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Chairman: Mr. Seixas da Costa (Portugal)
later: Mr. Mbayu (Vice-Chairman) (Cameroon)
later: Mr. Barnwell (Vice-Chairman) (Guyana)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 12: Report of the Economic and Social Council (A/56/3 and Add.1 and 2, A/56/86-E/2001/79, A/56/127-E/2001/101 and Add.1, A/56/211-E/2001/103, A/56/459, A/56/517, A/56/607-E/2001/106; A/C.2/56/L.6 and L.7; E/2001/L.47/Rev.1; A/56/CRP.1-E/2001/CRP.6, A/56/CRP.2-E/2001/CRP.7)

Introduction and general debate

1. **Mr. Scholvinck** (Chief of the Policy Coordination Branch of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs) said that, at the current session, the report of the Economic and Social Council (A/56/3) in its entirety would also be considered in the plenary General Assembly. Over the past year, the Council had used innovative approaches to policy development and coordination among all stakeholders. It had also improved its management and oversight of its subsidiary machinery, as well as its working methods.

2. The Ministerial Declaration adopted at the Council's high-level segment on the role of the United Nations system in supporting the efforts of African countries to achieve sustainable development would serve to link the New African Initiative adopted by the Organization of African Unity with United Nations efforts in that domain. It would also provide guidance for the final review and appraisal of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, to be conducted in autumn 2002, which would be an important step for rallying further support from the United Nations and the international community for the initiative launched by African leaders and for translating into practice an approach that stressed Africa's ownership of its own development. The Declaration noted the call made by African Heads of State for a special session of the General Assembly to consider how best to support the Initiative and supported the establishment of an ad hoc advisory group on countries emerging from conflict.

3. The Council's fourth annual meeting with the Bretton Woods institutions had afforded the Council an opportunity to meet with high-level officials responsible for finance and monetary issues, foreign affairs and cooperation for development in a dialogue on ways to address the deteriorating global economic situation and its implications for the achievement of the goals of the Millennium Summit.

4. The Council's coordination segment had focused on two themes — harnessing the potential of information and communication technologies (ICT) for development and building partnerships with the private sector — which held great potential for advancing development. The United Nations Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) Task Force was a pioneering effort to build public-private partnerships in support of the integration of developing countries into the global knowledge economy.

5. The question of follow-up to United Nations conferences and summits required the attention of the General Assembly. The Council had consistently taken steps to ensure coordinated and integrated follow-up to the major United Nations conferences and summits of the 1990s. In recent years, it had carefully considered questions relating to the scope, format, periodicity and forum of the review and appraisal exercises, and the functional commissions with responsibility for follow-up had had an opportunity to give their views on those matters.

6. **Mr. Bertucci** (Director of the Division for Public Economics and Public Administration) presented the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Five-year assessment of the progress made in the implementation of General Assembly resolution 50/225 on public administration and development" (A/56/127-E/2001/101), which detailed the measures taken by Governments and concerned partners, both within and outside the United Nations system, to implement the resolution in question. The report reviewed development issues affecting public administration; examined Governments' responses to the challenges encountered; stressed the lessons learned in recent years; and established an agenda for capacity-reinforcement and the role of the United Nations in that area. It observed that, at the beginning of a new millennium, despite the achievements in many fields of activity and the opportunities created by globalization, the world continues to face great challenges that called for reforms in public administration and the strengthening of public institutions.

7. Numerous Governments had undertaken reforms, often centred on promoting democratization and the decentralization of the State, developing a legal framework and ethics and anti-corruption strategies and enhancing transparency, accountability and efficiency in the public sector. In many countries, considerable progress had been made in providing

public services for all, improving resource mobilization and financial management systems and fostering partnerships between the State, the market and civil society. Some Governments had also taken measures to strengthen their capacity for managing diversity and conflict prevention. Reform was a continuous process, however, and the report underscored the importance of international cooperation and regional integration as means of effectively taking up the challenges posed by globalization.

8. The report drew three lessons, in particular, from past experience. First, developing countries and countries in transition must have greater ownership of the reforms they undertook. Rather than applying standard reform measures, they should adapt them to the national context. Second, Governments must be strong, strategic and democratic. Experience had shown that many countries' problems stemmed from an institutional capacity deficit. Third, the State was called on to harmonize and coordinate international, national and subnational activities. The existence of a strong State was a prerequisite not only for development and peace, but also for strengthening international cooperation for the benefit of all. In that regard, the report emphasized the crucial role that the United Nations must play in reinforcing public administration capacities, to which end it must enhance its capacity to collect, organize and disseminate information on public administration and finance systems.

9. **Mr. Frangialli** (World Tourism Organization) informed the Committee that the Economic and Social Council was transmitting to it a draft resolution in which it proposed that due account be taken of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism prepared by the World Tourism Organization (WTO). The members of WTO were proud to submit a resolution that would betoken the international community's acknowledgement of the importance of an instrument on which his organization had worked since 1997. In 1999, the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development had endorsed the idea of drawing up a code of ethics and good practices for world tourism and had invited WTO to seek further input from all the stakeholders. The resulting document had since been adopted by over 100 countries. At the fourteenth session of its General Assembly, WTO had decided to set up a World Committee on Tourism Ethics

responsible for monitoring and coordinating the implementation of the Code.

10. The purposes of the Code were to affirm common and universal values generating rights and obligations for all those involved in tourism, minimize the harmful impact of tourism on the environment, host communities and cultural heritage and maximize the benefits that the residents of the areas visited and the private sector of tourists' countries of origin and host countries could derive from that activity, which was a bona fide sector of the economy. Tourism, which was the largest item of international trade, often furthered economic liberalization while at the same time benefiting from it, and it encompassed a considerable number of sectors, branches and stakeholders.

11. The Code was ambitious, for it touched on a wide range of questions. It prohibited the sexual exploitation of children, advocated the participation of host communities in development projects, recognized the value of ecotourism, insisted on the need for transparent commercial contracts, recommended the staggering in time and space of tourist flows, encouraged North-South dialogue and urged multinationals in the sector to behave in a responsible manner.

12. In proposing that the Assembly should examine the Code, WTO was taking the opportunity to draw attention to one of its founding principles, namely, that tourism should help to safeguard international peace and understanding. At a time when New York had scarcely begun to recover from the dreadful attacks of 11 September, WTO wished to point out that the Code categorically condemned terrorism. It trusted that the difficulties currently experienced by the world tourist industry would not obscure the necessity of a viable growth in tourism. The tourist sector had been badly hit by recent events, but it had to remain in business in order to meet a real need.

13. **Mr. Asadi** (Islamic Republic of Iran), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, praised the initiative of organizing the special high-level meeting of the Economic and Social Council with the Bretton Woods institutions, which had generally served the intended purpose. Nevertheless, that annual meeting should be better utilized and should permit a substantive dialogue that would contribute to the deliberations within the various international and multilateral bodies. Such participation would ensure a

richer exchange of views and a more comprehensive understanding of how to address global challenges, particularly those with a serious impact on developing countries at both the national and the international level.

14. Some of the debates at the substantive session of the Economic and Social Council had been very good, largely because of the careful, timely preparation of documentation. The format adopted for the various meetings of the high-level segment on the role of the United Nations system in supporting the efforts of African countries to achieve sustainable development had been quite interesting. The segment on operational activities had sparked rich, wide-ranging discussions on all aspects of those activities and had made an outstanding contribution to the preparation of the excellent report of the Secretary-General currently before the Committee on the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system (A/56/320). The agreed conclusion of the coordination segment on “The role of the United Nations in promoting development, particularly with respect to access to and transfer of knowledge and technology, especially information and communication technologies, inter alia, through partnership with relevant stakeholders, including the private sector” had also been a substantive outcome.

15. The results of the humanitarian affairs segment and the general segment had been much more mixed, as discussions had faced serious difficulties because of the late preparation and distribution of documents. As a result of that situation, little progress had been made on some issues and the consideration of some draft resolutions, which had been submitted too late, had been deferred until the next session. While the Group of 77 and China were aware of the constraints faced by the secretariat and the Bureau of the Council and appreciated their work, they believed that it was necessary to raise those concerns in the Committee. The functional commissions, regional commissions, relevant committees and expert groups could facilitate the work of the Council’s general segment by considering all the items on their agendas and working on a broad-based consensus that took into consideration the views of all Member States.

16. Technical problems had also prevented a discussion of the issue of public administration and development during the Council’s substantive session. The report on that subject had, of course, been

distributed within the Group, which looked forward to considering that item at the resumed session.

17. *Mr. Mbayu (Cameroon), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.*

18. **Mr. Mizukami** (Japan) expressed pleasure that, in the Ministerial Declaration issued at its high-level segment, the Economic and Social Council had welcomed the adoption of the New African Initiative, renamed the New Partnership for Africa’s Development, as “an African-owned and African-led framework for action towards (...) sustainable development”. His Government wished to pursue the discussion of that initiative with African countries and their partners at the International Conference on African Development to be held in Tokyo.

19. Among the various issues discussed in the general segment, his delegation wished to single out agenda item 6, on integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits. Although, as had happened in the previous year, the Council had not had time to discuss that issue thoroughly, the adoption of resolution 2001/21 was an important step forward. Recalling the wording of paragraph 4 of that resolution, his delegation believed that the Second Committee should conduct a comprehensive examination of that urgent issue in accordance with the Council’s recommendation; it stood ready to cooperate with other delegations to that end.

20. **Mr. Liu** Jingtao (China) said that the Ministerial Declaration (A/56/3) should guide United Nations action in the coming century to assist African countries in their efforts to promote sustainable development, eradicate poverty and build peace. It also provided a basis for helping Africa integrate more fully in the globalization process and for preparing more thoroughly for the final evaluation, in September 2002, of the United Nations New Agenda for Africa’s Development in the 1990s.

21. Turning to the reform of the Economic and Social Council, his delegation noted that, in recent years, the Council had made considerable progress in implementing General Assembly resolutions 50/227 and 52/12 B by strengthening its coordination role and improving its methods of work. His delegation wished to emphasize, however, that without sufficient financial resources the Council could not play its full part in operational activities. Countries must therefore honour

their undertaking to revitalize United Nations action in the economic, social and related fields and begin by reviving the Organization's flagging support for development, rather than embarking on fresh reforms.

22. His delegation welcomed the dialogue between the Economic and Social Council and the Bretton Woods institutions and advocated closer coordination between the United Nations and the other bilateral and multilateral bodies, pursuant to the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and the development goals set in the Millennium Declaration. It particularly welcomed the cooperation between the United Nations, the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization (WTO) in the run-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development. Although it was extremely important to review the follow-up to the major conferences of the 1990s, the methods for doing so should be changed, given the growing number of conferences and activities organized to that end. Any decision on the subject should be taken by consensus and should aim to lighten the workload of the Secretariat and the Member States. In keeping with their specific national characteristics, countries would have to do their utmost to promote the participation of civil society and the private sector in the national process of reviewing the outcome of major conferences and to improve their contribution in that respect. The same approach should be employed for the international review process but, when it came to the United Nations, the methods of participation should be consonant with the pertinent guidelines. His delegation hoped that the debate on global partnerships, which was on the agenda of the current session of the General Assembly, would make it possible to formulate useful guidelines.

23. **Mr. Holubov** (Ukraine) said that his country, which had just been elected a member of the Economic and Social Council for the period 2002-2004, would do its best to help strengthen the role of the Council, as the principal United Nations organ responsible for coordination in the economic, social and humanitarian fields, in solving global problems related to sustainable development, poverty eradication and protection of human rights and in promoting harmonious and sustainable implementation of the outcomes of major United Nations conferences and summits.

24. His delegation associated itself with all those that had given a positive assessment of the Council's work in 2001. In particular, it welcomed the continuation of

the dialogue between the Council and the Bretton Woods institutions, which provided an opportunity to reflect in a cooperative manner on the important economic and financial issues of the day and on the social dimensions of development. The high-level meeting held in May on the establishment of a stable international financial system that was responsive to the priorities of growth and development had reaffirmed the increased need for coordination and system-wide cooperation among the different global institutions and had deepened understanding of the main issues related to reform of the world financial architecture and to development.

25. His delegation wished to commend the Council on its preparations for the major international events in the field of development to be held in 2002, namely, the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the International Conference on Financing for Development, whose final documents would provide the Council with a valuable working tool for addressing global challenges in the social, economic, environmental and humanitarian spheres. The 2001 substantive session had also confirmed the Council's important role as a forum for representatives of governments and international organizations to discuss problems of common concern.

26. For his delegation, one of the highlights of that session had been the high-level segment on the role of the United Nations system in supporting the efforts of African countries to achieve sustainable development, which had been based on the report of the Secretary-General on the same subject (E/2001/83), and especially the policy dialogue with the heads of the financial and trade institutions of the United Nations system on recent developments in the world economy. His delegation had welcomed the adoption of the Ministerial Declaration of the segment as an expression of the international commitment to assist African nations in their struggle for lasting peace, poverty eradication and sustainable development. The Declaration had affirmed that the Council was at the centre of United Nations support for African development. In that regard, as a member of the Security Council, his delegation had been playing an active part in increasing the role of that organ, which bore the main responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, in finding solutions to the conflicts in Africa, which were one of the major

causes and consequences of underdevelopment in the region.

27. His delegation attached particular importance to the coordination segment, which was directly relevant to the mandate of the Economic and Social Council. Indeed, the constructive discussions on policy aspects and on the activities of specialized agencies and organizations of the United Nations system had determined the pragmatic nature of the Council's agreed conclusions. The agreed conclusions 2001/1 would provide valuable guidance to the United Nations system in its efforts to ensure effective access for developing countries and countries with economies in transition to information and communications technologies (ICT) and enable them to develop ICT sectors in their economies. His delegation also wished to emphasize the productive debate on the future of the Joint United Nations programme on HIV/AIDS in the light of the goals set by the special session of the General Assembly on that subject.

28. Turning to the humanitarian affairs segment, the discussion had reaffirmed the Council's role in defining the guidelines for humanitarian assistance. Given the need for increased efforts on the part of the United Nations and its Member States in response to natural disasters, as well as the serious lack of funding for United Nations humanitarian activities, it would be advisable to approve the agreed conclusions of the segment at the Council's 2002 substantive session. With regard to the general segment, the work done by the Council to enhance the effectiveness of its functional and regional commissions and subsidiary bodies, whose recommendations and conclusions had led to the adoption of very useful decisions, should be commended. Nevertheless, the general segment could be improved further and the experience of the recent session had shown that additional efforts were needed to rationalize its agenda and hone its working methods. It was to be hoped that the Council would succeed in adopting an approach tailored to the various problems it would have to solve in the future.

29. **Mr. Isakov** (Russian Federation) said that, at its substantive session, the Council had considered various questions relating to international cooperation in the economic and social fields. He welcomed the outcome of the high-level segment conducted with the Bretton Woods institutions, which had made it possible to address the problems facing the African continent, including poverty, and the New African Initiative

adopted by the OAU Summit. The opportunities afforded by the humanitarian affairs segment and other Council segments should also continue to be used to examine the underlying economic causes of Africa's development problems.

30. The development of ICT would not only help improve the quality of communications but also allow unprecedented progress to be made, taking into account the impact of globalization. It was important therefore to bridge the digital divide, draw up rules to prevent the marginalization of countries that had not yet mastered those technologies and take immediate measures at the intergovernmental level to ensure coordination between the Council and the private sector, similar to those already under way, such as the setting up of an Information and Communication Technologies Task Force, as well as between the United Nations and other bodies, particularly with the Digital Opportunity Task Force (DOT) set up by the G-8 countries and in the context of the preparations for the World Summit on the Information Society to be held in Geneva in 2003 and Tunis in 2005, which was the subject of a draft resolution under consideration by the Second Committee.

31. Turning to other matters, he welcomed the recent establishment of a new subsidiary body of the Council, the United Nations Forum on Forests, which it was hoped would serve as a model for operational cooperation that could also be used in other sectors.

32. His delegation hoped that the Council's humanitarian affairs segment would become increasingly productive, as that was an essential aspect of international cooperation and coordination of efforts in the humanitarian sector. The segment should be organized in the most constructive way possible, avoiding politically sensitive issues that might arouse pointless controversy. Although his delegation had not opposed the proposal at the previous session not to adopt agreed conclusions in 2001, it stressed that the decision should not create a precedent and that it was inappropriate to call into question the humanitarian affairs segment without even mentioning the ill-conceived proposals that contributed to its incoherent fragmentation. The adoption of agreed conclusions would mark a willingness to compromise. On the other hand, if the Council failed to provide guidance for United Nations humanitarian activities for the second year running, that might well have damaging effects on the role it played in that area.

33. The debate on the comprehensive triennial policy review of United Nations operational activities for development had identified the main elements for a draft resolution: enhanced coordination of operational activities; introduction of effective evaluation mechanisms; stable, predictable financing for funds and programmes, bearing in mind the unchanging principle that contributions to such activities should be voluntary; and further reform of the United Nations operational activities sector, maintaining the coordinating role of the Economic and Social Council. Those issues were important enough for the Council to accord them priority, particularly from the standpoint of system-wide coordination.

34. It was particularly useful to review the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences, and such reviews would be facilitated if the sessions of the Council's functional commissions coincided with the regular sessions of the General Assembly. That would end the practice of organizing special sessions and special bodies for the five-year or 10-year reviews of major conferences and would bolster the lead role of the General Assembly in that area. Such reviews would then eventually become part of the overall process of reviewing the implementation of the Millennium Declaration, which encompassed all the objectives of the major conferences of the 1990s.

35. In short, the Council was still an important link in the global system of multilateral mechanisms and its role was not restricted to coordinating United Nations activities in the economic, social, humanitarian and environmental fields. Through the dialogue with the leaders of the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the World Trade Organization, all bodies would be able to agree on the prospects for developing the global economy and define the main guidelines for international cooperation. All Member States had a responsibility to help strengthen the role of the Council, and his delegation intended to take an active part in doing so.

36. **The Chairman** said that, before closing the general debate on the item, he wished to draw the Committee's attention to chapter I, page 1, of document A/56/3/Rev.1, and specifically to the provisions of Economic and Social Council resolution 2001/21 on integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits.

37. *Mr. Barnwell (Guyana), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.*

Agenda item 96: Sectoral policy questions (*continued*)

(a) Business and development (*continued*) (A/C.2/56/L.26)

Draft resolution A/C.2/56/L.26

38. **Mr. Mirafzal** (Islamic Republic of Iran), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, introduced draft resolution A/C.2/56/L.26 entitled "Preventing and combating corrupt practices and illegal transfer of funds and repatriation of such funds". The draft resolution recognized the importance of the ad hoc committee established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 55/61 by urging it to include in its work the consideration of illegally transferred funds and the repatriation of such funds. The title of the draft resolution had been amended accordingly. He believed that the draft resolution could easily be adopted by consensus.

(b) Industrial development cooperation (*continued*) (A/C.2/56/L.25)

Draft resolution A/C.2/56/L.25

39. **Mr. Tootoonchian** (Islamic Republic of Iran), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, introduced draft resolution A/C.2/56/L.25 entitled "Second Industrial Development Decade for Africa (1993-2002)", which was based on earlier resolutions on the subject. The Second Decade would be ending in 2002 and its results were far below expectations, owing to internal and external factors and to lack of interest on the part of the international community. Specific steps had to be taken, especially with regard to the transfer of technology, and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) had an important role to play. The draft resolution asked for the support of the donor community, the international financial institutions, the United Nations system and all development partners. He hoped that the resolution would be adopted by consensus.

Agenda item 97: Sustainable development and international economic cooperation (*continued*)
(A/C.2/56/L.21, L.22, L.23 and L.24)

(a) Women in development (*continued*)
(A/C.2/56/L.21)

Draft resolution A/C.2/56/L.21

40. **Ms. Vadiati** (Islamic Republic of Iran), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, introduced draft resolution A/C.2/56/L.21 entitled “Women in development” after making some editorial revisions. The draft resolution drew attention to the importance of gender equality and the empowerment of women through education and training, especially in the technical fields, in order to combat poverty and stimulate sustainable development. Governments were therefore urged to take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women, including discrimination in financial matters. She hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted by consensus.

(b) Human resources development (*continued*)
(A/C.2/56/L.24)

Draft resolution A/C.2/56/L.24

41. **Mr. Tootoonchian** (Islamic Republic of Iran), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, introduced draft resolution A/C.2/56/L.24 entitled “Human resources development”, which was based on previous resolutions on the subject. The Group of 77 believed that health and education should be at the centre of concern and that an enabling international climate, in which provision was made for assistance to the developing countries, was needed. The United Nations system could play a greater role in that respect, especially by devising and executing programmes that took account of the priorities of each country. He hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted by consensus.

(d) Implementation of the commitments and policies agreed upon in the Declaration on International Economic Cooperation, in particular the Revitalization of Economic Growth and Development of the Developing Countries, and implementation of the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade (*continued*) (A/C.2/56/L.23)

Draft resolution A/C.2/56/L.23

42. **Mr. Zarie Zare** (Islamic Republic of Iran), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, introduced draft resolution A/C.2/56/L.23, which provided for the elaboration of a new international development strategy during the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly, based upon the outcomes of several meetings to be held in the interim, in particular the International Conference on Financing for Development and the World Summit on Sustainable Development. He hoped that it would be possible to adopt the draft resolution by consensus.

(c) High-level dialogue on strengthening international economic cooperation for development through partnership (*continued*)
(A/C.2/56/L.22)

Draft resolution A/C.2/56/L.22

43. **Mr. Zarie Zare** (Islamic Republic of Iran), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, introduced draft resolution A/C.2/56/L.22 on the high-level dialogue. The draft resolution recalled the Agenda for Development and the importance of the dialogue and of partnership and decided to convene during the fifty-eighth session of the General Assembly the third high-level dialogue on strengthening international economic cooperation for development through partnership, the details of which would be decided during the fifty-seventh session. He hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted by consensus.

The meeting rose at 11.45 a.m.