



# Economic and Social Council

Provisional  
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## Substantive session of 2012

High-level segment

### Provisional summary record of the 22nd meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 9 July 2012, at 3 p.m.

*Chair:* Mr. Koterec. . . . . (Slovakia)

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*The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.*

**Theme: Accountability, transparency and sustainable development: Turning challenges into opportunities**  
(continued)

*Address by the Secretary-General*

1. **The Secretary-General** said that the issue of corruption and accountability had been very much on his mind in Tokyo, where he had recently attended the latest in an important series of conferences on Afghanistan. He was encouraged to note that Member States had pledged a further \$16 billion over the coming three to four years for Afghanistan's development and welcomed the adoption, on 8 July 2012, of the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework, which should reassure Afghans and donors that the commitments they had made to each other would be monitored and honoured. Afghanistan faced many challenges, including corruption, which hampered the ability of nations to prosper and to grow. However, corruption was not confined to Afghanistan; it occurred in every country and every region and it was the people with the least power who bore the greatest cost as they were forced to pay bribes for services that should be their right, such as delivery of a driver's license or health care, fair treatment by the police or a fair hearing before an impartial court. Corruption fed criminality, impaired economies, weakened democracy and fuelled public distrust.

2. He therefore welcomed the Council's discussion, which went to the heart of the ideals and goals of the international community. Peace, development and human rights could not flourish in an atmosphere of corruption, which had a particularly profound impact on societies where the rule of law was fragile and institutions were weak and had a direct impact on development. In 2011, corruption had prevented 30 per cent of all development assistance from reaching its final destination, translating into bridges, hospitals and schools that had never been built and people who were living without the benefit of those services. That failure of accountability and transparency should not be allowed to persist. The United Nations Convention against Corruption and its peer review mechanism embodied a strong global consensus to eradicate that disease. By reviewing each other, nations were working towards mutual responsibility. However, they should go further by forging strong links with the private sector, civil society, the education sector, the

media, women and young people in order to build cultures of integrity.

3. The outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), "The future we want", highlighted the insidious damage that corruption inflicted on society. It urged all States that had not yet done so to consider ratifying or acceding to the Convention against Corruption and to begin its implementation. Accountability and transparency between donors and recipients, and between the United Nations system and Member States, were present throughout that document; only through such accountability could sustainable development be achieved. Rio+20 was a step towards a sustainable future, but States must take the next steps and must take them together. If the international community was transparent and accountable for its members' commitments and if it lived up to the promise of Rio+20 and of all previous conferences and declarations, it could build a better world for all. He would do his utmost to make that happen and was prepared to be held accountable for that promise.

4. **Mr. Fedotov** (Executive Director, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime) said that the commitment of the United Nations to combat corruption and promote transparency and accountability was manifest in the Institutional Integrity Initiative of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), which was fully aligned with the Convention against Corruption. Although corruption remained a challenge, attitudes were changing worldwide; citizens no longer accepted "business as usual" and were prepared to take their Governments to task for not instituting anti-corruption policies.

5. Efforts to achieve universal ratification of the Convention must continue. Although corruption was often local in its manifestations, it should be addressed through a global approach based on full implementation of that instrument. He urged all States to participate fully in the Convention's peer review mechanism, which supported anti-corruption initiatives and sent a clear signal that nations could combat corruption together; nothing expressed the multilateral spirit of the United Nations more than that inclusive process.

6. Greater efforts must be made to ensure that every dollar lost to corruption was recovered and returned. The UNODC-World Bank Stolen Asset Recovery

(stAR) Initiative was helping to prevent money-laundering and return badly needed assets to their countries of origin. It must be recognized, however, that States alone could not win that battle; they must work with the private sector, youth, women and civil society to promote a zero-tolerance approach to corruption. Although the debate at the current session of the Council had focused on corruption in the context of sustainable development, it had actually been about people since anti-corruption laws, good business practices, accountability and transparency were merely tools that enabled people to live more sustainable lives.

7. **The President** said that the discussion had highlighted the impact of accountability and transparency on development and the importance of a comprehensive, multidisciplinary approach for their promotion. He urged Member States that had not yet done so to become parties to the Convention against Corruption and to add their voices to the groundswell of countries that were seeking to promote accountability and transparency. They should also embrace the role of other stakeholders in that joint effort and in building public-private partnerships capable of supporting sustainable development. The promotion of accountability and transparency must be a priority at both the national and the international levels.

#### **Theme: Implementing effective macroeconomic policies for employment creation**

8. *A panel discussion on the topic "Implementing effective macroeconomic policies for employment creation", chaired by the Mr. Miloš Koterec (Slovakia), President of the Council, and moderated by Mr. Rico Hizon (Anchorperson, Newsday and Asia Business Report, British Broadcasting Corporation), followed. The moderator introduced the panellists: Mr. Syed A. Samad (Executive Chairman, Board of Investment, Bangladesh); Mr. Ivan Šimonović (Assistant Secretary-General, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights); Mr. Martin Rama (Lead Economist, Development Research Group, World Bank); and Mr. Stephen Pursey (Director, Department of Policy Integration, International Labour Organization). The panellists responded to questions posed by the moderator, the representative of Bangladesh and the observers for the International Public Policy Institute and the International Presentation Association of the Sisters of the*

*Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the moderator made concluding remarks.*

*The meeting was suspended at 5 p.m. and resumed at 5.40 p.m.*

#### **Adoption of the ministerial declaration** (E/2012/L.10)

9. **The President** invited the Council to consider the draft ministerial declaration of the 2012 high-level segment entitled "Promoting productive, employment and decent work to eradicate poverty in the context of inclusive, sustainable and equitable growth at all levels for achieving the Millennium Development Goals" (E/2012/L.10).

10. **Mr. Berger** (Germany), **Mr. León González** (Cuba), **Ms. Nordström** (Finland), **Mr. van der Vliet** (Netherlands), **Mr. Manjeev Singh Puri** (India), **Mr. Ovalles-Santos** (Observer for the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China) and **Ms. Kabaki** (Observer for the United Republic of Tanzania) said that they needed more time to consider the draft text submitted by the President.

11. **Mr. Morrill** (Canada) said that as the draft ministerial declaration appeared to reflect the text that had been agreed upon in informal consultations, he saw no reason to delay its adoption.

*The meeting was suspended at 5.55 p.m.*