

**Statement by
H.E. Ms. Sylvie Lucas
President of the Economic and Social Council,
Permanent Representative of Luxembourg to the United Nations**

**CONCLUSION OF THE 2009 PRESIDENCY OF THE
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL**

Ms. Deputy Secretary-General,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It has been an honour and a privilege for me to preside over the Economic and Social Council during the past year.

I wish to express my heartfelt gratitude to the other members of the outgoing Bureau for their dedication and hard work, Ambassador Carmen Maria Gallardo Hernandez from El Salvador, Ambassador Tiina Intelmann from Estonia, Ambassador Somduth Soborun from Mauritius and Ambassador Hamidon Ali of Malaysia. I wish also to thank once more all the relevant services of the Secretariat for their unwavering support during my term as President.

As we are moving on to a new presidency, allow me to briefly highlight the main outcomes of the Council's work over the past year and to mention some of the challenges that remain.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Council's work during 2009 should be viewed in the context of the severe global crises – food, energy, financial and economic – that wreaked havoc on the world economy. As a consequence, progress towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) has been slowed and the adverse impacts could be long-lasting.

The Council endeavoured to respond appropriately and effectively to the challenges of the crises. The Special High-level Meeting of ECOSOC with the Bretton Woods institutions, WTO and UNCTAD, held last April, brought together the concerned international parties and offered a first opportunity to have an inclusive exchange of views on the global financial and economic crisis. It highlighted the need to address the crisis in a coherent and coordinated manner and the urgency to deal with its human impact in order to prevent the crisis from becoming a large-scale human tragedy.

The summary record of the discussions was used in the preparation of the draft outcome document of the International Conference on the World Economic and Financial Crisis and Its Impact on Development, held in New York, in June. In recognition of the coordinating role of the Council, the International Conference entrusted several mandates, including the promotion and enhancement of a coordinated response of the United Nations development system to the crises; the strengthening of the collaboration and cooperation between the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions and the possible establishment of an ad hoc panel of experts on the world economic and financial crisis and its impact on development, to the Council.

As mandated by decision 2009/258, I presented on 15 December 2009, during the Council's resumed substantive session, an oral summary on the follow-up given to paragraph 56 of the Outcome of the Conference on the World Economic and Financial Crisis and Its Impact on Development. This oral report has in the meantime also been issued as an official document and is contained in document E/2009/119. As indicated in December, while further consultations are certainly needed on some of the mandates, I believe we have managed to lay the groundwork for their full implementation.

Other mandates, as the one on a strengthened and more effective intergovernmental inclusive process to carry out the financing for development follow-up, have been duly fulfilled. The General Assembly thus recently endorsed the recommendations submitted by ECOSOC in this regard. The challenge now lies in implementing these recommendations fully and effectively and in ensuring that the financing for development follow-up is given due attention and consideration. The organisation of the Special High-level Meeting of ECOSOC with the Bretton Woods

institutions, WTO and UNCTAD constitutes an important first opportunity in this regard.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I believe it can be said that in 2009, the Annual Ministerial Review gave major political impetus to the agenda of the global public health. It assisted in placing the issue of health at the center of the development agenda and galvanized political attention to implementation of health-related development goals. The Ministerial Declaration underlined the importance of multi-sectoral and integrated people-centered and results oriented approaches, as well as the strong link that exists between the health related MDGs and poverty eradication in general.

It opens new opportunities for collaborative actions, partnerships and the engagement of new and diverse stakeholders by promoting consensus on a variety of issues ranging from non-communicable and communicable diseases, neglected tropical diseases, health systems and health literacy and setting concrete measures including financing mechanisms, to advance the realization of the global public health goals.

The national voluntary presentations by Bolivia, China, Jamaica, Japan, Mali, Sri Lanka and Sudan demonstrated the value of ECOSOC serving as a platform to engage the global community in exchanging critical lessons learned in the implementation of the MDG's. It also offered valuable support to the national efforts being undertaken. The growing interest for this unique platform of the Council is reflected by the fact that 14 countries have already volunteered for this year's session.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The strengthening of humanitarian coordination, the roles of the United Nations Emergency Relief Coordinator, Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator in this context; the implementation of the guidance on the United Nations' operational activities; the necessary deepening of the system-wide coherence process, including on governance and funding of UN operational activities, were other important issues reviewed by the Council during the last months.

The Council did not lose sight either of the global dynamics of development cooperation. The Development Cooperation Forum is increasingly recognized as the central forum within the UN system for holistic consideration of development cooperation issues. In this context, I would like to mention the high-level symposium on “Accountable and transparent development cooperation: towards a more inclusive framework”, held on 12 and 13 November, 2009, in Vienna. This symposium laid the foundation for the global dialogue on this important issue for the Development Cooperation Forum to be held in June this year.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased that the efforts to strengthen the interaction and the institutional links between the Council and the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) are starting to bear fruit. The Chairman of the Organizational Committee of the PBC thus participated in several panels of the Council, including during its Substantive Session, and on 29 October, the Council and the PBC held its first joint event, in partnership with the World Food Programme, to consider the Impact of the Food and Economic Crises in Post-Conflict Countries.

I strongly hope that this relationship will be further strengthened in the years ahead, as the Council has undoubtedly a role to play in peacebuilding and post-conflict development. Perhaps the institutional links and the cooperation between both bodies could also be considered in the context of the Review of the Peacebuilding Commission which is to be conducted this year, taking into account the call by the Council for enhanced engagement with the PBC, including with its country-specific formations.

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

During 2009, the Council has strived to effectively fulfil its role as an intergovernmental, multi-stakeholder mechanism for addressing emerging challenges and advancing the implementation of the development agenda.

Important challenges undoubtedly remain.

I call on the Council to continuously strengthen its mechanisms, to use its full potential to mobilize action, to establish synergies and to generate momentum for the realization of the development agenda and the Millennium Development Goals as well as the great vision that they embody.

I thank you for your attention.