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The <u>54-member Economic and Social Council</u> 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.

I - PAST EVENTS

A - ECOSOC

Luxembourg Diplomat Elected Sixty-Fifth President of UN Economic and Social Council, 15 January 2009..p.2

Annual meeting of the Bureau of the Economic and Social Council with the Chairpersons of the functional commissions, 27 January 2009 ..p.2

AMR e-discussion on Global Public Health, 29 January – 26 February 2009..p.2

ECOSOC Special Event: The Contribution of Traditional Medicine to the Realization of International Development Objectives related to Global Public Health, 12 February 2009..p.3

ECOSOC Special Event on Philanthropy and the Global Public Health Agenda, 23 February 2009..p.3

B - ECOSOC Subsidiary Bodies

Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations, 19-28 January 2009..p.4

International Narcotics Control Board, Ninety-Fourth Session, 2-6 February 2009..p.4

Commission for Social Development, Forty-Seventh Session, 4-13 February 2009..p.4

United Nations o 086

I - PAST EVENTS A - ECOSOC Ambassador Sylvie Lucas of Luxembourg was elected 65th President of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) on 15 January 2009, with a call to continue building on ECOSOC's successes and to tackle the challenges at ...Continued on page 3

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Mr. Sha Zukang, Under-Secretary-General ship dialogues and underlined that materna are easily treated and largely preventable. stressed the need for a global initiative, mo	the Global F which feature -moon, Prof. Novartis For President Bil participants of global health States and U and explored nal and girls' for Economic al and child me A number of	Public Health and addresses I Klaus Leisin undation for I Clinton of t of the corpora partnerships nited Nation opportunities health and no and Social A ortality as we participants,	ell as neglected including som	B Febrity Gericand Less, more pic, access well as well as diseased the control of	ruary 20 neral Ba CEO of opment ore than cademic l as Mer entified ess in ma eases. e two lea ical dise he panel	one of the control of
to raise the necessary awareness for maternal and child health. With regard to neglected tropical dis- eases, a number of participants, including the panelists also underlined the need to create a broader net- work with its central focus on Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs).						
	need to impr particularly NGOs. He a sell technolo vance the pu for corporat	ove health noting rural are also encouraged by the least of the least	resident Bill Cetworks in deveas, in collaborate seed private seed oping countrand emphasized philanthropimpact of ever	relopination of the control of the c	ng count with I ompanie nat help import apply	tries, local es to ad- ance their
			n was jointly and Social Af			

П П Π -...Continued from page 4 The Fortieth session of the United Nations Statistical Commission took place from 24-27 February 2009 in New York. The Commission continues its work as the leading body of the global statistical system, especially in the area of developing international standards and methods for official statistics. During the 2009 session, new technical norms in the area of national accounts (System of National Accounts) were before the Commission for formal approval. Furthermore, the Commission focused on an in-depth programme review of the field of official statistics for climate change, which has been prepared, as in past years, by a member-state, namely the Australian Bureau of Statistics. Further key items on the agenda included the development of a framework for agriculture statistics, a review of regional statistical development in Asia and the Pacific and a discussion on the ongoing improvements in compiling MDG indicators. The Commission also conducted a technical review of proposed indicators on 'violence against women'

...Continued on page 6

...Continued from page 5

The Global Preparatory Meeting of ECOSOC, to be held on 31 March 2009, will give a snapshot of the progress on the international health goals, the implications of the world financial crisis on the achievements of the international health goals and health challenges in post conflict situations. A number of panelists have already confirmed their participation. For the morning session, it will include Professor Rosling from the Karolinska Institute who will give an overview of where we stand on the health MDGs and Mr. Cassels, WHO Director of Strategy, for the health and financial crisis panel. For the afternoon session, confirmations include the Minister of Health of Sierra Leone, and the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Haiti, who will both participate in the panel discussion on Health and Conflict. The policy recommendations will serve as input to the report of the Secretary-General for the ECOSOC High-level Segment.

B-ECOSOC Subsidiary Bodies

The <u>fifty-third session of the Commission on the Status of Women</u> will be held in New York from 2 to 13 March 2009. This year the Commission will consider The equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, including care giving in the context of HIV/AIDS as the priority theme. A number of interactive events on the priority theme are planned including a high-level round table on 2 March (3pm); interactive expert panels on key policy initiatives on 3 March (10 am), and on capacity-building on mainstreaming a gender perspective in the development, implementation and evaluation of national policies and programmes (3 pm).

The Commission will consider as the emerging issue. The gender perspectives of the financial crisis, through an interactive expert panel discussion on 5 March (3 pm), and will review the status of implementation of the agreed conclusions on Equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes at all levels, adopted by the Commission in 2006, through an interactive dialogue on 6 March (10.a.m.). An expert panel on Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to global public health: a gender perspective, will be held on 12 March (10 a.m.) to provide input to the ECOSOC Annual Ministerial Review. A large number of parallel events will be organized by UN agencies, funds and programs, Permanent Missions, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

The Committee for Development Policy will hold its eleventh plenary session in New York from 9 to 13 March 2009. A main topic of the Committee's deliberations will be the theme the Council's 2009 Annual Ministerial Review. In particular, the Committee will examine the persisting inequalities in health. The Committee understands that the presence of marked inequalities have significant implications for achieving internationally agreed goals on public health. In the lack of well targeted efforts to provide necessary health care services for worse-off, neglected and disadvantaged groups, achieving a particular *average* target will not necessarily indicate that living conditions *of all* have improved. At the international level, the Committee will examine whether and how new approaches for development cooperation embodied in the global health partnerships (GHPs) -- alliances among public and private entities-- have an impact on health inequalities and will recommend ways in which GHPs and other formats of international aid can help reduce health inequalities.

The Committee will also conduct the 2009 triennial review of the list of Least Developed Countries. The objective of the review is to identify those low-income countries that would be eligible to join, and those LDCs already on the list that would be eligible to graduate from the category. The category comprises low-income developing countries which face severe structural impediments to growth as indicated by high economic vulnerability to external shocks and low level of human capital development. There are currently 49 countries identified as LDCs, including the Maldives and Samoa whose graduation has already been taken note of by the General Assembly.

Other issues on the Committee's agenda include the current financial turmoil and its implications for the developing countries and the sustainable development agenda.

...Continued on page 7

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