

**Statement by Ambassador Siv, U.S. Representative to the Economic and Social Council: Special Event on Avian Influenza
November 3, 2005**

Thank you Mr President for hosting this meeting on the very urgent issue of preparing for the possibility of an influenza pandemic. As we have just heard from the panel, affected countries must ensure rapid and timely responses to all outbreaks of pandemic potential, particularly if we were to contain the virus at its source. Non-affected states must increase their understanding of the threat and prepare for it.

The United States is determined to deal with public health threats such as this one, in close collaboration with other countries and relevant international organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and private sector partners. If unchallenged, a human influenza pandemic arising from H5N1 avian flu would become a clear and present danger across health, economic, social, and political sectors.

On November 1, President Bush released the United States National Strategy for Pandemic Influenza. It can be found at www.pandemicflu.gov. This strategy will guide my government in finalizing its pandemic preparedness. We urge all countries to put national plans in place immediately and to coordinate closely with their neighbors.

President Bush is seeking \$251 million from Congress as part of the our contribution to the international effort to combat avian and pandemic influenza. Last May, the United States made available an emergency \$25 million fund to prevent and control the spread of avian flu in affected countries. Over the past year, we have also provided \$5.5 million in technical assistance and grants to affected areas in Southeast Asia and to the World Health Organization (WHO) for influenza pandemic preparedness.

In his address to the General Assembly on September 14, 2005, President Bush spoke to the dangers of avian influenza, and launched the International Partnership on Avian and Pandemic Influenza (IPAPI). He asked affected countries “to immediately share

