

ECOSOC News

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Newsletter on the work of the United Nations Economic and Social Council

The [54-member Economic and Social Council](#) serves as the central forum for discussing international economic and social issues, and for formulating policy recommendations addressed to Member States and to the United Nations. Its makes or initiates studies and reports; makes recommendations on international economic, social, cultural, educational, health and related matters; and promotes respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms. Subsidiary bodies, commissions and committees of ECOSOC carry out its year-round work. ECOSOC strengthens cooperation within the United Nations system, coordinates the work of the specialized agencies and consults with non-governmental organizations. A substantive session of the Council is convened annually in July, and supplementary formal meetings as well as informal panels on topical issues are held throughout the year.

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The Members of the Bureau of ECOSOC as elected on 17 January 2007

President of ECOSOC:

H. E. Ambassador Dalius Cekuolis (Lithuania)

Vice-Presidents of ECOSOC:

H. E. Ambassador Youcef Yousfi (Algeria)

H. E. Ambassador Léo Mèrorès (Haïti)

H. E. Ambassador Hjálmar W. Hannesson (Iceland)

H. E. Ambassador Lauro L. Baja, Jr. (Philippines)



UN Photo/Eskinder Debebe

2007 ECOSOC Organizational Session:
[H.E. Mr. Dalius Cekuolis](#) (Fourth from left), President of ECOSOC for 2007, delivers his opening statement, 17 January 2007-ECOSOC Chamber

A - ECOSOC

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New Economic and Social Council President Dalius Cekuolis of Lithuania takes office with four Vice-Presidents, 17 January 2007



The Members of the ECOSOC Bureau as of 17 January 2007 (From left to right)

Vice-President of ECOSOC:
H. E. Ambassador Hjalmar W. Hannesson (Iceland)

Vice-President of ECOSOC:
H. E. Ambassador Youssef Yousfi (Algeria)

President of ECOSOC:
H. E. Ambassador Dalius Cekuolis (Lithuania)

Vice-President of ECOSOC:
H. E. Ambassador Lauro L. Baja, Jr. (Philippines)

Vice-President of ECOSOC:
H. E. Ambassador Léo Mérorès (Haiti)

UN Photo/Mark Garten

[H.E. Mr. Dalius Cekuolis](#) of Lithuania was elected 63rd President of the United Nations Economic and Social Council on 17 January 2007. The other members of the bureau include the Permanent Representatives of Algeria, Haiti, Iceland and the Philippines representing their respective regional groups. The new bureau of ECOSOC will oversee the launch of its new functions as agreed by the 2005 World Summit and endorsed by the General Assembly in November 2006 ([A/RES/61/16](#)). These functions will include, among others, the holding of Annual Ministerial Reviews (AMR) and a biennial Development Cooperation Forum (DCF) which will be launched during the High-level Segment of the Council's substantive session, to be held in Geneva in July 2007.

During the meeting, Mr. Ban Ki-moon delivered his [first address](#) to the Council as Secretary-General of the United Nations. Mr. Ki-moon highlighted his vision for ECOSOC and stressed that the "Council is on the cusp of renewal. The opportunity to revitalize its original vision is within reach. I hope that new leadership at both the Secretariat and the Council can work together to seize this moment, and

advance our common development goals."

Ambassador Cekuolis, in his [opening remarks](#) to the Council reiterated that the "spirit of cooperation for achieving the development goals is very well captured in the global partnership for development. I believe that the Economic and Social Council has an instrumental role in making this partnership work effectively and efficiently".

The new President of ECOSOC, H.E. Mr. Dalius Cekuolis also participated at a United Nations [press briefing](#) on 18 January 2007. Ambassador Cekuolis spoke about his plans for carrying out reform of ECOSOC, especially to track and promote progress on the Millennium Development Goals and other UN-development objectives.

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Resumed Substantive session of 2006 and Organizational session of 2007

The Council took several decisions on the organization of its substantive session for

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In recent statements, the President of ECOSOC, Ambassador Dalius Cekuolis, before the General Assembly and the Security Council has emphasized the economic and social aspects of peacebuilding in the debate on the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) and on security

sector reform (SSR).

In his statement on 31 January 2007 at the open debate of the Security Council on the Peacebuilding Commission, the President stressed the strong correlation between low levels of development and violent conflict,

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noting that nine out of ten countries with lowest human development indicators have experienced conflict at some point or other since 1990. Because of the linkage between development, peace and security, Ambassador Cekuolis

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The committee reaffirmed its support to the

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reach the goals set in “Agenda 21” and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation in relation to the four thematic issues.

Beginning four years ago, the Commission agreed on a multi-year program consisting of different thematic clusters of issues in two-year cycles. The first cycle was from 2004-2005, addressing water, sanitation and human settlements. The next cycle (2008-2009) will address agriculture, rural development, land, drought, desertification and Africa.

The draft document called on Governments and the United Nations to work with major groups and stakeholders to take action on the four thematic issues of the current cycle. In regard to energy, it states that fossil-fuels will remain prominent sources of energy for many decades to come; however, renewable energy should be researched and expanded, giving access to the poor. Industrial development was

deemed crucial for sustainable economic growth, eradication of poverty and employment creation; thus, the draft document recommended more sustainable practices of production and consumption. Under air pollution, the draft recommended 33 policy options, stating that air pollution should be addressed at the national, regional and international levels. Climate change was address by the intergovernmental preparatory meeting with the understanding that the work of the CSD is meant to complement, but not duplicate, the work of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. Twenty-eight policy options were suggested, focusing on cleaner practices and more research and funding. A final section suggested follow-up and review of implementation of CSD decisions over the span of one- or two-days during the 2010-2011 and 2014-2015 cycles.

**Statistical Commission
38th Session
27 February-2 March 2007**

At the [38th session](#) of the Statistical Commission, which was held from 27 February to 2 March 2007, more than one hundred thirty representatives from national capitals, most of whom heads of national statistical offices, gathered in New York this year to celebrate the Commission's 60th anniversary. Against the backdrop of the anniversary, the Commission focused on education statistics as its main theme, among other issues.

The Commission made technical recommendations on the 2010 round of national population and housing censuses, and on the revision of the system of national income accounts planned for adoption in 2008; in addition, the Commission discussed development indicators and national statistical capacity-building. This latter theme further built on the Economic and Social Council resolution (2006/6) on strengthening statistical capacity; this resolution provides a fundamental set of criteria to make serious progress in this field.

The Commission also shared information on migration, energy and finance statistics, and held a joint panel discussion with the Commission on the Status of Women on the measurement of elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child.

The Commission adopted its report on 2 March for submission to the 2007 substantive session of ECOSOC at its general segment.

At the 60th anniversary of the Statistical Commission, special commemorative events were held including:

(i) a one-day seminar on 23 February on the evolution of national statistical systems, which included a keynote presentation on Evolution of national statistical systems

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session on 1 March on survey processing and data presentation; and

(iv) a dialogue on statistical development with international agencies on the afternoon of 1 March 2007.

C– Other Events

Friedrich Ebert Foundation Workshop on ECOSOC reform 18 January 2007

On 18 January 2007, the [Friedrich Ebert Foundation](#) New York Office hosted a workshop on ECOSOC reform. The workshop provided a valuable opportunity for Ambassadors and delegates to exchange views in an informal setting on next steps in the ECOSOC Reform.

In its [resolution 61/16](#) on the “Strengthening of the Economic and Social Council”, the General Assembly laid the

groundwork for the new ECOSOC architecture and served as a starting point of the discussion.

The discussion focused on how to ensure efficacy of ECOSOC’s two new functions, the annual ministerial-level substantive review (AMR) and the biennial Development Cooperation Forum (DCF). Delegates also discussed the implications of the two new functions for the overall architecture of the ECOSOC substantive session.

II - Noteworthy and Other Announcements

A - ECOSOC

Economic and Social Council approves themes for 2007 Thematic Discussion and Annual Ministerial Review 2 March 2007

Ø On 2 March 2007, the Economic and Social Council adopted the themes for debate at its High-level Segment of its annual substantive session to be held in Geneva from 2-5 July 2007. As proposed by H.E. Mr. Dalius Cekuolis, President of ECOSOC, the Council decided that its 2007 thematic debate would be devoted to “strengthening efforts at all levels to promote pro-poor sustained economic growth, including through equitable macroeconomic policies”; and that the theme for its Annual Ministerial Review would be “strengthening efforts to eradicate poverty and hunger, including through the global partnership for development”.

Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review-TCPR

Ø The Office of ECOSOC Support and Coordination (OESC) is currently preparing for the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review (TCPR) of UN system operational activities for development. The 2007 TCPR will evaluate to what extent and in what ways the UN development system provides efficient and effective support to developing countries to realize their national development strategies and achieve the internationally agreed development goals (IADGs). As part of the preparatory efforts, a series of country case studies are being conducted in February to gather information from key players engaged in the UN system’s operational activities for development at the field level. These country case studies will reinforce the 10 thematic analytical studies that are being conducted on issues concerning effectiveness and coherence of the UN operational activities. A global consultation meeting involving the UN system, Member States and the civil society will be held in Turin, 14-16 March 2007 to validate some findings from the preparatory work. The outcome of all these preparatory activities will feed in the policy debate on TCPR at ECOSOC and the General Assembly at its 62nd session.

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Ø The 2005 World Summit mandated the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) to convene a biennial high-level Development Cooperation Forum (DCF) that would review trends in international development cooperation and promote greater coherence in the development activities of a diverse set of actors. Asserting DCF as an integral part of revitalizing ECOSOC, the General Assembly further decided that the Forum should exert a positive influence on the development system by providing guidance and recommendations on policy options to promote more effective development cooperation. The DCF is to be launched in Geneva in 2007 and held biennially in New York starting in 2008. Preparations for the 2007 and 2008 DCF will start in the Spring.

**Special High-level Meeting of the Economic and Social Council
with the BWIs, WTO and UNCTAD, 10th session
16 April 2007**

Ø The Economic and Social Council will hold its [tenth special high-level meeting](#) with the Bretton Woods Institutions, the World Trade Organization and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development in New York, the day following the spring meetings in Washington of the International Monetary and Financial Committee and the Development Committee.

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Commission on the Status of Women, fifty-first session
27 February-9 March 2007
(Ongoing Event)

Ø The [fifty-first session](#) of the [Commission on the Status of Women \(CSW\)](#) is taking place from 26 February to 9 March 2007 at United Nations Headquarters. In accordance with its multi-year programme of work for 2007-2009, the Commission is considering as its priority theme “The elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child”. In addition, in accordance with Council [resolution 2006/9](#) of 25 July 2006, the Commission is assessing the progress achieved in the implementation of the agreed conclusions from its 48th session on the role of men and boys in achieving gender equality.