

HIGHLIGHTS

- Since November, ECOSOC has focused on improving the situation in the Sahel.
- HLPF preparations started with an intersessional meeting of the Human Rights Council.
- H.E. Ms. Mona Juul, President of ECOSOC, together with the President of the GA launched a new high-level panel on financial accountability, transparency and integrity (FACTI) during a joint briefing on the work of the two charter bodies.
- The Bureau held hearings with the Chairpersons of ECOSOC's Functional Commissions and Expert Bodies.

STRENGTHENING RELATIONS WITH OTHER UN BODIES

UN Human Rights Council Intersessional Meeting

3 December 2019



Inspired by the political declaration of the Sustainable Development Goals Summit, the second intersessional meeting, focused on the theme of the HLPF, took place on 3 December 2019. Emphasis was placed on:

1. Measures to promote empowerment, inclusion and equality in the context of the implementation of the SDGs;
2. The role of the human rights mechanisms in supporting the achievement of SDG goals and targets, as well as the experiences and good practices in this regard;
3. The importance of ensuring adequate space for civil society, business representatives and other stakeholders.

The common thread of the discussion was the vision to “leave no one behind”, which permeates the 2030 Agenda. The outcomes of the meeting will inform the HLPF on how human rights processes and mechanisms contribute to a decade of action and delivery for reaching the SDGs. In her video message, H.E. Ms. Mona Juul, President of ECOSOC, stated that “The fundamental principle of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – to leave no one behind – strikes at the very core of human rights”.

Joint Meeting of ECOSOC and the Peacebuilding Commission

3 December 2019



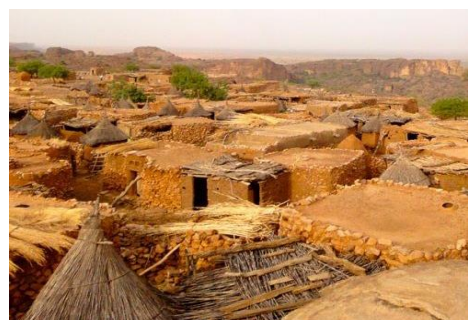
ECOSOC and the Peacebuilding Commission convened a joint Meeting on “The Impact of Cross-border Transhumance on Sustainable Peace and Development in West Africa and the Sahel” on 3 December 2019. The meeting raised awareness of the complex challenges related to transhumance in countries and cross-border areas of West Africa and the Sahel; it showcased successful practical approaches and actions to address transhumance-related challenges; and encouraged

further action-oriented, integrated and sustainable solutions to address further gaps and challenges, as well as accelerate implementation for impact on the ground.

H.E. Ms. Mona Juul, President of ECOSOC, stressed that “To achieve sustainable peace and development in West Africa and the Sahel, we need to discuss how the United Nations can ensure a more integrated, coherent and coordinated response to address the root causes of conflicts”. This event built on previous joint ECOSOC-PBC meetings on the 2030 Agenda and the linkages between climate change and challenges to peacebuilding and sustaining peace in the Sahel.

ECOSOC Adopts Resolution on Better Coordinating Support to Sahel Region

10 December 2019



The Economic and Social Council adopted a resolution on 10 December 2019 aimed at better coordinating support to Africa’s Sahel region. The Council stressed the need for strengthening collective and integrated engagement across the Sahel region in line with existing frameworks and welcomed the strengthened cooperation between the United Nations and African Union. The resolution is a reminder of the region’s severe security, development and humanitarian challenges.

It highlights the importance of the Sustainable Development Goals and the need to provide opportunities for young people, it will help ECOSOC and Member States to make an impact on the lives of the people of the Sahel.

Joint Briefing of the Presidents of the General Assembly and the ECOSOC

January 28th, 2020



The President of the General Assembly and the President of the Council convened a joint briefing to inform Member States on their efforts to enhance synergies and coherence between the work of the two charter bodies. Among the issues highlighted: the alignment of agendas; financing for development and the new high-level panel on financial accountability, transparency and integrity (FACTI); youth; and Least Developed Countries. Additionally, it provided an

opportunity for delegations to exchange on the upcoming work of the GA and ECOSOC.

H.E. Ms. Mona Juul, President of ECOSOC, expressed her commitment to ensuring that the two Charter bodies reinforce each other’s work to support the accelerated implementation of the 2030 Agenda and other international agreements.

Open Meeting of Bureau of ECOSOC with the Chairs of the ECOSOC Functional Commissions and Expert Bodies

January 31st, 2020



The President of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), H.E. Mona Juul (Norway), convened a meeting of ECOSOC with the Chairpersons of ECOSOC's Functional Commissions and Expert Bodies on 31 January. For the first time, the annual meeting, which was traditionally between the ECOSOC Bureau and the Chairpersons, was open to the ECOSOC Member States and the entire membership of the UN. The meeting focused on contributions of the ECOSOC ecosystem to the 2020 theme of ECOSOC and the HLPF, "Accelerated action and transformative pathways: realizing the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development".

The Chairs' interventions also focused on the implementation of the provisions of General Assembly resolution 72/305 on the strengthening of ECOSOC.

Member States engaged in an interactive dialogue with the ECOSOC Bureau and Chairs of ECOSOC subsidiary bodies. Participants stressed the need to better align the work of the subsidiary bodies with the 2030 Agenda. Other key issues raised included the upcoming reviews of HLPF and ECOSOC resolutions, the need to strengthen coherence, synergies and coordination among subsidiary bodies, accountability improving working methods and enhancing and better utilizing the contribution of subsidiary bodies to the HLPF thematic reviews. There was also a strong call for an in-depth follow-up to the meeting and a more sustained and institutionalized interaction between the ECOSOC and its subsidiary bodies. A summary by the ECOSOC President will be prepared and shared with Member States.

STORIES FROM THE FIELD



The SDGs require a whole-of-society approach. Governments need the private sector, civil society and every individual to engage in the collective effort to boost social, economic and environmental gains by 2030. UN Country Teams are well-positioned to build bridges and "connect the dots" for the SDGs.

In, Benin, for example, the UN country team consulted with over 100,000 people via phone during 2019 to focus on the needs of women, youth, people with disabilities, those living with HIV and many who face discrimination due to their sexual orientation, also focusing on most at-risk locations.

The objective was to listen to their needs to assess key challenges. With 80 per cent of Benin's 9.3 million people owning mobile phones, the UN team partnered with a mobile phone company's foundation to create a hotline where people could voice their concerns. The feedback received via the hotline is being used to set up joint United Nations programmes targeting key segments of the population.

One important concern raised was the lack of birth certificates in certain areas of the country. Using a toll-free system, more than 30,000 people have registered newborn children in three regions, through the specialized government agency.

OTHER EVENTS

UNITAR Training on The Work of the Economic and Social Council

23 January 2020



A UNITAR orientation course for Member States on ECOSOC took place on Thursday 23 January 2020. The course, which was co-organized with the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), is a core training activity for UNITAR. It is a good resource for new members of the ECOSOC and other delegations on the role and work of ECOSOC and the HLPF.

H.E. Mr. Munir Akram, Vice-president of ECOSOC, spoke about history of the Council and how it can be strengthened to address emerging challenges within the Decade for Action. The course included modules addressing: 1. the role of ECOSOC and mandates as well as its structures, platforms, segments, procedures and working methods; 2. The HLPF and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda; 3. Oversight and coordination of the UN through the ECOSOC's Operational Activities for Development; 4. Mobilizing financing and technology for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda; 5. ECOSOC's role in peace, development and humanitarian affairs; 6. ECOSOC's role in engaging stakeholders and forging partnerships. Staff members of UNDESA, DGACM and OCHA served as panelists. The course attracted the participation of around 75 members from Permanent Missions in New York. A detailed summary of the course will be posted shortly at [UNITAR's website](#).

The International Day of Education

24 January 2020



The President of ECOSOC, Ambassador Mona Juul, issued a message on the International Day of Education 2020. The message highlighted that:


Education is at the heart of sustainable development. It is the most powerful means to escape poverty. It changes lives, transforms communities and paves the way towards productive, sustainable and resilient societies in which children – girls and boys – can reach their full potential.

Considerable progress has been made worldwide in enrolling children into primary schools, increasing literacy rates and closing the gender gap in education. Yet, too many children today continue to be robbed of the opportunities and benefits of a quality education. Last September, world leaders launched the Decade of Action to accelerate delivery of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17

sustainable development goals. SDG 4, on ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education, is an essential global goal and critical for the realization of the 2030 Agenda as a whole.

Access to education for girls remains highly uneven in many countries.

Priority areas for action include:

-  Invest in education that is inclusive, of good quality and reaches all
-  Adequately fund and support national and local education systems
-  Remove barriers that keep poor, vulnerable and marginalized children out of school
-  Promote greater equity in education, including through resource allocations and access to technology



From H.E. Mona Juul's message on the International Day of Education 2020

ACTIVITIES OF THE ECOSOC ECOSYSTEM

Committee on Non-Governmental Organisations

20-29 January 2020



In this session, the Committee on Non-Governmental Organisations considered 360 new applications by NGOs for consultative status with ECOSOC as well as 272 applications deferred from earlier sessions. The Committee also reviewed 616 quadrennial reports of NGOs in general or special consultative status, as well as reports deferred from earlier sessions. The session's recommendations will be sent to the Economic and Social Council for its approval during the Management Meetings held from 6-7 June 2020.

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES OF THE ECOSOC ECOSYSTEM

Commission for Social Development

10-19 February 2020



The priority theme of the fifty-eighth session of the Commission for Social Development (CSocD58) is “Affordable housing and social protection systems for all to address homelessness”. The Commission is serving as the main UN forum for an intensified global dialogue on social development issues. It is an advisory body of ECOSOC on the social development pillar of global development. In 2020, the United Nations is celebrating the 75th anniversary of the Commission and the 25th anniversary of the World Summit for Social Development (Copenhagen, March 1995). The [“Copenhagen Declaration on Social](#)

[Development and Programme of Action”](#) represented a unique consensus on three key objectives of sustainable development, namely, eradicating poverty, promoting full and productive employment, and fostering social inclusion and set out a holistic approach to achieve them. The year 2020 is crucial for the accelerated implementation of the 2030 Agenda, giving special attention to leaving no one behind and reaching the furthest behind first, promoting inclusive societies and reducing inequalities everywhere for all people of all ages.

Committee for Development Policy (CDP)

24-28 February 2020



The Committee for Development Policy (CDP) will hold its annual plenary meeting on February 24-27. This year the CDP starts preparations for its 2021 Triennial Review of the least developed country (LDC) category and discusses support to graduating and graduated countries. It will also discuss its substantive inputs to the new Programme of Action for LDCs to be adopted during LDC-V. Beyond LDC issues, the CDP will be addressing the ECOSOC and HLPF theme, “Accelerated action and transformative pathways: realizing the decade of action and delivery for

sustainable development” and the analysis undertaken by one of its subgroup on the Voluntary National Reviews carried out at the HLPF.

While the CDP Plenary meetings are closed, an open session will be held on Tuesday, February 25, from 15:00 to 16:30 on “Development Policy and New Inequalities” in Conference Room 6. Additionally, the CDP will give a briefing to delegates on its deliberations on LDC issues, including the comprehensive review of the LDC criteria, support for graduating and graduated countries and its inputs to the new Programme of Action for LDCs. The briefing will take place on Thursday, February 27, from 13:15 to 14:30, also in Conference Room 6.

Statistical Commission

3-6 March 2020



The Statistical Commission will organize its 51st Session on the theme, “2020 Comprehensive Review of the global SDG indicator framework” on 3-6 March 2020. At this session, [thirty-one topics and documents](#) will be reviewed, among them, Data and indicators for the 2030 Agenda; Coordination of statistical programmes; Future of economic statistics; and National accounts. (See [agenda, provisional programme](#)).

Commission on the Status of Women

9-20 March 2020



In 2020, the global community will mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women and adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995). A five-year milestone will be reached towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. 2020 is therefore a pivotal year for the accelerated realization of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, everywhere, with impacts on the SDGs.

The main focus of the session will be on the review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the 23rd special session of the General Assembly. The review will include an assessment of current challenges that affect the implementation of the Platform for Action and the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women and its contribution towards the full realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

DID YOU KNOW THAT ...



ECOSOC Ad Hoc Advisory Group in Haiti

The Economic and Social Council has developed mechanisms to respond to the problems faced by countries emerging from conflict and enhance the peace and development nexus.

- The Council provides advice to Haiti on a long-term development strategy to promote socio-economic recovery and stability through the ad hoc advisory group on Haiti.
- The Council considers South Sudan under its agenda item "African promote coherent and coordinated support to the country by the United Nations system."
- ECOSOC regularly hosts joint meetings with the Peacebuilding Commission. Including most recently, a joint meeting on "The Impact of Cross-border Transhumance on Sustainable Peace and Development in West Africa and the Sahel."

ON THE HORIZON

- The **ECOSOC Youth Forum** will take place on 1-2 April 2020 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. Every year, the ECOSOC Youth Forum provides an opportunity for young people to engage in a dialogue with Member States. This year, it will be held back to back with the Youth Plenary on 31 March. The plenary is convened by the presidents of the GA and ECOSOC to respond to the request by the General Assembly to contribute to the global dialogue on “The future we want, the United Nations we need”.
- The **ECOSOC Partnership Forum** will take place on 3 April 2020. Every year, the Partnership Forum provides the opportunity to listen to the world’s most influential thinkers, business representatives, Member States representatives, and non-state actors.
- The **ECOSOC Forum on Financing for Development follow-up** will take place on 20-23 April 2020. The FfD Forum is an intergovernmental body with universal participation mandated to review the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (Addis Agenda) and other financing for development outcomes and the means of implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



The ECOSOC newsletter is produced by the [Office for Intergovernmental Support and Coordination for Sustainable Development](#) in the [UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs](#).