

**Statement by H.E. Ms. Sylvie Lucas,
Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Luxembourg to the United Nations,
President of the Economic and Social Council
at the Parliamentary Hearing on
“The Way Forward: Building political support and implementing effective responses to the
global economic crisis”**

New York, 19 November 2009

Honorable Members of Parliament,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my honour and pleasure to participate in today's Parliamentary Hearing on the “The Way Forward: Building political support and implementing effective responses to the global economic crisis”, organized jointly by the IPU and the United Nations. The theme of our panel, “Overview of the international response to the crisis”, is directly relevant to the ongoing work of the Economic and Social Council, the principal organ of the United Nations responsible for economic and social issues and the coordination and implementation of the United Nations development agenda. In my capacity as President of ECOSOC, I would therefore like to share with you some of the Council activities in response to the global financial and economic crisis and its impact on development.

The crisis has affected almost every country, with the most vulnerable hit the hardest. It has jeopardized progress in achieving the Millennium Development Goals and led to severe development impacts that pushed millions more into poverty. To safeguard the UN development agenda from the potentially catastrophic impacts of the crisis, coordinated and collaborative action is needed at the global, regional and national levels.

There are currently three major fora within ECOSOC that promote this type of global partnership for development: (1) the Special high-level meeting of the Council with the Bretton Woods institutions, the World Trade Organization and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development; (2) the Annual Ministerial Review (AMR); and (3) the Development Cooperation Forum (DCF).

This year's so-called "Spring meeting" with the BWIs, WTO and UNCTAD provided a unique opportunity for the Council to have an inclusive and multi-stakeholder dialogue on the impact of the world financial and economic crisis on development, including on issues related to the international financial architecture and global economic governance. The event underscored the urgency for a coherent and coordinated response to the crisis and emphasized the need to address its human impact if we are to prevent this multidimensional crisis from becoming a large-scale human tragedy. It also addressed the issue of strengthening the financing for development follow-up and ensuring that the policy commitments we all made in the Monterrey Consensus and in the Doha Declaration on Financing for Development are implemented. Even when this crisis is overcome, we will still be left with immense development challenges, including the target of achieving the goals set in the Millennium Declaration. The summary of the discussions served as an input to the preparation of the International Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and Its Impact on Development held in June this year. In the run-up to the Spring meeting several informal briefings and panels were organized so as to bring the perspectives on the global financial crisis and its impact on development on the part of institutional and other stakeholders, including civil society, to the attention of Member States, the convening power and the inclusiveness of the Economic and Social Council being undoubtedly one of its main strength.

Mandated by the Heads of State and Government at the 2005 World Summit, the Annual Ministerial Review of ECOSOC main purposes are to assess progress made towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and the other goals and targets agreed to at the major UN conferences and summits held since 1990, and to contribute to scaling-up and accelerating action to realize that development agenda, by serving as a global high-level forum with broad-based participation, where lessons learned can be exchanged and successful practices

and approaches that merit scaling-up can be identified. The 2009 Annual Ministerial Review helped ensure that the international community remained focused on the crucial issue of implementing the internationally agreed development goals, and in particular the Millennium Development Goals, amidst the fallout of the crisis. The meeting gave major political impetus to the implementation of the global public health goals, the focus of this year's Annual Ministerial Review, on the road to the 2010 high-level event on the MDGs. Preparations have already begun for the next Annual Ministerial Review, which will focus on gender equality and empowerment of women, a field that received renewed emphasis in the 2008 Doha Declaration on Financing for Development.

The 2005 World Summit also mandated ECOSOC to convene a biennial high-level Development Cooperation Forum to review *inter alia* trends in international development cooperation, including strategies, policies and financing and to promote greater coherence among the development activities of different development partners. The preparations for the second Development Cooperation Forum are well underway and will place a particular focus on mutual accountability in development cooperation, South-South and triangular cooperation, as well as coherence in the way aid is managed to promote other forms of financing for development. In this context I would like to mention the high-level symposium on "Accountable and transparent development cooperation: towards a more inclusive framework", hosted last week by the Government of Austria, and which was the first of a number of regional meeting and symposia that aim to ensure thorough and broad-based preparations and keep development cooperation high on the agenda during these difficult economic times.

The Doha Declaration on Financing for Development and the Outcome of the International Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and Its Impact on Development have entrusted ECOSOC with further important mandates.

The Doha Declaration thus called on the Council to work towards a strengthened and more effective intergovernmental inclusive process to carry out the financing for development follow-up. The response of the Council to this request which is closely linked to the question of an effective response to the crisis was swift and constructive. At its Substantive session last July,

ECOSOC recommended a number of changes in the modalities for the financing for development follow-up process, which are currently before the General Assembly for approval; changes aiming at setting in place a real process, spanning over the year and from one year to the next one, giving the Financing for Development agenda the higher profile and visibility that it rightfully deserves, while maintaining its integrated approach and its open, inclusive, multi-stakeholder nature.

The Doha Declaration and the outcome of the Crisis Conference also requested ECOSOC to examine the strengthening of institutional arrangements to further promote international cooperation in tax matters. The Council has taken up this issue and will continue to do so in the context of its review of the important work undertaken by the UN Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters.

Another mandate entrusted to ECOSOC by the Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and its Impact on Development, held in June, is pertaining to the ILO Initiative called “Recovering from the crisis : A Global Jobs Pact”. I invited Dr. Somavia to present this important initiative adopted by the 98th International Labour Conference to the Council on the opening day of its Substantive session in July. The Council welcomed the adoption of the “Global Jobs Pact” and encouraged Member States to promote and make full use of it.

In addition, the Outcome document of the June Conference contains three other important mandates for ECOSOC, as follows:

- (1) to promote a coordinated response of the United Nations development system to the world financial and economic crisis;
- (2) to review the implementation of the agreements between the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions, with a view to enhancing collaboration and cooperation between them; and
- (3) to make recommendations to the General Assembly regarding the possible establishment of an ad hoc panel of experts on the world economic and financial crisis and its impact on development.

Based on the Secretariat background reports, the Council has initiated informal consultations on each of these issues. There will be further substantive discussions with a view to taking first concrete steps at a resumed session of ECOSOC towards the end of this year and I hope that we will be able to make recommendations to the General Assembly in a not too distant future.

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am confident that the present event will provide an important contribution to building political support for the work of ECOSOC in addressing the challenges of the current crisis and its impact on development.

I would like to ensure you that ECOSOC will continue to play its role in promoting policy coherence and coordination of actions at all levels in response to the current crisis and towards longer-term development goals.

Thank you.