. *Draft decision V was adopted.*

17. **Mr. Zarie Zare** (Islamic Republic of Iran), speaking also on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that when dealing with purely procedural issues, such as establishing themes for the Council's sessions, the Council should avoid establishing direct linkages between the various segments and panels. He also noted that during the humanitarian affairs segment there were traditionally at least two panels, one of which should certainly be devoted to the issue of multilateral funding for humanitarian assistance. In the context of the Council's meetings in general, he requested the Secretariat to provide delegations with adequate background information in order to facilitate the work of the Council.

Draft decision VI: Theme for the item on regional cooperation at the substantive session of 2001 of the Economic and Social Council

18. **The President** said he took it that the Council wished to defer discussion of draft decision VI.

19. *It was so decided.*

Draft decision VII: Date of the high-level meeting of the Economic and Social Council with representatives of the Bretton Woods institutions

20. *Draft decision VII was adopted.*

21. **Mr. Khan** (Director of the Division for Economic and Social Council Support and Coordination) drew the attention of Council members to an information note which had been circulated to them concerning the high-level meeting with the Bretton Woods institutions. Consultations were under way with those institutions to define the themes and establish the format for that important meeting.

22. **Mr. Rahmtalla** (Sudan) wondered what role the Council played in selecting the themes for the high-level meeting.

23. **Mr. Khan** (Director of the Division for Economic and Social Council Support and Coordination) said that the recommendations of the Second Committee to the General Assembly provided a starting point for further consultations to select a more precise theme which would reflect the interests of both the Council and the Bretton Woods institutions.

24. **The President** said that the Bureau was of the opinion that discussions should bear some relation to current concerns with regard to preparations for the conference on financing for development.

Draft decision VIII: Tenth meeting of the Ad Hoc Group of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters

25. *Draft decision VIII was adopted.*

Draft decision IX: Fifth session of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development

26. *Draft decision IX was adopted.*

Implementation of General Assembly resolutions 50/227 and 52/12 B

27. **The President** said he took it that the Council wished to defer the item until the resumed organizational session in May of that year and hold informal consultations the following month.

28. *It was so decided.*

Recommendations made by the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources for Development at its second session (E/2001/L.1)

29. **The President** said he took it that the Council, at the request of the Group of 77 and China, wished to defer consideration of the item.

30. *It was so decided.*

Elections, nominations and confirmations
(E/2001/L.2 and Add.1 and Corr.1)

Commission on Science and Technology for Development

31. **The President** said he took it that the Council wished to elect Algeria and Sierra Leone from the Group of African States, for a term beginning on the date of election and expiring on 31 December 2004.

32. *It was so decided.*

33. **The President** said he took it that the Council wished to further postpone the election of three members from the Group of Asian States and two members from the Group of Western European and other States.

34. *It was so decided.*

Commission on Human Settlements

35. **The President** said he took it that the Council wished to elect Egypt, Ethiopia and the United Republic of Tanzania from the Group of African States, Bangladesh from the Group of Asian States and Haiti and Trinidad and Tobago from the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States for a term beginning on the date of election and expiring on 31 December 2004.

36. *It was so decided.*

37. **The President** said he took it that the Council wished to further postpone the election of one member from the Group of Western European and other States.

38. *It was so decided.*

Intergovernmental Working Group of Experts on International Standards of Accounting and Reporting

39. **The President** said he took it that the Council wished to elect Algeria, Benin, Cameroon and Sierra Leone from the Group of African States for a term beginning on the date of election and expiring on 31 December 2003.

40. *It was so decided.*

41. **The President** said he took it that the Council wished to further postpone the election of one member from the Group of Eastern European States and two members from the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States.

42. *It was so decided.*

Executive Board of the World Food Programme

43. **The President** said he took it that the Council wished to elect Denmark and Italy from the Group of Western European and other States for a term beginning on the date of election and expiring on 31 December 2003.

44. *It was so decided.*

45. **The President** informed the Council that Norway was resigning its seat on the Board and said he took it that the Council wished to elect Finland to complete Norway's term, which expired on 31 December 2001.

46. *It was so decided.*

Programme Coordination Board of the Joint United Nations Programme on Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (UNAIDS)

47. **The President** said he took it that the Council wished to elect Sweden from the Group of Western European and other States for a term beginning on the date of election and expiring on 31 December 2003.

48. *It was so decided.*

Committee for Development Policy (E/2001/L.2)

49. **The President** said he took it that the Council wished to approve the nomination by the Secretary-General of the 24 experts listed in document

E/2001/L.2, for a term beginning on the date of appointment and expiring on 31 December 2003.

50. *It was so decided.*

Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (E/2001/L.2/Add.1 and Corr.1)

51. **The President** said he took it that the Council wished to defer consideration of the item pending further consultations.

52. *It was so decided.*

Resignation of seats by members from the African Group of States

53. **The President** informed the Council that Kenya had resigned from the Commission for Social Development, Djibouti had resigned from the Commission on Human Rights and Comoros had resigned from the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme/United Nations Population Fund. He took it that the Council wished to elect Comoros to complete Kenya's term of office, expiring on 31 December 2004, on the Commission for Social Development, Kenya to complete Djibouti's term of office, expiring 31 December 2003, on the Commission on Human Rights, and Djibouti to complete Comoros' term of office, expiring on 31 December 2003, on the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme/United Nations Population Fund.

54. *It was so decided.*

55. **The President** urged the regional groups in general to advise the Council as soon as possible of candidates for outstanding seats and further strongly encouraged all candidates for election to be prepared to complete their terms of office and avoid the need to find a replacement before the end of that term.

Closure of the organizational session

56. **The President** said that the Council had thus concluded consideration of the issues before its organizational session.

The meeting rose at 5.45 p.m.