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PROVISIONAL SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 20th MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Friday, 7 July 2006, at 3 p.m.

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| <u>President:</u> | Mr. HANNESSON | (Iceland) |
| | (Vice-President) | |

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In the absence of Mr. Hachani (Tunisia), Mr. Hannesson (Iceland),
Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

SUSTAINED ECONOMIC GROWTH FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING THE
ERADICATION OF POVERTY AND HUNGER (continued) (E/2006/56)

Panel discussion with the Chairpersons of the functional commissions

The PRESIDENT said that Heads of State and Government at the 2005 World Summit had decided to assign new functions to the Council, stipulating that it should serve as a platform for high-level engagement among Member States and with the international financial institutions, private sector and civil society on emerging global trends, policies and action in the international economic, environmental and social fields. The Council had also been requested to develop its ability to respond more effectively to developments in that regard. Such a mandate must be understood as encompassing the institutional mechanisms that were part of the Council, notably the functional and regional commissions.

A major innovation in the future work of the Council was the holding of Annual Ministerial Reviews to assess progress in follow-up of the outcomes of major United Nations conferences and summits. Since the commissions would cover national implementation as well as relevant regional and international efforts, it would seem appropriate for them to devote part of their annual sessions to the theme of the Reviews where it related to a conference follow-up process within their competence. More generally, the new exercise called upon the functional commissions to gear their activities to core policy issues on the international development agenda and to link their work more closely to that of the Council. Another innovation was the holding every two years of a Development Cooperation Forum to review trends in international development cooperation and promote coherence among all those concerned. As the Forum would also help to strengthen the link between the normative and the operational work of the United Nations, the functional commissions might consider how best to contribute to development cooperation in their substantive fields of work.

While there had been much progress towards greater coherence among the subsidiary bodies of the Council, the outcome of the World Summit was a clear call to take an additional step forward in that regard. The Panel discussion provided an excellent opportunity to assess

from the vantage of the commissions and the Council their individual and collective contribution to the achievement of the United Nations Development Agenda and to consider how the commissions could contribute to the Council's new functions.

Mr. CIVILI (Assistant-Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Inter-Agency Affairs) said that in order to lend continuing political momentum to the pursuit of the internationally agreed development goals, in particular the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the Council would have to give the follow-up and integration processes strong policy and substantive roots. Those functions would require the Council and its subsidiary bodies to pool their political and analytical assets and function as a single system. The specificity of the processes whereby the conferences that contributed to the development agenda each focused on a particular development issue and generated its own follow-up mechanisms should be both maintained and nurtured. At the same time, those processes would have to be conducted in the awareness that each of the issues being addressed, and each of the agreed goals, could not be separated from other economic, social or environmental aspects of development. Positive synergies and mutually reinforcing policies and actions were a *sine qua non* for achieving actual results and monitoring actual outcomes.

The special significance of the Council's new functions was that they provided a powerful content to the Council's coordination, policy review and policy dialogue roles in the implementation of the agreed development goals and to the Council's interaction with the commissions in promoting coherent operationalization of conference outcomes. The quality and impact of conference reviews would hinge in many ways on the Council's capacity to build on the work of its functional commissions, with their uniquely wide-ranging analytical and substantive expertise, and on that of the regional commissions, with their links with regional organizations and development banks and their experience of best practices in monitoring the Millennium Development Goals. Ideally, the Council should combine comprehensive assessments of progress with a focus each year on one core issue common to the outcomes of major United Nations conferences and summits so that by 2015 the whole canvas of core issues would be covered by the Annual Ministerial Review.

The key issues in responding to the challenge of relating the work programmes and priorities of the functional commissions to the core policy areas in the United Nations

Development Agenda might be stated in the form of four questions. How to enable the Council and its subsidiary bodies to operate as a unified system around a common framework of the agreed development goals? How to reposition the functional commissions, as well as the regional commissions, to ensure that the Council's new functions were effectively supported? Were the commissions addressing the issue of how far their substantive priorities needed to be adjusted in the light of the Summit Outcome? How could the individual follow-up processes be geared to unified implementation of the United Nations Development Agenda? He hoped that those questions would help stimulate an interactive discussion on moving from unity of purpose among the Council and its subsidiary organs to a genuine system with the capacity for unified implementation.

Mr. MACEDO (Mexico), speaking on behalf of the Chairman of the Statistical Commission, said the Commission's session that year had been attended by 95 per cent of the United Nations membership, typically represented by the chief national statistician, thereby ensuring that the Commission retained its technical focus as the leading body in the global statistical system.

The unified implementation of the United Nations Development Agenda needed to be supported by a unified set of high-quality data produced by national statistical systems to allow meaningful measures of progress over time and across countries. The Commission had been working hard to fulfil the Council's mandate as the intergovernmental focal point for the harmonization and rationalization of indicators. In the past year, the Commission had conducted a comprehensive analysis of the ability of member countries to produce indicators to monitor progress towards the Millennium Development Goals. The results had been alarming, and had prompted the submission by the Commission of a draft recommendation to the Council urging the need to strengthen statistical capacity in the developing countries if progress towards the monitoring of national and international development goals was not to be compromised. The Commission had noted that international estimates had been used for regional and global aggregations in the absence of country data and had expressed concern at the use by international agencies of imputed data, particularly when there was lack of transparency with regard to methodology.

In order to address those issues, the draft resolution invited Member States to intensify their efforts to strengthen national capacity, with the support of the United Nations system and donor countries and organizations, with the aim of empowering national statistical systems to compile their own national data in accordance with international statistical standards. It also called on international agencies to improve the coverage, reporting and transparency of all international indicators. It was hoped that the draft resolution would command the same broad support that it had had in the Commission.

On the important topic of cooperation between international statistical offices, the Commission had welcomed the fact that a large number of international organizations had committed themselves to a number of professional principles, covering issues such as data quality, transparency of methods, confidentiality and equal access, and it was asking international organizations to take steps towards the practical application of those principles. In line with its mandate to develop common international statistical standards, the Commission had adopted two new classification systems for industrial activities and products and had continued its technical work in the area of basic economic statistics, census taking, and environmental and social statistics with a view to the establishment of norms in those fields. The Commission had a standing agenda item on the statistical implications of the Council's policy decisions, and had also contributed to the work of other functional commissions. To the extent that they and the Council identified a particular substantive focus well in advance, the Statistical Commission was committed to making a technical contribution to reviewing relevant information management aspects of the topics selected.

Mr. GASS (Vice-President of the Commission on Population and Development), speaking on behalf of the Chairman of the Commission, said that population was a subject that cut across all areas of socio-economic development. The Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, which continued to be the foundation for the Commission's work, covered almost every aspect of the interplay between population and development, including the environment, the status of women, education and population age-structures, as well as issues such as HIV/AIDS, reproductive health and migrants. Since 1994, the Commission had each year chosen a different theme concerning the Programme's

implementation at country and international levels, according to where it could make the most valuable contribution to implementation of the United Nations Development Agenda and the goals of the Millennium Declaration and the World Summit. In 2005, it had discussed the topic of population, development and HIV/AIDS, in 2006 it had debated the issue of international migration and development, and the theme for the 2007 session was changing population age-structures and the implications for development.

In its deliberations, the Commission did not passively reflect the global development agenda but made significant contributions of its own to refining and enhancing that agenda. For example, its consensus document on achieving universal access to reproductive health was reflected in the outcome document of the World Summit, its contribution representing a significant advance in relation to the 2000 Millennium Declaration.

The Commission was concerned with building up a coherent and effective Council system with clear mandates and a sound division of labour among its constituent elements. Its Bureau had recommended that the Commission take the lead in highlighting the importance of population issues for the work of other functional commissions. It was also aware of the contributions that the other functional commissions could make to its own work. Its comprehensive approach to the annual review of the implementation of the Commission's programme of action, combined with the innovative ways of enhancing cooperation with other commissions, had been well received and attested to shared desire for coordinated approaches to cross-cutting issues in the interests of a more focused and effective Council.

Mr. DANESH-YAZDI (Chairperson of the Commission for Social Development) said that the World Summit for Social Development had stressed the need to create a framework for action to integrate economic and social policies in order to make them mutually supportive. The 2005 World Summit Outcome, which embodied a unified stance by the international community on a broad range of social issues, had also set development efforts in a broader context by highlighting the interrelated nature of peace and security, human rights, and economic and social development. In that regard, the United Nations needed more than ever to build an effective platform of global policy advocacy and coordination on social, economic, and development issues.

The immediate challenge facing the Council was to ensure that the outcomes of the functional commissions' work had an impact on the review of the Millennium Development Goals and the World Summit Outcome. While it was important to foster a sense of ownership in the economic and social sphere, the aim must be to maximize the contribution that the entire intergovernmental machinery could make to the fundamental task of implementing the United Nations Development Agenda. Individually and collectively, the commissions should strengthen their coherence by giving increased importance to the attainment of the international community's overarching objectives.

The major unifying idea to emerge from the Copenhagen Declaration and the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development was the need for a people-centred approach to development, underpinned by full and productive employment, poverty eradication and social integration. Through its mandate for implementing the Copenhagen Outcome, the Commission for Social Development had a unique opportunity to harmonize the implementation of agreed social development goals with the wider United Nations Development Agenda. The adoption by the Council of the Commission's recommendation that the theme for the 2007/2008 review and policy cycle should be "Promoting full employment and decent work for all" would place the Council's substantive priorities in line with those of the World Summit Outcome.

Employment was affected by a wide range of development issues, including finance and trade, poverty and inequality, international migration, gender, health and education, organized crime, social protection, demographic change, and natural disasters. While it was increasingly acknowledged that the different strands were interrelated, development policy did not recognize the interconnection in practice. Widening gaps between skilled and unskilled workers and between the formal and informal economy had contributed to deepening inequality worldwide. The Commission supported the pursuit of a more unified approach through the Annual Ministerial Review and favoured a collaborative process involving a broad range of actors from within and outside the United Nations system. It hoped finally that the Development Cooperation Forum would promote greater unity among development partners and that there would be enhanced dialogue and collaboration with the governing bodies of United Nations funds and programmes.

Ms. GALLARDO HERNANDEZ (Chairperson of the Commission on the Status of Women) said that the Council's new functions should enable it and its functional commissions to operate as a more unified system to support the implementation of the United Nations Development Agenda. The development of a multi-year work programme for the Council, or agreement on an indicative list of common themes, could guide and facilitate the work of the functional commissions. Collaboration and coordination between the Council and its functional commissions should be increased to maximize synergies and ensure integrated follow-up of the United Nations Development Agenda.

In keeping with its role in promoting and monitoring gender mainstreaming within the United Nations system, the Commission could help to ensure the integration of gender perspective in the United Nations Development Agenda, the work of the Council and the follow-up to global conferences and summits by other functional commissions. The Commission's emphasis on wider dissemination of the action-oriented recommendations contained in its outcomes could accelerate a unified implementation process at national, regional and international levels.

Since the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995, the Commission had increased its focus on the implementation of policy outcomes at national level and had provided a forum for enhanced exchange of national experiences on lessons learned and good practice. Consideration might be given to ways of enhancing the transmission of the conclusions of its high-level round tables as inputs to both the Annual Ministerial Review and the Development Cooperation Forum.

The World Summit Outcome reaffirmed that development, peace and security, and human rights were interlinked and that gender equality and empowerment of women was essential for developing those three pillars of the United Nations agenda. Since the First World Conference on Women in 1975, the Commission had worked to strengthen the linkages between gender equality (including women's human rights), development and peace. In 1987, the mandate of the Commission had been expanded to include reviewing and appraising progress at the national, regional and global levels. Based on the priorities identified by the 2005 World Summit, the Commission would focus in 2007-2009 on the elimination of violence against women and girls, combating HIV/AIDS and financing for development as issues requiring immediate attention.

The Commission had regularly transmitted to relevant intergovernmental and operational bodies of the United Nations the outcomes of its programme of work for 2002-2006. In 2007-2009, it could continue to ensure that its themes were considered within the broader framework of the United Nations Development Agenda by contributing to the follow-up of the twenty-seventh special session of the General Assembly on children in 2007, providing input to the International Conference on Financing for Development to review implementation of the Monterrey Consensus in 2008 or 2009, and by contributing to the follow-up of the Comprehensive Review of progress achieved in realizing the targets set out in the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS.

The Commission on the Status of Women had systematically endeavoured to follow up on the policy guidance it received by providing input to the Council's work, including a conference room paper on the theme of the high-level segment. However, it could envisage identifying more clearly policy areas that should be brought to the attention of the Council, such as the introduction of a gender perspective in programmes focused on international migration. The Council, for its part, might consider how it could more effectively utilize the outcomes of the functional commissions to influence its own processes.

Mr. DE CEGLIE (Chairman of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice) said that one of the key elements in implementing the United Nations development goals was the coordination of technical cooperation. Given that several United Nations funds, programmes and agencies worked on aspects of the rule of law and criminal justice, it was essential to enhance cooperation, having regard to differing mandates. Better synergies between the various providers of technical assistance would assist in better utilization of scarce resources.

Efforts to mainstream crime and justice issues within the larger development agenda should be continued. The 2005 Round Table on Crime and Drugs and Impediments to Security and Development in Africa and the related Programme of Action for 2006-2010, focused on strengthening the rule of law and criminal justice systems in that continent, were a good example of prioritizing specific areas of assistance based on the needs of a particular region.

It would assist the Commission in selecting topics for thematic debate if the Council were to indicate major areas of common interest to various commissions. The commissions could also

be asked to consider alternative approaches to integrating common themes in their agendas, for example through round-table discussions, working groups or special agenda items relating to their specific mandates. The outcomes and conclusions of such events could provide inputs to the Council's consideration of progress towards meeting development goals.

It would be helpful for the Council to provide guidelines to the functional commissions on how its new functions would be carried out and the support necessary. It should be remembered that the functional commissions had specific and often technical mandates, only some of which lent themselves to the provision of support to the Council's meetings. It would also be useful if the Council were to find ways of addressing issues of shared concern to the functional commissions and if new requests for action were accompanied by appropriate budget provisions.

The 2005 World Summit had paid particular attention to the mandate of the Crime Commission, especially the negative effects on development, peace and security and human rights posed by transnational crime. The Commission saw the fight against corruption as a prerequisite to establishing the rule of law and good governance. Terrorism, considered one of the most serious threats to freedom, democracy and human rights, could only be defeated through the active participation of all States and through regional and international cooperation. The reform of criminal justice systems, including institution-building and capacity-building, was seen as essential to the establishment of the rule of law and sustainable development.

The Commission had convened an intergovernmental group of experts to discuss the outcome of the Eleventh United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and the Bangkok Declaration on Synergies and Responses: Strategic Alliances in Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. The development of a consistent methodology for applying lessons learned from United Nations crime congresses should greatly facilitate their unified implementation and could contribute to improved implementation of other major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields.

While the Commission's work must continue to focus on policy and technical matters in the area of crime prevention and criminal justice, current reporting arrangements offered an opportunity to identify overlapping policy areas that could be discussed in greater depth with the

involvement of other functional commissions and the Council. Consideration could be given to expanding coordination and information meetings between the bureaux of the functional commissions and the secretariat prior to joint meetings with the officers of the Council.

Mr. ALJOWAILY (Egypt), speaking on behalf of the Chairperson of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, said that the mandate, agenda and composition of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD) were currently under review following the request in the Tunis Agenda that the Council should oversee the system-wide follow-up of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society. Recognizing the widening technological gap between the developed and developing world and the important role of science and technology in the development process, the Tunis Summit had called for a multi-stakeholder effort to bridge the digital divide in order to ensure harmonious and equitable development for all.

Prior to the Commission's ninth session in May 2006, the President of the Council had organized an open-ended consultation on CSTD's role in the follow-up to the World Summit, which had been attended by the representatives of Member States, United Nations organizations, the private sector, civil society and NGOs. The Commission had subsequently agreed that the substantive agenda item for the 2006-2008 review and policy cycle should be "Promoting the building of a people-centred, development-oriented and inclusive information society, with a view to enhancing digital opportunities for all people".

In its consideration of follow-up measures at the current session, the Council would have before it the report of the Secretary-General containing concrete ideas and recommendations, such as linkage of the science and technology agenda to the Millennium Development Goals. Concerning the review of the Commission's mandate, agenda and composition, the Council would also be able to consult a paper by the UNCTAD secretariat comparing the Commission's composition and mandate with that of other functional commissions tasked with the follow-up of major United Nations conferences in the economic and social fields.

The topics that the Council had to consider included: how the Commission's role might be furthered within its existing mandate; how to deal with cross-cutting international public policy issues not adequately addressed by current mechanisms; new issues arising from the follow-up

process; and the modalities and agencies to be involved in the follow-up process. The President of the Commission would welcome suggestions from other commissions on ways of strengthening the CSTD for the performance of its new tasks.

Mr. HOOGEVEEN (Chairman of the Bureau of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF)) said that the issues of poverty reduction and deforestation were interlinked, poverty being a cause of forest loss worldwide and forest loss contributing to poverty. According to the latest FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment, deforestation continued at the alarming rate of some 13 billion hectares per year. Sustainable Management of Forests (SFM) was a crucial element in efforts to alleviate poverty worldwide.

The UNFF aimed to put implementation of the United Nations Development Agenda at the forefront of its work. However, the current system of international forestry governance was facing a range of challenges that needed to be addressed to strengthen the link between forest policy issues and the development agenda.

The many organizations engaged in the international governance of SFM (including UNFF, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), FAO and the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO)) were located in disparate parts of the world, had varying levels of autonomy and dealt with the same or separate but interrelated policy issues. Fragmentation notoriously led to conflicting agendas, inconsistency in legislation, larger reporting burdens and “negotiating fatigue”. In a Sustainable Forest Management system that had substantial, if insufficient, resources, duplication and lack of coordination meant that resources were not always used efficiently.

Whereas the institutions engaged in SFM were largely State-centric, civil society actors such as environmental NGOs and business were playing an ever greater role in forest issues worldwide. Furthermore, the private sector was becoming increasingly engaged in forest matters through voluntary commitment and public-private partnerships. The challenge for the future was to create additional institutional space to allow all stakeholders to contribute fully.

At its sixth session, in a draft resolution for consideration by the Council, the UNFF had adopted four global objectives on forests geared to environmental sustainability and poverty

alleviation. They were: to reverse the loss of forest cover worldwide through sustainable forest management and increased efforts to prevent forest degradation; to enhance forest-based economic, social and environmental benefits, including by improving the livelihoods of forest-dependent people; to increase significantly the area of sustainably managed forests and the proportion of derivative forest products; and to reverse the decline in official development assistance and mobilize additional financial resources for the implementation of sustainable forest management.

To effectively deliver on its mandate, the Forum at its next session in April 2007 would adopt a new multi-year programme of work for the period to 2015. It had also agreed to conclude and adopt a non-legally-binding instrument on all types of forests, thereby considerably strengthening the International Arrangement on Forests. Other tasks to be carried out included securing long-term political commitment in the realm of forestry and development, giving increased support to the implementation of the development agenda; ensuring broader participation of stakeholders to increase SFM financing from a variety of sources; promoting a consensus on strengthening the Collaborative Partnership on Forests and its governing bodies; and improving mechanisms for coordination among international organizations with a mandate on forests and development.

UNFF strongly supported the organization of a biennial Development Cooperation Forum, to which it hoped to contribute assessments of its own cooperation efforts. Finally, it welcomed the prospect of working closely with other functional commissions to enhance understanding of their interrelated concerns.

Ms. TAULI-CORPUZ (Chairperson of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues) said that a key lesson learned by the Forum in its five years of existence concerned the need for coordination and system-wide coherence in order to fulfil its mandate of bringing about positive change in the lives and well-being of the world's indigenous peoples. While it continued to make progress in that regard, including through the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues, the Forum saw a need for enhanced cooperation among the functional commissions. In that respect, it looked forward to participating in the meetings of other commissions and welcomed their participation in its own work.

The Forum had been reflecting on its methods of work with a view to ensuring the most efficient and effective use of its time. At its fourth session in 2004, it had appointed a number of its members as Special Rapporteurs to review its methods of work, including the formulation of its recommendations and their implementation. It had emerged from their studies that over 50 per cent of its recommendations had been implemented by the United Nations system and by Member States at the international, regional and national levels. The findings reflected the improved linkages between the normative work of the Forum and the operational activities of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes.

The Forum had focused its MDG-related work over the previous two sessions on the linkages between human rights and economic and social development and the empowerment of indigenous peoples. It had issued recommendations to operationalize a human-rights-based approach to development and had urged the need for coherence among functional commissions undertaking MDG reviews at the international level. It believed that it was equally important to maintain dialogue with the governing bodies of international organizations to ensure institutional coherence within the United Nations system. Contacts with the IFAD Governing Council, for example, had resulted in increased IFAD funding for indigenous groups and the appointment of an Assistant President responsible for indigenous and tribal issues.

Following the inclusion of related commitments in the World Summit Outcome, the first session of the Human Rights Council had recently adopted the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which was a landmark in the history of the indigenous peoples' engagement with the United Nations. The fact that only 2 of the 30 members of the Council had voted against its adoption was a signal that the international community was now ready to recognize and protect the rights of indigenous people. The Forum had been tasked to monitor the application of the Declaration, which would be an important framework for its work and for implementation of the Programme of Action of the Second Decade of the World's Indigenous People.

Another commitment of the World Summit Outcome was to the sustainable development of indigenous people and their communities as crucial to the fight against hunger and poverty. Indigenous peoples were not only a vulnerable sector but also had contributions to make to

enhancing cultural and biological diversity. A recommendation by the Forum to the Council had called for the holding of an international expert workshop on the negotiation of access to and sharing of genetic resources on the basis of a human rights approach and perspective.

Another point in the World Summit Outcome concerned the urgent need to address the issues of food security and rural and agricultural development in indigenous and local communities. In identifying human rights and participatory governance as two essential elements in the international development agenda, the Summit had provided critical momentum for positive changes on indigenous issues.

As the Council had been mandated by the World Summit to hold biennial forums on development cooperation, the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues believed that, together with the functional commissions, it should be integrated in that new platform as well as the follow-up processes of the United Nations Development Agenda. Finally, it had recommended to the Council that indigenous issues should be adopted as the theme for the 2007 Coordination Segment.

Mr. ROSENGREN (Observer for Finland) stressed the importance of the Council's function of providing policy guidance to its functional commissions to promote coherence and coordination. The commissions had an important contribution to make to the Council's follow-up to major United Nations conferences. He strongly supported the commissions' efforts to achieve greater synergy in their respective functions, welcoming the review of their working methods and the steps taken to involve NGOs and the private sector more closely in their work. He emphasized finally the contribution that the commissions could make to the Council's follow-up of the outcomes of major United Nations conferences and to preparation of the biennial Development Cooperation Forum and the Annual Ministerial Reviews.

Mr. CABRAL (Guinea-Bissau) said that there was a self-evident need for greater coordination both between the commissions and the Council and between the commissions themselves. Within the overall reform of the United Nations system, it was necessary to ensure that there was no duplication of work and that there was greater synergy in the commissions' functioning. Their activities, like that of the international system as a whole, must be geared to producing tangible benefits for the peoples the United Nations existed to serve.

Mr. OULD TOLBA (Mauritania), emphasizing the importance of quality statistics for effective action, said that the provision of aggregated data at the national level should not be at the expense of statistical information at the local level, needed to address problems in the areas of education, health and the rural economy. The work of the functional commissions could benefit from the introduction of a cross-cutting theme relating to good governance, conceived in terms of efficient practice and fair distribution of benefits.

Mr. SOW (Guinea), underlining the importance of statistical data for Member States, asked what the Statistical Commission was doing to improve the methodology for compiling statistics, for example through multi-year collection. He welcomed the steps taken by the Commission on Population and Development to interact with other commissions and its initiatives on population census. He likewise commended the Commission's integration of the topic of immigration with that of population, opening up new possibilities for development financing. Concerning the report of the Commission for Social Development, he asked what was being done to promote linkages with the activities of ILO and other agencies so as to reflect the concern with employment and productive work. It would have been helpful if the President's oral report had been distributed to highlight the Commission's thoughts on poverty and development, with particular reference to the least developed countries.

Mr. EKANZA (Democratic Republic of the Congo) said that in countries such as his own in the grip of armed conflict the rights of women and young people were often gravely violated, as when women were abducted and reduced to sexual slavery or young men were forcibly conscripted into armed militias. What was the Commission on the Rights of Women doing to focus international attention on the human rights aspect, as well as on the number of deaths occasioned by such conflicts? Forests too were often bombed and destroyed in the pursuit of rebel groups, and he wondered what measures the Forum on Forests envisaged to protect forests in times of conflict.

Mr. MILLER (United States of America), endorsing the remarks of the representative of Guinea-Bissau, said that the activities of the international community were characterized by a great deal of incoherence, typified by the dispersal and overlapping of responsibilities between the different agencies, organs, programmes, commissions and

committees of the United Nations system for implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. Whereas it was the responsibility of the Council to impose some order and coherence on that plethora of activity, its agenda suggested that the methodology for doing so had not yet been captured. There was a need for members of the Council to give collective thought to the issue.

Mr. RIMDAP (Nigeria), noting that good planning in areas such as health, education and transportation were dependent on good statistics, urged close continuing cooperation between the Commission on Population and Development and the Statistical Commission. The same considerations applying to the relations between other functional commissions, he believed that they should seek closer linkages among themselves centred on a common concern with human rights. Moreover, given that human rights were no longer treated as a separate topic by the Economic and Social Council, the President of the Human Rights Council might be invited to inform representatives about his Council's work.

Ms. TAULI-CORPUZ (Chairperson of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues) said that, at a time when the Human Rights Council was adjusting its working methods, it was a good moment to consider in depth the question of the relations between the two major councils of the United Nations.

Mr. HOOGEVEEN (Chairperson of the Bureau of the United Nations Forum on Forests) said that improved coordination was required not only within the United Nations system but also at the national level, given that in the forestry field as many as 10 international organizations might be working in the same area. It might be an idea for the Council or some other body to state clearly which organization should have the lead role in certain areas so as to avoid overlap in mandates and implementation. With regard to the question posed by the representative of Congo, while it was impossible to intervene in situations of armed conflict, related areas on which the Commission would like to work were the creation of enabling environments for reforestation and for involvement and investment by local communities and forest owners, with particular reference to policymaking and improved market access.

Mr. ALJOWAILY (Egypt), speaking on behalf of the Chairperson of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, noted that in the case of his Commission cross-fertilization had gone beyond the functional commissions to encompass its

organic relationship with UNCTAD. The role played by UNCTAD as the technical secretariat of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development could serve as a model for a productive pooling of efforts and resources.

Mr. DE CEGLIE (Chairman of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice) welcomed the recognition by the Council of the link between the rule of law and the fight against crime and corruption and the promotion of development.

Ms. GALLARDO HERNANDEZ (Chairperson of the Commission on the Status of Women) said that the rights of families in time of conflict, particularly those of women, were a permanent concern of the Commission. It was in constant contact with the Security Council, with particular reference to the situation of women and children in circumstances of armed conflict. The Commission had made recommendations on the question in 2003 and their implementation at the national level would be assessed in 2008. The Commission had also established relations with the newly created Peacebuilding Commission, women playing an essential role in the process of post-conflict reconciliation.

Mr. DANESH-YAZDI (Chairperson of the Commission for Social Development), responding to a question from the representative of Guinea, said that the Commission for Social Development was cooperating closely with ILO on the topic of full employment and decent work for all and was also working with ILO and the World Bank on the projected Youth Employment Network. It was to extend an invitation to the Director-General of ILO to attend the Commission's next meeting.

Mr. GASS (Vice-President of the Commission on Population and Development), speaking on behalf of the Chairman of the Commission, said that the problem of census taking was bound up with that of the resources necessary to carry out the 10-yearly operation and the difficulty of marshalling the human resources required to analyse their results and to disseminate them nationally and internationally. With regard to the question of coherence as it concerned the work of the functional commissions, the bureaux of the commissions interacted regularly in the planning of future work and the Council itself approved the provisional agenda of each of the commissions, thereby offering an opportunity to resolve questions of overlap.

Mr. MACEDO (Mexico), speaking on behalf of the Chairman of the Statistical Commission, underlined the importance of quality statistics for development efforts and hoped that the Council would adopt the resolution approved unanimously by the Commission, containing measures for strengthening the capacity for compiling statistics.

Mr. CIVILI (Assistant-Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Inter-Agency Affairs), expressing satisfaction at the interest shown by participants in the theme of the meeting, said that the reform effort gave content to the Council's dialogue and coordination functions in relation to the Millennium Development Goals and the follow-up to other United Nations conferences. Whereas coordination in a vacuum had its limitations, coordination against targets agreed by the international community had a much greater chance of success and of making interaction with the functional commissions truly meaningful. He was grateful also to the representatives of the functional commissions for highlighting the interrelations between their mandates and their convergent contributions to the overall development agenda.

The meeting rose at 6.10 p.m.