

ECOSOC Special Event on “The Avian Flu”

Thursday, 3 November 2005

Biographies of Participants

H. E. Ambassador Munir Akram, President of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)

H. E. Ambassador Munir Akram is the Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations in New York since May 21st, 2002. He holds a Master of Arts and Bachelor of Law from Karachi University. He has previously held many diplomatic positions for Pakistan, among others, Ambassador & Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations in Geneva, Switzerland (1995-2002); Additional Foreign Secretary (1992-1995), Ambassador of Pakistan to the European Community, Belgium and Luxembourg (1988-1992), and Director-General (United Nations, Economic Cooperation and Policy Planning), Ministry of Foreign Affairs (1985-1988).

Mr. Jan Eliasson, President of the Sixtieth Session of the General Assembly

H.E. Mr. Jan Eliasson was elected President of the sixtieth session of the United Nations General Assembly on 13 June 2005. At the time, he was Sweden's Ambassador to the United States, a post he held from September 2000 until July 2005. A veteran in the fields of diplomacy and foreign relations, from 1994 to 2000 Mr. Eliasson served as State Secretary for Foreign Affairs, a key position in formulating and implementing Swedish foreign policy. Earlier, from 1988 to 1992, he was Sweden's Ambassador to the United Nations in New York. During this period, he also served as the Secretary-General's Personal Representative on Iran/Iraq and was Chairman of the UN General Assembly's working group on emergency relief (1991), Vice President of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) (1991 to 1992) and Chairman of the UN Trust Fund for South Africa (1988 to 1992). In 1992, Mr. Eliasson was appointed United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs. A recipient of honorary doctorate degrees from the American University, Washington, D.C., Göteborg University, Sweden, and Bethany College, Kansas, he also has been decorated by a number of Governments.

Dr. Margaret Chan, Assistant Director-General, Communicable Diseases, and Representative of Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO) for Pandemic Influenza.

Dr. Margaret Chan is the Assistant Director-General, Communicable Diseases, for the World Health Organization. Dr. Chan obtained her medical degree from the University of Western Ontario in Canada. She joined the Hong Kong Department of Health in 1978, where her career in public health began. In 1994, she was appointed to Director of Health of Hong Kong. She has effectively managed outbreaks of avian influenza and of severe acute respiratory syndrome. In 2003, Dr. Chan became WHO's Director of the Department of Protection of the Human Environment. In June 2005, she was appointed as Director, Communicable Diseases Surveillance and Response as well as Representative of the Director-General for Pandemic Influenza. She was appointed as WHO Assistant Director-General for the Communicable Diseases Cluster in September 2005, and still serves as the Representative of the Director-General for Pandemic Influenza.

Ms. Louise Fresco, Assistant Director-General for Agriculture, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

From February 2000 to present, **Ms. Louise Fresco** has been the Assistant Director-General of FAO (Agriculture Department) and a Corresponding Member of the Spanish Academy of Engineering Sciences, Madrid (since January 2000). She was a Nominated Foreign Member of the Hollandsche Maatschappij van Wetenschappen at Haarlem (Dutch Academy of Sciences) in 2001. From 1997 to January 2000, Ms. Fresco was Director of the Research, Extension and Training Division, which includes Natural Resources, GIS and Remote Sensing, of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, with special responsibility for Climate Change. She holds a personal Chair at the Agricultural University Wageningen (WAU) in International Agriculture. From 1991 to 1997, Ms. Fresco was a Full Professor of Plant production systems with special reference to the (sub) tropics and Chair of the Department of Agronomy from 1993 to 1995. From 1986 to 1991, Ms. Fresco was the Senior Lecturer at the (then) Department of Tropical Crop Science and from 1996-1997 she was Chair of the National Advisory Council for Research on Nature and Environment (RMNO). Ms. Fresco completed her PhD thesis at WAU in 1986 (cum laude). She was in charge of developing a new interdisciplinary research field as well as a new set of courses on tropical land use and was one of the founding members of the newly created Graduate School of Production Ecology at WAU. She was also actively involved in integrated land use planning research in Costa Rica and the Sahel, and was also the overall coordinator of the tropical research programmes of the Agricultural University.

Dr. David Nabarro, Senior United Nations System Coordinator for Avian and Human Influenza

Dr. David Nabarro is the Senior United Nations System Coordinator for Avian and Human Influenza. He is also Principal Adviser in Policies of the WHO Director General. He joined the WHO in 1999 as Project Manager of the “Reduce Malaria” Project, and then became Executive Director in the Office of the Director General in March 2000. He obtained his diploma in Medicine in 1973 then worked for the United Kingdom’s Health National Service. From 1976, he worked during 2 years in East Nepal as Child Health Manager of the district of Dhankuta. He then graduated from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and worked as Regional Director of Meridian Asian Funds of the “Save the Children” Fund. In 1985, he joined The Liverpool School of Medicine as Conference Master with a major in Communitarian International Health in the Ken Newell Department. In 1989, he was Strategic Counselor for health and population in Eastern Africa at the British Overseas Development Organization. He was then appointed Principal Counselor for Health and Population in London for the Overseas Development Administration in 1990 and following that appointment becomes Human Development Director. During his first Press Conference, the new Coordinator insists on the necessity to control Avian Flu in order to prevent a human fever pandemic situation. For Dr. Nabarro, a human flu pandemic situation threat should be taken seriously and if nothing is done its spread will be two times faster than HIV/AIDS.

Mrs. Magareta WALSTRÖHM, Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator

Mrs. Margareta Wahlström recently served in the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) as Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General responsible for relief, reconstruction and development. Prior to that appointment, she had served in the same Mission as Chief of Staff of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. From 2000 to 2002, Mrs. Wahlström worked as an independent consultant on issues related to emergency response and strategic and organizational development. From 1989 to 2000, Mrs. Wahlström worked at the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in Geneva, where her last assignment included provision of operational and strategic direction and leadership in the IFRC response to disasters. Earlier in her career, Mrs. Wahlström worked for non-governmental organizations, as well as in the private sector. She has worked in South-East Asia, Latin America and Africa. Ms. Wahlström, a national of Sweden, has a degree in economic history, social anthropology and political science.