

# CHAPTER V.

## THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

AMUN's Economic and Social Council will consider five topics on its agenda, including reports on the final day from the Commission on Social Development and UNESCO. Representatives can choose to explore these topics in a number of forms: through resolutions, in less formal working groups or commissions, or through the creation of treaty or convention documents.

**PURVIEW OF THIS SIMULATION:** The Economic and Social Council is the principal UN organ responsible for coordinating the economic, social, and related work of the 14 UN specialized agencies, 10 functional commissions and five regional commissions. Along with its coordinating role, ECOSOC is able to gather information, and advise member nations through resolutions on the economic, social, humanitarian and human rights programmes. ECOSOC also coordinates and collaborates with autonomous specialized agencies that work closely with the United Nations. These include multilateral financial and trade institutions, such as the World Bank and the World Trade Organization.

More information is available on-line at: [www.un.org/docs/ecosoc/](http://www.un.org/docs/ecosoc/)

### STATE MEMBERS

Albania	Costa Rica	Italy	Republic of Korea
Angola	Cuba	Japan	Russian Federation
Armenia	Czech Republic	Lithuania	Saudi Arabia
Australia	Dem. Republic of the Congo	Madagascar	South Africa
Austria	Denmark	Mauritania	Spain
Bangladesh	France	Mauritius	Sri Lanka
Belgium	Germany	Mexico	Thailand
Belize	Guinea	Namibia	Tunisia
Benin	Guinea-Bissau	Nigeria	Turkey
Brazil	Guyana	Pakistan	United Arab Emirates
Canada	Haiti	Panama	United Kingdom
Chad	Iceland	Paraguay	United Republic of Tanzania
China	India	Poland	United States of America
Colombia	Indonesia		

### BACKGROUND RESEARCH

#### HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT: COORDINATION SEGMENT: SUSTAINED ECONOMIC GROWTH FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING THE ERADICATION OF POVERTY AND HUNGER

ECOSOC chose its 2006 coordination segment due to the growing recognition that there is a close relationship between economic growth and social development. Economic growth can be an important avenue to realizing social goals in the areas of health, education, and poverty eradication. In the other direction, the development of human capital through many of the same social programs is vital to achieving a sustainable economy. This understanding is the basis for many recent global conferences and programs such as the World Summit for Social Development and the Millennium Summit.

Early efforts to pursue economic growth revealed that higher average income alone did not improve the lives of poor people. In the 1990s, therefore, an effort was made to highlight the social aspects of development, including health and educational attainment. The 1995 World Summit for Social Development, for example, called for an integrated framework of socio-economic strategies to achieve poverty eradication, generation of productive employment, and social integration. Although social development and economic growth may be complementary in the long run, they do have some trade offs in the short run. Social development requires increased expenditures in various social sectors, while an aggressive pursuit of macroeconomic stability would discourage much of this spending.

The Secretary-General recently reported, based on a study of country trends, that countries that were successful in decreasing poverty and achieving high economic growth and development were those that pursued equitable growth and investment in human development. As a result of this study, the Secretary-General recommended that countries adopt comprehensive, coherent and participatory policy approaches to the achievement of sustained economic growth and social development; that policy approaches should be tailored to the needs of each country; and that the international community create an enabling environment through greater policy integration and coherence.

Many actions at the national, international, and United Nations system levels have been suggested to promote poverty and hunger eradication. At the country level, the UN has encouraged countries to develop comprehensive strategies for the integration of economic growth and social development. The international community can encourage national solutions and accountability. Donors may also need to assess their priorities to see whether they are in line with the United Nations development agenda. This might entail the reduction of conditionalities and encouraging the strengthening of country capacity to make and analyze policies. Further research is also needed to better understand the impact of various policy reforms.

Questions to consider from your government's perspective on this issue include:

- Who are the most important players in promoting sustained economic growth?



- What role can and should the UN play?
- Do major donors have policies that are consistent with the UN development agenda? If not, what could be done to encourage them to modify their policies?
- What other initiatives are in place to address poverty eradication and hunger? How can those initiatives be integrated?

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- “World Economic and Social Survey,” *UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs*, [www.un.org/esa/policy/wess/index.html](http://www.un.org/esa/policy/wess/index.html).
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## UN Documents:

A/60/138  
 E/2006/56 – Report of the Secretary-General  
 ECOSOC 2005/42  
 ECOSOC 2005/45  
 ECOSOC 2005/39  
 ECOSOC 2005/221  
 ECOSOC 2005/56 – Report of the Secretary-General  
 ECOSOC 2005/52

## Additional Web Resources:

[www.un.org/docs/ecosoc/meetings/2006/cs2006/Coordination Segment Website](http://www.un.org/docs/ecosoc/meetings/2006/cs2006/Coordination%20Segment%20Website)  
[www.un.org/esa/](http://www.un.org/esa/) - United Nations Economic and Social Development

## COORDINATION, PROGRAMME AND OTHER QUESTIONS: MAINSTREAMING A GENDER PERSPECTIVE INTO ALL POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES IN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

The United Nations Charter asserted the principal of gender equality and has been working to strengthen the rights of women in its policies and programs since its establishment. An early approach to integrate gender into the creation of policies and programmes was known as “women in development.” In the late 1970s, the approach was widely criticized by advocacy organizations for identifying women as a special interest group rather than as an integral part of developing communities. Moreover, this approach failed to address gender inequalities in all areas of the United Nations system. “Gender mainstreaming” the approach formally endorsed at the Third World Conference

on Women in Nairobi in 1985, is a technique for responding to the inequalities between men and women by making gender questions central to institutional activities.

The Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, held in 1995, brought together Governments, international organizations, and civil society to create a global agenda for women’s human rights, gender equality and the empowerment of women. The resulting Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action repeatedly cited gender mainstreaming as a strategy to remedy inequality in the twelve cited areas of concern, which include economics, health, and education. The Platform for Action also proposed a detailed role for the United Nations in meeting the goals set forth by the conference, and stated that “the integration of a gender perspective into all policies and programmes of the United Nations system must rest at the highest levels.”

The United Nations’ working definition for gender mainstreaming was codified as “the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women’s as well as men’s concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality.”

The Commission on the Status of Women conducted a review and appraisal of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action at its forty-ninth session in in 2005. There, the Secretary-General reported on the progress made toward mainstreaming a gender perspective in entities of the United Nations system. The Secretary-General praised the established framework for gender mainstreaming and the progress that had been made since, but noted the that “the gap between policy and practice remains a major constraint.” He went on to stress the importance of inter-agency collaboration, evaluation, and institutional support. The CSW session specifically addressed mainstreaming a gender perspective in post-disaster relief, strongly urging all relevant bodies to take necessary measures, including the development and implementation of gender-sensitive codes of conduct, to protect women and girls from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse and all other forms of violence in the context of natural disasters.

There are several challenges in the pursuit of gender mainstreaming. One of the largest problems has been the lack of reliable information. The collection and dissemination of gender-disaggregated statistics have become major functions of the United Nations in recent years. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs’ 2005 report, *Progress in Statistics*, found that there has been limited progress in the reporting of official national statistics important to the study of gender. It went on to suggest that the lag could in part be attributed to a lack of gender mainstreaming in those countries, and that by applying gender mainstreaming to the production of statistics, the gender perspective of these statistics could be improved. Other challenges facing the United Nations system in mainstreaming a gender perspective include limited accountability measures within the United Nations and a lack of sufficient funding. Several organizations have asked for extended sources of financial resources to allow long-term planning of gender mainstreaming activities.

The commitment to gender mainstreaming impacts all aspects of United Nations operations. The process of gender mainstreaming requires long-term vigilance and evaluation. As the United Nations



moves forward to institutionalize gender mainstreaming, ECOSOC must expand its application, continue to evaluate programs, and reaffirm the importance of gender mainstreaming to Member States.

Questions to consider from your government's perspective on this issue include:

- What recommendations should ECOSOC make to enforce gender mainstreaming in those areas of United Nations operations that have not yet integrated a gender perspective as noted in the Secretary-General's 2004 review?
- What benefits could come from integrating a gender perspective in new areas, including poverty eradication, macroeconomic development, energy, sanitation, infrastructure, rural development, and peace and security?
- What provisions should the UN make to strengthen the collection of gender significant statistics at the national level?
- How should the United Nations assist Member States to meet mainstreaming goals at the national-level? What commitments should be sought from Member States to further integrate gender mainstreaming at the UN and intergovernmental level?

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"UN Report Asks Governments to Improve Data Collection to Better Women's Lives," *UN Wire*, 18 January 2006.

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E/Res/2003/39

E/Res/1997/66

E/CN.6/2005/2

E/CN.6/2005/3

E/2006/27

E/2006/83

E/2005/27

A/Res/S-23/2

A/52/3

A/CONF.177/20/Rev.1 ST/ESA/STAT/SER.K/17

### Additional Web Resources:

[www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/Review/](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/Review/)

[www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/index.html](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/index.html)

[www.un.org/womenwatch/ianwge](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/ianwge) - Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality

[unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/indwm/wwpub.htm](http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/indwm/wwpub.htm)

- Statistics on Women and Men

[www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi) - Office of the Special Advisor on Gender Issues and the Advancement of Women

### ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL REPERCUSSIONS OF THE ISRAELI OCCUPATION ON THE LIVING CONDITIONS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE IN THE OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORY, INCLUDING JERUSALEM, AND THE ARAB POPULATION IN THE OCCUPIED SYRIAN ARAB GOLAN

Territorial conflict has been a constant in the lives of Israelis and Palestinians since the state of Israel was created after the Second World War. In 2005, the Israeli army pulled out of the Gaza Strip. However, Israel continues to occupy the West Bank and the Syrian Arab Golan Heights. The Israeli settlements, and the building of a barrier to encompass these settlements in the West Bank, have been a hardship for many of the people who reside on the affected lands. According to multiple human rights organizations, the Israeli occupation has resulted in the forced removal of people, the destruction of property and crops, the disruption of commutes, and fatalities. Roadblocks and arbitrary restrictions on movement have hampered the Palestinians' daily routines and crippled their economy. In 2003, 37% of the Palestinian people in the West Bank were living in poverty.

The United Nations has generally been unable to effect change in the past. In 1967, the Security Council passed Resolution 242, which required the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the territories it gained from Syria and Egypt. That was followed in 1973 by Resolution 338, which called for a cease fire in the Yom Kippur War. Yet since the passage of Resolutions 242 and 338, the Security Council has rarely taken an active role in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and the situation remains tense. However, the General Assembly has been more vocal in its concern for the people in the occupied territories. In 1988, the General Assembly held a special session in Geneva after the United States refused to grant Yasser Arafat a visa to enter the United States to visit the UN headquarters in New York City. The General Assembly also submitted the question on the legality of the barrier being constructed in the West Bank to the International Court of Justice, which ruled in 2004 that Israel's actions violated international law.

Currently, the Quartet, composed of the United Nations, the European Union, Russia and the United States, is actively involved in negotiations between the Israelis and Palestinians to end the territorial conflict and the resulting hardship of the Palestinian people. The United States, with the support of the other members of the Quartet, put forward The Roadmap for Peace in 2003, which aims to develop a two-state solution. The Security Council officially adopted the Roadmap in 2003.

ECOSOC has also stayed actively involved in the economic and social repercussions of the territorial conflict. In 2005, gravely concerned about the deterioration of the economic and living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, ECOSOC demanded an immediate cessation of all acts of violence, called upon Israel to end the occupation, and reaffirmed the right of the Palestinians to their natural and economic resources. It further stressed that the wall being built by Israel was debilitating to the development of the Palestinian people, and urged Member States to encourage direct investment in the occupied territories.

Additionally, the United Nations General Assembly has recently passed several resolutions to deal with the social and economic situation of the Palestinian people while the Roadmap



is being implemented. This year, the General Assembly commended the work of the Special Committee investigating human rights abuses in the occupied territories, and criticized Israel for continuing to violate human rights. Further, the General Assembly asked Israel to stop the construction of the barrier and halt the growth of Israeli settlements and to abide by the Geneva Convention relating to civilians by lifting its movement restrictions within the occupied territories.

Perhaps more visibly, the Secretary-General has been heavily involved in the pursuit of peace in the Middle East. The Secretary-General has spoken to the Security Council on several occasions regarding the violence in the occupied territories and has distributed reports and notes on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as instructed by the various General Assembly committees and ECOSOC. A 2006 report emphasized that the occupation continues to deepen the economic and social hardship of the Palestinians. It was particularly critical of the Israeli closure system and the Israeli confiscation of Palestinian land and water resources for resettlement.

Although all branches of the United Nations are involved, there is still no perfect solution to the current impasse between the Israelis and Palestinians. Without the support of the United States, the Security Council has been mostly unable or unwilling to act in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. However, both the Security Council and the General Assembly have remained actively seized of the situation and, more importantly, the United Nations continues to play an important role by way of its membership in the Quartet.

Questions to consider from your government's perspective on this issue include:

- Can the United Nations, alone or as a member of the Quartet, play an effective role in bringing about peace in the Middle East?
- Will the end of armed conflict between Israel and Palestine result in marked socio-economic improvement for the people in the occupied territories? Are there any connections between peace and socio-economic development, and what are they?
- Is The Roadmap for Peace the best method of ending conflict in the Middle East? Is this still viable given existing political conditions in the area?
- What intermediate steps can the United Nations urge Israel and the Palestinian Authority to take in order to lessen the violence?
- What does your country think of The Roadmap? What does it think of the prospects for peace in the Middle East?

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### UN Documents:

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 E/Res/2003/59  
 A/Res/60/107  
 A/Res/60/106  
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 S/Res/1515  
 S/Res/338  
 S/Res/242  
 E/2006/13 - Note by the Secretary General  
 A/59/89 - Note by the Secretary-General  
 Security Council Press Release SC/8624 (31 January 2006)  
 Security Council Press Release SC/8596 (20 December 2005)  
 Security Council Press Release SC/8342 (24 March 2005)

### Additional Web Resources:

- [www.hrw.org](http://www.hrw.org) - Human Rights Watch  
[www.ohchr.org/english](http://www.ohchr.org/english) - Office of the UNHCHR  
[www.un.org/unrwa/](http://www.un.org/unrwa/) - United Nations Relief and Works Agency  
[www.globalpolicy.org](http://www.globalpolicy.org) - Global Policy Forum  
[www.btselem.org/english](http://www.btselem.org/english) - B'Tselem

### REPORTS OF THE COMMISSION ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT & THE UN EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC & CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

In addition to the three main topics on ECOSOC's agenda, the Council will also receive reports on the final day from the Commission on Social Development (CSD) and the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). As a functional commission established by ECOSOC, the CSD is required to make annual reports on its activities to the members of ECOSOC. While these reports are generally accepted pro forma, ECOSOC may also choose to take some action on the recommendations contained in the report. The CSD may also present their recommendations in resolution format, allowing ECOSOC the chance to review and formally pass the CSD's proposals.

Similarly, as a specialized agency of the UN system, UNESCO makes annual reports to ECOSOC. This serves both to provide formal details of UNESCO's work, but also to assist in coordination between UNESCO and ECOSOC on shared issue areas. As with the CSD, these reports are usually accepted pro forma, with the option of ECOSOC taking additional action.

To facilitate this process, the final day will culminate in a joint session at which the reports and recommendations will be made to ECOSOC. Following each presentation, it will be up to the joint session to take further action. Please be aware that, as a functional commission of ECOSOC, the CSD has been given significant responsibilities to study, review, debate and decide on recommended actions within specific topical areas that ECOSOC felt should be dealt with in greater detail than could be addressed by the main body. Similarly, UNESCO is a stand-alone organization that coordinates with ECOSOC, but which is not operated under the ECOSOC umbrella. It is recommended that all Representatives assigned to ECOSOC also review the background section on the CSD (Chapter VI) and UNESCO (Chapter VII), and possibly choose to do some additional research into these topics.

