

## **Biographical notes**

**Mr. Juan Somavia** was elected to serve as the ninth Director-General of the ILO by the Governing Body on 23 March 1998. He was re-elected for a third term as Director-General in November 2008. An attorney by profession, Mr. Somavia has had a long and distinguished career in civil and international affairs. Between 1990 and 1999, he was Permanent Representative of Chile to the United Nations in New York and, among other things, was also President of the United Nations Economic and Social Council in 1993/94 and 1998/99. Mr. Somavia began his career as an academic and has also been involved in business, financial and civil society organizations for many years. Among other things, he was coordinator of the Third World Forum, a network of African, Asian, Latin American and Caribbean social actors, and also served as Chairman of the United Nations Committee of Parliamentarians for Global Action.

**Ambassador Laura Thompson** assumed her post as Deputy Director General of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) on 1 September 2009. She was formerly the Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Costa Rica to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva, Switzerland. In this role, Ms. Thompson had leadership responsibility for key governing bodies of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (2007-2009) and the International Organization for Migration (1996-1998), enhancing her understanding of humanitarian assistance issues. Ambassador Thompson has also acted as chair of governing bodies of the United Nations Compensation Commission, the World Intellectual Property Organization and the International Labour Organization.

**Mr. Supachai Panitchpakdi** began his first four-year term as Secretary-General of UNCTAD on 1 September 2005, following his endorsement by the United Nations General Assembly. Earlier he served as Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Commerce of Thailand, in which capacity he successfully coordinated his country's response to the Asian financial crisis of the mid-1990s. He was also the Director-General of the World Trade Organization from September 2002 to August 2005, being the first national from a developing country to head the organization. Mr. Supachai has published a number of books, including *Globalization and Trade in the New Millennium* (published in 2001) and *China and WTO: Changing China, Changing World Trade* (published 2002, co-authored with Mark Clifford).

**Ms. Alicia Bárcena Ibarra** was appointed Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean in 2008. (ECLAC). She had previously served as the as the Under-Secretary-General for Management and, before that, as the Chef de Cabinet to former Secretary-General Kofi Annan. Earlier in her career, Ms. Bárcena Ibarra served as Deputy Executive Secretary of ECLAC, and in this capacity she contributed substantively and increased interagency collaboration to provide a regional

perspective on the Millennium Development Goals and on Financing for Sustainable Development, connecting issues of inequality, poverty, economic development and sustainability with the required fiscal policies needed to address extreme poverty. Previously, she served in the Government of Mexico as the first Vice-Minister of Ecology and as Director-General of the National Institute of Fisheries. Ms. Bárcena Ibarra has published a number of articles on sustainable development, namely on financing, public policies, environment and public participation.

**Mr. Andrew Steer** was appointed Director General for Policy and Research at Department for International Development (DFID) in April 2008. In this capacity he is responsible for overseeing Policy and Research Division, Trade Policy Division, the Chief Economist and Chief Scientist, and Civil Society Unit. Mr. Steer is an executive member of the Management Board and he chairs the Development Committee and Country Planning Review Committee. Prior to joining DFID, Mr. Steer held a number of senior positions with the World Bank, including as the Bank's Director in Vietnam and then Indonesia, as head of Country Risk, and as Chief Author of the World Development Report on "Development and the Environment".