


7 February 2013

Excellency,

I have the pleasure to enclose herewith a letter and its enclosure from H.E. Mr. Jan Grauls, Permanent Representative of Belgium and H.E. Mr. George Wilfred Talbot, Permanent Representative of Guyana, the two Co-Facilitators for the further review of the implementation of resolution 61/16 on the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council, inviting you to an informal meeting on 8 February 2013.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.



Zdravko Ponos
Chef de Cabinet

To All Permanent Representatives and
Permanent Observers to the United Nations
New York



New York, February 6, 2013

Excellencies,

The President of the General Assembly appointed us as Co-Facilitators to assist him in the further review of the implementation of resolution 61/16 on the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council at its sixty-seventh session, as decided by the UN General Assembly (65/285).

For this purpose, a series of informal consultations will be held to enable sufficient consideration and agreement by Member States. After two meetings (19/12; 23/01) on the general objectives and context of the present review, a meeting on relevance (29/01) and on coordination and coherence (01/02), the open-ended Informal meeting, scheduled for Friday, 08 February 2013 at 10am in NLB ECOSOC will focus on the Rio+20 Outcome Document and the post-2015 development agenda.

In order to enrich our discussions we attach herewith some informal food for thought. We would appreciate your delegation's active participation, at the highest possible level, at this meeting and look forward to a productive and lively discussion on *the ECOSOC We Want*.

Please accept, Excellencies, the assurances of our highest consideration

Jan Grauls
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Belgium
to the United Nations

George Wilfred Talbot
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Guyana
to the United Nations

To
All Permanent Representatives
and Permanent Observers

**Food for Thought
'The ECOSOC we want'**

**Part V: Tasking of ECOSOC in the Rio+20 Outcome Document (FWW) and in
the context of the post-2015 Development Agenda
(Friday, 8 February 2013)**

General remarks

The Rio+20 Outcome Document (FWW) contains several direct or indirect references to ECOSOC and to ECOSOC's future role.

Par. 82 and 83 of FWW calls for a strengthening of ECOSOC within its mandate under the Charter, as a principal organ in the integrated and coordinated follow-up of the outcomes of all major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social, environmental and related fields. It recognizes ECOSOC's key role in achieving a balanced integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development. It also refers to the review of the implementation of GA resolution 61/16 on the strengthening of ECOSOC.

ECOSOC's increased systemic role

Par. 93 calls for the mainstreaming of the three dimensions of sustainable development throughout the United Nations system and requests the SG to report to the GA through ECOSOC on the progress made in this regard.

In addition to the follow-up of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, there are within the FWW numerous mandates addressed to ECOSOC's related bodies within the social, economic and environmental fields and regional and expert levels, which also significantly impact the Council's systemic role and functions. The list is not exhaustive:

- Par. 100 enhances the capacities of the United Nations regional commissions and their subregional offices to promote a balanced integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development in their regions and support member states in implementing sustainable development.
- Par. 250 sets in place a framework for global, integrated and scientifically based information on sustainable development and gives the lead to the United Nations regional commissions in collecting and compiling national inputs, with the support of the relevant bodies of the United Nations system.
- Par. 195 reaffirms the vital role of the United Nations Forum on Forests, a subsidiary body of the Council, in addressing forests related issues in a holistic and integrated manner.
- Par. 226 adopts the ten year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production patterns and resolution 67/203 designates ECOSOC as ad-interim body for its follow-up.
- Par. 88 strengthens and upgrades the United Nations Environment Programme as the leading global environmental authority that sets the global environmental agenda; requests UNEP to strengthen its engagement in key United Nations coordination bodies and reaffirms resolution 2997 of 1972

which mandates ECOSOC to receive the reports of the UNEP Governing Council.

- Par. 137 refers to sustainable urban development and calls for the coordinated implementation of the Habitat Agenda, whose follow-up is jointly considered by ECOSOC and the General Assembly in accordance with resolution 56/206.
- Par. 145 calls for the full and effective implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, implemented respectively through CSW and CPD.
- Par. 179 calls for continued and enhanced efforts to assist Small Island Developing States in implementing the Barbados Programme of Action and the Mauritius Strategy, whose follow-up was entrusted to the CSD, and calls on the United Nations system for strengthened support.
- Par. 38 tasks the United Nations Statistical Commission, itself an ECOSOC Expert Body, in consultation with relevant United Nations system entities and other relevant organizations, to launch a programme of work on broader measures of progress to complement gross domestic product in order to better inform policy decisions.
- Par. 252 reaffirms the means of implementation identified in the Monterrey Consensus and the Doha Declaration of Financing for Development.

The HLPF and ECOSOC

Par. 84 decided to establish a HLPF, building on the strengths, experiences, resources and inclusive participation modalities of the Commission on Sustainable Development (which is a subsidiary body of ECOSOC) and subsequently replacing it.

The ECOSOC's role in achieving a balanced integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development signals both a substantive and institutional link between the HLPF and ECOSOC, the nature of which has yet to be determined. Determining this link is necessary to respond to the elements agreed in the Outcome Document, such as the requirement to avoid duplications and overlaps in a cost-effective manner (par. 79 and 84)

Furthermore, another useful aspect of this necessary linkage is that ECOSOC remains the central body for economic and social development (including the DCF) and FWW has indicated the need for coordination and coherence between the follow-up of Conferences (e.g. development of SDGs) and processes that will consider the post-2015 development agenda (par. 249). ECOSOC will likely have a key role for the latter as it is currently the principal body for the follow-up to the MDGs (again par. 82).

As a general remark, it is important to ensure that the work of the HLPF is not duplicated by other functions of a reformed ECOSOC.

Possible lines of action

1. implementation of par. 82 and 83 of FWW : 'achieving a balanced integration of the three SD dimensions' by ECOSOC

Suggested actions:

- the ECOSOC integration session (in May, as suggested) would consolidate in a balanced manner the inputs provided by organizations, commissions, agencies and other actors linked to ECOSOC on the social, economic, environmental and related fields in view of contributing to the integration of the three SD-pillars.
- the integration session would also contribute to a focused (annual theme) and coordinated follow-up of the outcomes of the major UN conferences and summits.
- the overall goal would be to deal with global problems (unemployment, food security, poverty, inequality, biodiversity loss, climate change) through three-dimensional lenses.
- the result of the integration session would feed into the HL session at the end of an ECOSOC cycle.

2. implementation of par. 79 and 84 of FWW : 'avoid duplications and overlaps in a cost-effective manner'

Some questions :

- secretariat arrangements for ECOSOC and the HLPF (one single (flexible) secretariat or separate)?
- one single ECOSOC/HLPF session or separate ECOSOC and HLPF sessions?

These issues are also to be dealt with in the context of the HLPF facilitation

3. implementation of par.249 : coordination and coherence of the post-2015 development agenda

The strengthening of ECOSOC should ensure ECOSOC can build on its current role as a key body for the follow-up of the MDGs in the light of the deliberations on the post-2015 Development Agenda.

The "Development Week" could maintain high-level focus on development challenges and enhance cooperation. It would build on the various sessions through the annual theme and contribute to an integrated and coordinated follow-up and implementation of UN Conferences/Summits and of the post-2015 development agenda.

P.M. relations between HLPF and ECOSOC to be defined

Whatever the place where the HLPF will be located (in- or outside the ECOSOC), arrangements will be necessary in order to avoid duplication.

This issue is also to be dealt with in the context of the HLPF facilitation.