



# Economic and Social Council

Provisional

29 July 2005

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## Substantive session of 2005

### Coordination segment

#### Provisional summary record of the 19th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 7 July 2005, at 3 p.m.

*President:* Mr. Hachani (Vice-President) . . . . . (Tunisia)

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*In the absence of Mr. Akram (Pakistan), President, Mr. Hachani (Tunisia), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

*The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.*

**Towards achieving internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration** (*continued*)

**Panel discussion with the Chairpersons of the functional commissions and other subsidiary bodies of the Council: “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”**

1. **The President**, noting that the functional commissions were a vital part of the Council’s overall machinery to promote social progress, said that some of the reform proposals currently being considered by the General Assembly in preparation for the high-level summit in September would impact directly on the Council’s agenda of work and on the substantive contributions of the functional commissions. The discussion at the present meeting would allow representatives to review the commissions’ contribution to meeting the internationally agreed development goals and provide inputs on how to strengthen their contribution to promoting coordinated and integrated follow-up. It should also be used to promote thematic coherence in the work of the Council and the commissions, and to suggest ways of improving the commissions’ working methods, as requested in General Assembly resolution 57/270 B.

2. **Mr. Ocampo** (Under-Secretary-General, Department of Economic and Social Affairs) said that the past several years had seen a growing contribution by the functional commissions to the Council’s work and increased coordination within the wider Council family, in line with intergovernmental requests and recommendations by the Secretary-General. Coordination within the Council machinery served to improve service delivery to Member States. Service delivery meant, above all, implementing the United Nations development agenda. That agenda could change the reality on the ground, provided it were used in a coordinated, concerted and coherent fashion. In that regard, two key challenges needed to be overcome.

3. The first challenge related to the existing system for assessing progress in implementing the development agenda. While the individual functional commissions carried out substantive reviews of conferences, the Council promoted a coordinated approach to conference follow-up and reviewed commitments; that led to a disjointed review and avoidable duplication. A way must be found to connect the commissions’ work more directly to that of the Council, through closely linked multi-year work programmes. Such programmes would strengthen coherence by giving increased importance to the broader themes of the development agenda such as employment, social integration, countries with special needs, democracy, good governance and human rights, and science and technology. Together with the Millennium Development Goals, those themes constituted an agenda for the whole Council machinery and should be focused on more systematically. The functional commissions needed to promote “clustering”, while those that dealt with closely related parts of the agenda should strive to build stronger synergies. The Secretariat, meanwhile, needed to help the commissions make informed decisions on their work programmes. In that regard, its reports focused increasingly on linkages and synergies and a task force of the functional commissions’ secretariats had been set up to ensure a coherent approach to the various elements of the development agenda.

4. The second challenge was how to translate the normative and analytical work of the United Nations into operational priorities; currently the work of the functional commissions did not influence the priorities of United Nations funds and programmes. Accordingly, it was necessary to reflect together on how the Council could help to convey the commissions’ valuable guidance to the United Nations development system. The commissions could facilitate that process by articulating specific points for action by the funds and programmes.

5. Meeting those challenges were two major ways in which the Council and its subsidiary bodies could become more efficient and effective. Efforts on both fronts would facilitate the roles that the Council was likely to be given by the September summit. The functional commissions could also contribute to the coordination segment’s theme for 2006 — sustained economic growth for social development, including the eradication of poverty and hunger — and enrich

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Council debates by giving their perspective on coordinated efforts to meet that key objective.

6. **Mr. Quiroga** (Chairman, Commission for Social Development) said that at its most recent session, held on the tenth anniversary of the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen, the Commission for Social Development had adopted a Declaration reaffirming the basic tenets of Copenhagen, seeking to link poverty eradication efforts to social integration and employment strategies, and recognizing that implementation of the Copenhagen commitments and attainment of the Millennium Development Goals were mutually reinforcing. In addressing progress towards the Goals it was important to see linkages and complementarities in the commissions' different approaches so as to ensure that the outcomes had a clear impact on the September review. Emphasizing the need for continued support for regional and subregional initiatives on social and economic development, he said that priority attention should be given to the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and that the special needs and aspirations of least developed countries (LDCs), landlocked developing countries and small island developing States must be considered with the requirements of middle-income countries and economies in transition.

7. Recalling the first commitment of Copenhagen, he said that the question of how to create, or enlarge the quality and possibilities of, an enabling environment for social development at all levels continued to be part of a vibrant debate that could have a compelling impact on the Millennium review. The issue should be guided by discussions that reflected a deeper understanding of the social dimensions of globalization and the need to mobilize new and additional financial resources for social development. Recalling that the Commission's most recent session had acknowledged that, in order to increase the resources available for social development, current levels of official development assistance (ODA) must be raised as soon as possible in order to reach the 0.7 per cent target by 2015, he recognized the Monterrey Consensus and welcomed the recent initiative by the Group of Eight (G8) to cancel the debt of some of the poorest nations. However, while positive, the initiative would be insufficient to help countries escape the trap of hunger, disease and economic stagnation unless it were part of an integrated strategy to mobilize new resources. The Council should therefore use the

September summit to call on Member States to deliver on existing commitments, including the achievement of Goal 8 on a global partnership for development.

8. Recalling the Commission's recent decision to organize future sessions in a series of two-year action-oriented implementation cycles, he said that he looked forward to reviewing the methods of work that would facilitate implementation of conference outcomes in the 2006 session. That session — dedicated to reviewing the First United Nations Decade for Poverty Eradication (1997-2006) — would provide an opportunity for Governments and other stakeholders to examine the multidimensional aspects of poverty highlighted in Copenhagen. In view of the growing concern about jobless growth, it was important to remember that creation of productive employment was vital to attainment of the Millennium Development Goals and to security, development and human rights. Accordingly, employment generation and social integration must be a part of the broader development agenda.

9. **Mrs. Sonaïke** (Vice-Chairperson, Commission on the Status of Women), speaking on behalf of the Chairperson, said that the Commission played a central role in monitoring implementation of the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly and had adopted a Declaration at its forty-ninth session emphasizing that full and effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action was essential to achieving the internationally agreed development goals and stressing the need to ensure the integration of a gender perspective in the September summit.

10. The Commission had also played a catalytic role in integrating gender perspectives into the work of other subsidiary bodies of the Council and United Nations entities, adopting a resolution on gender mainstreaming each year. The Council could further address gender mainstreaming when it reviewed implementation of its agreed conclusions 1997/2 before 2010. It could also encourage its subsidiary bodies to incorporate gender equality issues into their follow-up to major conferences and summits and encourage the Commission to continue its catalytic role and contribute to the work of other functional commissions by providing practical advice on gender mainstreaming.

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11. The Commission had also played a proactive role in establishing close collaboration with the Council and its subsidiary bodies, through, inter alia, systematic transmission of its outcome documents to other functional commissions and United Nations entities, joint meetings with the Bureaux of the Council and other functional commissions, participation of its Chairperson in annual sessions of the Commission on Human Rights, and the high-level round table organized with the Statistical Commission in 2004. In the future, its Chairperson could also report to the Council on the outcome of the Commission's work and on progress and challenges in relation to common themes to be discussed by the Council and its functional commissions or in the context of annual ministerial peer reviews of the development agenda. Coordination between the Commission, Council and other functional commissions could also be enhanced by organizing more frequent bureau meetings and annual meetings of Chairpersons.

12. Lastly, as requested in General Assembly resolution 57/270 B, at its forty-eighth session, the Commission had discussed its working methods and decided, inter alia, to enhance the use of interactive events at its annual session, further explore options for the multi-year programme of work and explore ways of making better use of its standing agenda item on emerging issues, trends and new approaches to issues affecting women. The Commission had decided to continue discussing its working methods at its fiftieth session. In reviewing its working methods, the Commission would continue to prioritize implementation in the context of integrated follow-up to conference outcomes and contribute to monitoring implementation of the internationally agreed development goals, including the outcome of the September summit. The Commission would also discuss its multi-year work programme beyond 2006. In order to promote thematic coherence in the work of the Council and functional commissions, those bodies would consult closely on the substance, schedule and periodicity of their work programmes in order to maximize synergies and ensure integrated follow-up to the United Nations development, security and human rights agenda. The Council's efforts to make its own work more predictable — for example, through a multi-year work programme or agreement on an indicative list of common themes — were critical in guiding and facilitating the work of the functional commissions, as such efforts would enable them to

better prepare their contributions to the work of the Council and to draw on the Council's work on common themes in their own discussions.

13. **Mr. Sharma** (Chairperson, Commission on Narcotic Drugs), noting that poverty, infectious diseases, environmental degradation, terrorism, transnational organized crime and weapons of mass destruction posed a threat to international peace, security and prosperity, said that the Commission addressed many of those threats within the framework of the rule of law, which must be strengthened by universal participation in multilateral conventions. While the international drug control conventions enjoyed almost universal adherence, it was important to work towards their full implementation.

14. Strong international cooperation as well as the inclusion of appropriate measures in national development priorities were needed to address such global threats. The Commission coordinated its activities in that regard with the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. Concerning the implementation of the outcome of the twentieth special session of the General Assembly, the Commission had found that Member States needed not only to make further efforts in the areas of international cooperation, prevention, rehabilitation and treatment, but also to improve their information and evaluation capacity. Member States should adopt a comprehensive approach to alternative development, integrating programmes in that area into wider economic and social development programmes, including environmental conservation, access to financial mechanisms and access to land ownership. The Commission had also urged the international community to strengthen its support for the efforts of the governments of producer, transit and consumer countries to implement comprehensive drug abuse prevention programmes covering vulnerable or at-risk population groups, with emphasis on children and adolescents.

15. The Commission had adopted resolutions relating to HIV/AIDS and other blood-borne diseases and women and substance abuse, respectively and, in view of the unprecedented increase in opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan and the resultant threat to the security and stability of not only Afghanistan but of the entire world, called upon the international community to provide the necessary technical and financial support to the Afghan Government's Counter-Narcotic Implementation Plan. It welcomed the

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opportunity to cooperate more closely with other Commissions on approaches to integrating drug control-related matters into mainstream development work.

16. The functional commissions and relevant follow-up mechanisms could contribute to the future monitoring and evaluation by the Council of the implementation of the internationally agreed development goals, by seeking information from Member States concerning their implementation of the development goals in the areas for which the functional commissions were mandated. However, since many Member States already found it difficult to meet their existing reporting requirements, stock should be taken of existing sources of information and their relevance. Member States and the Secretariat should not be overburdened with reporting obligations that diverted resources from achieving their substantive goals and targets. On the promotion of greater harmony and thematic unity in the work of the Council and its functional commissions, he noted, *inter alia*, that an indicative list of common themes from the Council could provide input into the selection of topics and sub-themes for thematic debates. The commissions could also be asked to consider other approaches to integrating items relating to the common themes into their agendas.

17. While continuous reviews of the Commission's methods of work had resulted in increased efficiency, the trend towards shorter sessions and increased intersessional work put tremendous pressure on the Commission, delegations and the secretariat. The integration of the work of the functional commissions could be improved *inter alia* through the identification of relevant cross-cutting agenda items by the bureaux of the functional commissions and the secretariat of the Council; however, consideration would have to be given to any financial implications in that regard.

18. **Mr. Habermann**, speaking on behalf of the Chairperson of the Statistical Commission, said that at its latest session the Commission had discussed a wide range of issues, including demographic statistics, national and environmental accounting, and had agreed unanimously on a draft resolution on the 2010 World Population and Housing Census Programme. The Commission contributed to achieving the internationally agreed development goals through its work as the intergovernmental focal point for the harmonization and rationalization of indicators. That

was a crucial task, since Member States continued to be overburdened with data requests. Indeed, the dearth of adequate data in many parts of the developing world was hampering efforts to monitor the implementation of development policies; 19 out of 56 countries in Africa had not conducted a population census in the past 10 years, nearly twice as many as in the previous decade.

19. International estimates had taken the place of real country data as a basis for regional and global aggregation, seriously calling into question the ability of the development community to assess any progress made in achieving specific national and global goals. The Statistical Commission had repeatedly emphasized that national statistical systems should be empowered to compile their own national data in accordance with international statistical standards. It had requested that a detailed report be prepared annually, analysing the ability of countries to produce individual Millennium Development Goal indicators. Unfortunately, the final day of the Commission's session had been transformed into an *ad hoc* meeting of mostly mission representatives, producing great confusion among the Chief Statisticians and rendering a disservice to the Commission and the Council.

20. While the Statistical Commission was well placed to provide expert advice on development indicators and was the proper forum to agree on voluntary international standards for statistics, it was not the forum for making decisions on priorities of indicators and non-technical definitions. For example, agreement on the definition of poverty needed a political consensus, not a technical one. Noting that statistics were becoming more important and attracting more attention, he suggested that Chief Statisticians should reach out to their relevant bodies in their capitals to explain their positions and understand how the interests of their respective countries intersected on those issues. Furthermore, the Commission's secretariat should work with the permanent missions to anticipate political issues and resolve them before the technical Statistical Commission session began.

21. **Ms. Bahemuka** (Chairperson, United Nations World Forum on Forests), noting that forests and trees played a critical role in supporting the livelihoods of many of the world's poor, said that poverty eradication and sustainable development were at the heart of sustainable forest management. Alleviating poverty would be vital to both achieving the Millennium

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Development Goals and the sustainable management of all types of forests. The Forum on Forests was the ideal arena for discussions and policy development on that issue. As a high-level body under the Council, the Forum had the ability to pull together the various forest-related international and regional processes, institutions and instruments and to integrate them into a unified, global vision for action on forests and for humanity.

22. At its fifth session, the Forum had held a policy dialogue between ministers and heads of its member organizations. A report of the Secretary-General had been prepared for that session on the linkages between forests and the internationally agreed development goals. The report and the dialogue had *inter alia* stressed that, since sustainable forest management contributed substantially towards achieving many of the internationally agreed development goals, careful consideration should be given to setting clear objectives for international forest policy and linking sustainable forest management more closely to those goals. It was also suggested that national forest programmes should identify the relevance and potential role of trees and forests in achieving the Millennium Development Goals and that forest sector reforms, good governance and the creation of a stable and sound institutional and policy environment would attract more international finance, including ODA, and mobilize domestic resources, which could help make the sector self-financing.

23. The Forum's sixth session, which was scheduled for February 2006, would be of paramount importance as it would encourage the international community to come together *inter alia* to foster a new paradigm, highlighting forests in the broader development agenda.

24. **Mr. Ould Mohamed Lemine** (Vice-Chairman, Commission on Human Rights) said that many of the internationally agreed development goals, such as the right to safe drinking water and access to education for all, had been on the human rights agenda for many years. The Millennium Development Goals were therefore closely intertwined with human rights and had the same goal in mind — promoting the well-being of all human kind. However, in order for human rights to become entrenched in all societies there must be economic progress and development. The international community must therefore ensure that it fulfilled all its commitments, especially in the sphere of economic,

social and cultural rights, and promoted democracy and human rights.

25. The Commission's special machineries and procedures had not only helped to prevent human rights violations and to promote such rights but had also demonstrated the interdependence of human rights and development. The special rapporteurs on the right to education, health and on violence against women, for example, had clearly demonstrated the strong link between the effective enjoyment of human rights and development.

26. Other machineries of the Commission were involved in that collective effort. The working group on the right to development had considered the obstacles to the achievement of the Millennium Goals and the right to development and had recommended that national and institutional capacities of States should be strengthened to enable them to establish effective strategies for attaining the Millennium Goals. The Commission had held informal consultations on 20 June to consider the Secretary-General's proposal to establish a human rights council and to contribute to the intergovernmental deliberations on the proposed reform of the Organization. The summary of those consultations had been submitted to the President of the General Assembly.

27. **Ms. Navarro Barro** (Cuba), referring to the statement by the representative of the Statistical Commission, noted that the latter's was of particular importance because of its specific mandate to develop indicators and measurements for the accomplishment of targets like the Goals. At its most recent session, many speakers had highlighted the need for the Commission to contribute to the implementation of the outcomes of major United Nations conferences and summits focusing on economic and social issues.

28. **Mr. Blake** (Jamaica) noted that none of the reports presented had linked the work of the functional commissions to any particular internationally-agreed goals. Had they done so, the particular sphere in which a commission was working would have been indicated.

29. Secondly, regarding the level of coordination with the regional commissions themselves, the consolidated report of the Secretary-General contained no information on the issue, in terms of their ability to bring a greater focus to examining cross-cutting issues. Yet, in many cases, more than one regional commission worked in a specific sphere.

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30. **Mr. Woodroffe** (United Kingdom), speaking on behalf of the European Union, said that his Government believed that the functional commissions should continue to be primarily responsible for reviewing and assessing progress in the implementation of United Nations conference outcomes. The functional commissions had major contributions to make to the Council's work by identifying policy areas that were key to attaining all the conference goals.

31. However, the European Union believed that the functional commissions must examine their working methods, as set out in General Assembly resolution A/57/270 B. The intergovernmental system needed to be made more consistent.

32. The European Union was particularly interested in hearing the views of the chairs on two issues: firstly, whether the functional commissions could improve coordination between themselves to promote a more integrated implementation of conference outcomes and, secondly, the degree of success of the reviews of the commissions' working methods, and what further steps were required to improve them.

33. **Mr. Shamanov** (Russian Federation) said that his delegation regarded the functional commissions as a key mechanism for achieving consistent implementation of the outcomes of major conferences and summits. They also played a coordinating role in that regard. It was also important that a proper focus be kept on thematic specifics.

34. His country also saw the functional commissions as bodies that could broaden the analysis and make strategic contributions to implementing conference decisions. In that regard, the Russian Federation would support an enhancement in the overall thematic coordination of the Council and the work of the functional commissions. At the same time, he emphasized that there was no need for a uniform approach.

35. **Mr. Grey-Johnson** (Chairman, Commission on Population and Development) said that although the Goals were viewed as separate from, and even as a replacement for, the goals established in the various global conferences, the path to fulfilling them was through the programmes and plans of action of the conferences and summits.

36. It was generally agreed that the Council and the functional commissions should harmonize their work programmes. To that end, the Council should use a top-down approach by setting in advance its multi-year work programmes for the high-level and coordination segments. The functional commissions could then follow suit within the context of their own mandates by adopting contiguous programmes.

37. When given sufficient lead time by the General Assembly and the Council to organize its work effectively, the Commission could contribute directly to these bodies' work. For example, it had been able to contribute to the preparations for the forthcoming September summit by discussing the attainment of development goals, including the Goals, at its thirty-eighth session.

38. Regarding review of its working methods, the Commission had already adopted two decisions, namely on the date for the election of its bureau and the geographic rotation of the chair, which were envisaged to improve conference follow-up and give the Commission flexibility to adjust its work programme. The Commission fully concurred with the view, expressed in General Assembly resolution 57/270 B, that there was "no need for a uniform approach since each functional commission has its own specificity."

39. **Mr. Mansour** (Vice-Chairman, Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD)) said the Commission would seek to collaborate more closely with other functional commissions on such issues as energy for sustainable development, industrial development, air pollution and climate change, all of which were key to meeting the Goals and commitments made at the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development. The issues would be dealt with in an integrated manner and with the broadest participation of member Governments and major groups.

40. The Commission was uniquely placed to contribute to the work of the Council. Its emphasis on an integrated consideration of the three pillars of sustainable development had opened up avenues for close collaboration with other functional commissions and organizations of the United Nations system.

41. **Ms. Tauli-Corpuz** (Chairperson, Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues) noted that although the Forum was not a functional commission but rather an expert body, its mandate was to promote coordination

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on indigenous issues, as well as their integration/mainstreaming in the United Nations system. In that regard, it should engage in ongoing dialogue with other subsidiary bodies of the Council, and explore ways to improve the lives of over 370 million indigenous people around the world, one of the most marginalized sections of humanity.

42. Although the Forum was a new body, representatives of indigenous peoples and organizations had been actively participating in major United Nations conferences and summits and in most Council sessions. It looked forward to being invited to participate in the meetings of functional commissions so that a cross-fertilization of ideas could occur.

43. In the context of the Goals, the Forum recommended that indigenous people, who were not mentioned in the Goals or in most MDG country reports, should participate fully in the various development programmes, including the Goals, and that a human rights approach to development should be adopted. Countries and the United Nations system should also ensure the full participation of indigenous peoples in development programmes and poverty reduction strategies.

44. **Mr. Teta** (Chairman, Commission on Science and Technology for Development) said that at the Commission's recent session, participants had concluded that science and technology were central to achieving all development goals, but that unless concerted efforts were made to place science and technology at the centre of their development agenda, most countries were unlikely to meet their development goals by 2015. The Commission had called on national Governments to ensure that science, technology and innovation strategies were incorporated in international and national development strategies, especially those addressing the Millennium Development Goals.

45. One important outcome of the Commission's recent session had been a joint initiative in cooperation with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) designed to strengthen research and development capabilities of developing countries in some currently under-funded areas of research critical to those countries. The initiative was aimed at setting up a network to connect existing centres of excellence in developing countries. There were currently more than 100 institutions in developing

countries that could qualify as centres of excellence. The Commission hoped that the initiative would help reverse the brain drain and generate a critical mass of researchers who could effectively address development challenges. The network's full operating costs would be about \$1 million per year. The Government of Italy had already pledged \$500,000 to kick-start the project, while the Government of Pakistan would finance 20 fellowships. He invited donor countries to make voluntary contributions to fund the network and urged other United Nations agencies to become partners in the endeavour.

46. The Commission had also decided to adopt a biennial programme of work, beginning with its next session — focusing on policy analyses the first year and on operational aspects and implementation in the second — and to extend the mandate of its Gender Advisory Board for a further five years, beginning January 2006.

47. The Commission had selected the theme "Bridging the technology gap between and within nations" for discussion in the intersessional period; special emphasis would be placed on multi-stakeholder partnerships. Concrete aspects of that theme would be identified and addressed at the Commission's forthcoming panel meeting. As the lead intergovernmental entity for technology-related issues within the United Nations system, the Commission hoped to reinforce its policy advisory role with a particular focus on capacity-building for science, technology and innovation (STI) policy in Africa. To that end, it proposed to establish an informal working group for Africa to cooperate with the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and to address science and technology issues of priority to Africa and to guide the Commission on its future work.

48. **Mr. Grey-Johnson** (Chairman, Commission on Population and Development) acknowledged the pertinence of the points raised in the meeting, particularly on the need for enhanced interface among functional bodies. The Commission on Population and Development had sought to coordinate its work with that of other commissions with overlapping mandates. But much more needed to be done in that area, for example with the Commission on the Status of Women and the Commission on Sustainable Development. He called on the various commissions to incorporate the possibility of more effective interfacing into reviews of their working methods.



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49. **Mr. Mansour** (Vice-Chairman, Commission on Sustainable Development) noted that since the functional commissions met during the first six months of the year, the only chance for the Chairs of the functional commissions to meet would be in July. He noted that a proposal had already been made for a meeting of the Chairs of all the functional commissions in early January, and endorsed the proposal for the Chairs of the various functional commissions to participate in each other's meetings under the relevant agenda items.

50. **Ms. Sonaike** (Chairperson, Commission on the Status of Women) said that many commissions' functions overlapped. That was particularly true for the Commission on the Status of Women. The work of the commissions could be enhanced by more frequent meetings, both among them and with the Council. While working methods differed, frequent exchanges of views would ensure greater cross-fertilization.

51. **Ms. Tauli-Corpuz** (Chairperson, Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues) agreed that greater coordination was needed among the functional commissions. The Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues had to be particularly inventive in finding ways in which to improve the lives of the world's 370 million indigenous people.

52. **Mr. Quiroga** (Chairman, Commission for Social Development) said the commissions were already discussing the issues of coordination and review of working methods. The proposal that the Chairs of the functional commissions should meet early in the year, offered both attractions and drawbacks; all such proposals required financing. The commissions must enhance coordination within the Economic and Social Council, with particular attention to dialogue on policies for development.

53. **Ms. Bahemuka** (Chairperson, United Nations Forum on Forests), noting that the Forum on Forests had many overlapping areas of concern with, for example, the Commission on Sustainable Development and the Commission on the Status of Women, said that given the role played by forests both in development and in the achievement of the Millennium Goals, it was vital that the Forum should achieve greater visibility.

54. **Mr. Teta** (Chairman, Commission on Science and Technology for Development), endorsing the need both for enhanced coordination and greater visibility,

supported the proposal for an annual meeting of commission Chairs in January.

55. **Mr. Lemine** (Vice-Chairman, Commission on Human Rights) of the Commission on Human Rights, while generally agreeing with what had been said, pointed out that given the intergovernmental makeup of the commissions, the role played by their bureaux was limited. Proposing more meetings was therefore not necessarily a solution.

56. **The President** said that a consolidated report on the work of the functional commissions would be available by the start of the general segment.

*The meeting rose at 6 p.m.*