



CHAPTER FIVE

THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (ECOSOC)

MEMBERS OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

ARGENTINA	CHINA	GERMANY	MALAWI	RWANDA
AUSTRALIA	COMOROS	GHANA	MEXICO	SENEGAL
BAHAMAS	CUBA	INDIA	MONGOLIA	SLOVAKIA
BANGLADESH	DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	INDONESIA	NETHERLANDS	SPAIN
BELARUS	ECUADOR	IRAQ	NICARAGUA	SWITZERLAND
BRAZIL	EGYPT	IRELAND	NIGERIA	TURKEY
BULGARIA	EL SALVADOR	ITALY	PAKISTAN	UKRAINE
BURKINA FASO	ETHIOPIA	JAPAN	PHILIPPINES	UNITED KINGDOM
CAMEROON	FINLAND	LATVIA	QATAR	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
CANADA	FRANCE	LESOTHO	REPUBLIC OF KOREA	ZAMBIA
CHILE	GABON	LIBYA	RUSSIAN FEDERATION	

PURVIEW OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

The Economic and Social Council is the principal UN organ responsible for coordinating economic, social and related works of 14 specialized agencies, 10 functional commissions and five regional commissions. ECOSOC accepts reports and recommendations from other UN bodies, including the Commission on Population and Development (CPD) and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). Along with its coordinating role, ECOSOC gathers information and advises Member States on economic, social, humanitarian and human rights programs. ECOSOC also coordinates and collaborates with autonomous specialized agencies that work closely with the United Nations. These organizations include multilateral financial and trade institutions, such as the World Bank and the World Trade Organization.

Website: www.un.org/en/ecosoc/

RECOVERING FROM THE WORLD FINANCIAL AND ECONOMIC CRISIS: A GLOBAL JOBS PACT

As the 2007 financial crisis evolved into a broader global economic and social crisis, the world experienced a collapse in the labor market. In countries around the world unemployment rates and poverty increased dramatically, with young people disproportionately affected. The International Labour Organization (ILO) warned there could be further consequences, including increased social unrest and failure to meet Millennium Development Goal 1 of eradicating extreme poverty and hunger by 2015. A 2009 Report of the Commission of Experts of the President of the United Nations General Assembly on Reforms of the International Monetary and Financial System argued that a global response was needed for a global crisis. With all Member States interdependent in the era of globalization, the action of one Member State or institution directly affects a multitude of other Member States.

Within the United Nations system, the ILO is responsible for addressing labor and employment issues. Founded in 1919, it is the only tripartite agency within the United Nations. The ILO brings

together delegates from 185 Member States representing governments, employers and workers to improve the labor market, promote social justice and develop labor standards. The primary mission of the ILO is to promote labor peace as an essential component of global prosperity. Labor peace is the promotion of social justice and internationally recognized human and labor rights for all; however, this goal has been threatened by the current financial and economic crisis.

In 2008, the ILO unanimously adopted the Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization at the International Labour Conference in Geneva. The Declaration reaffirmed ILO values and objectives in the context of globalization and the financial crisis. Member States pledged to enhance the capacity of the ILO to advance its strategic objectives through the Decent Work Agenda. In addition, the Declaration focused on four main areas: creating jobs, guaranteeing rights at work, extending social protection and promoting social dialogue. Moreover, the Declaration called for support for Member States from the ILO as well as the development of new partnerships with non-State entities and other economic actors.

The ILO held the Summit on the Global Jobs Crisis in 2009. As a result of the Summit, the Global Jobs Pact was unanimously adopted. Similar to the Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization, the Global Jobs Pact was created as a set of policies available for Member States to modify based on their own needs and priorities. The policies within the Pact are job-centered, addressing the social impact of the financial crisis and aiming to ease the impact of the crisis on governments and workers and also accelerate job recovery. Using the Decent Work Agenda as a framework, the Global Jobs Pact is centered on five main objectives: generating employment, extending social protection, respecting labor standards, promoting social dialogue and shaping fair globalization.

The same year, the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) endorsed the Global Jobs Pact. ECOSOC also encouraged Member States, United Nations agencies, and financial institutions to use and promote the Global Jobs Pact based on their national needs and priorities.



Since 2009, ECOSOC has continued to support the Global Jobs Pact. In 2011, ECOSOC expressed its continued global concern about the ongoing crisis and recognized the role of the Global Jobs Pact in the employment recovery process and the need to promote sustained and fair growth to generate employment and eradicate poverty. It also encouraged Member States and United Nations funds and programs to incorporate the Global Jobs Pact in their respective policies and programs. Finally, the Council requested that the Secretary-General prepare a report on the use of the Global Jobs Pact within the United Nations system for the 2012 Annual Ministerial Review (AMR).

The 2012 AMR's theme is "Promoting productive capacity, employment and decent work to eradicate poverty in the context of inclusive, sustainable and equitable economic growth at all levels for achieving the MDGs." ECOSOC will focus on analyzing and assessing current policies, encouraging Member States to launch economy recovery initiatives and develop the engagement of the private and not-for-profit sectors to develop sustainable economic growth.

While some changes have been effective, the 2012 Employment Trend Report from the ILO states that the outlook for job creation is worsening and that there are over 27 million workers without jobs since the crisis began. To prevent further increases in unemployment and to maintain social unity, 600 million new jobs must be created over the next decade. Even with these 600 million new jobs, the report estimates that 900 million workers will still be living in extreme poverty, primarily in developing countries.

While the unanimous adoption of the Global Jobs Pact and subsequent United Nations resolutions shows strong support between Member States to combat the effects of the financial crisis, a great deal of work must be done. In addition to considering how to better implement the Global Jobs Pact, States should also consider what additional steps the UN system can take to promote full employment, particularly for the young people who have been most affected by the crisis. Some States have suggested that a separate Global Youth Employment program is necessary to address the unique needs of young people.

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

- What measures are currently being taken by the international community to promote the use of the Global Jobs Pact and the Decent Work Agenda? Are these measures successful?
- What alternate approaches can ECOSOC take to ensure the success of the Global Job Pact and to promote decent work for all?
- How should the international community approach working together to promote and implement the Global Jobs Pact while simultaneously respecting national sovereignty?

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Global Jobs Pact

Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization

Summit on the Global Jobs Crisis

Promoting productive capacity, employment and decent work to eradicate poverty in the context of inclusive, sustainable and equitable economic growth at all levels for achieving the Millennium Development Goals, Report of the Secretary General (2012 ECOSOC AMR Report)

2012 ECOSOC AMR Ministerial Declaration on the Global Jobs Pact

ADDITIONAL WEB RESOURCES

www.ilo.org – International Labour Organization

www.ilo.org/jobspact – International Organization webpage on the Global Jobs Pact

www.worldbank.org/financialcrisis/ – Financial Crisis Issue Brief from the World Bank

www.un.org/en/ecosoc/amr/index.shtml – ECOSOC Annual Ministerial Review



MAINSTREAMING A GENDER PERSPECTIVE INTO ALL POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES IN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

At the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in 1995, gender mainstreaming was accepted as a strategy for promoting gender equality. Gender mainstreaming refers to the assessment of implications for gender equality approach that the United Nations committed to achieve. In 1997, the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) adopted Agreed Conclusions 1997/2, which supported mainstreaming the gender perspective into all policies and programs in the United Nations system. The agreed conclusions stated that it is imperative to implement and monitor effective and efficient gender related policies and programs, as well as to ensure the full participation of women in the United Nations' work. Additionally, Member States renewed their commitment to continue promoting the policy of gender mainstreaming in all United Nations systems.

Gender mainstreaming is a strategy for encouraging global gender equality. Since 1997, the Assistant Secretary-General and the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and the Advancement of Women have been charged with implantation of the mainstreaming process. The process has been created to be inclusive to men and women in all areas and levels of legislation, policies, programs and projects. The ultimate goal of gender mainstreaming has been to ensure global gender equality.

The General Assembly has reiterated the importance of gender mainstreaming since its twenty-third special session in June 2000. The United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) also emphasize the importance of gender equality. In response to the call for gender mainstreaming, many development organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have adopted gender mainstreaming strategies. At the country level, governments have established agencies to implement gender mainstreaming throughout governmental institutions, operations and policies. Member States have appointed gender specialists and implemented gender-sensitive training programs for all staff. Member States have also implemented accountability offices to assess the progress of the mainstreaming strategy.

In 2004, the Secretary-General reviewed the 1997 ECOSOC report on mainstreaming a gender perspective. The Secretary-General noted that the efforts have been generally effective but that there was still a large gap between policy and practice. Furthermore, the review noted that lack of communication and failure to disseminate information have become the largest faults of the program.

In July 2010, the United Nations General Assembly created the UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women). The creation of UN Women combined several United Nations organs that deal with women into one body: the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW), the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI) and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM).

Most recently, ECOSOC resolution 2011/6 noted the Security-General's critiques and urged Member States to cooperate with different organs of the United Nations to focus their efforts on gender mainstreaming. The Council acknowledged that simply staffing more women in the United Nations system is not sufficient in meeting the goals set out for gender mainstreaming. Finally, the Council called upon UN Women to ensure that its work leads to more effective coordination and coherence to mainstreaming. Additionally, the Council urged UN Women to fully accept its role in leading, coordinating and implementing the accountability of the United Nations system in its work to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women.

After the United Nations launched UN Women, ECOSOC laid out various institutional requirements for gender mainstreaming. ECOSOC is responsible for mandating gender focal points in all areas, including economic, social, human rights, political, peacekeeping and security areas. The responsibilities also included supporting the development of gender-sensitive policies, advising and supporting staff, developing tools and methodologies, collecting and disseminating information, and assisting in monitoring progress made in gender mainstreaming. Although some of the initial confusion and lack of communication has decreased, there still remains a large gap in this organization from the adoption of the strategy to actual implementation of plans for gender mainstreaming initiatives. Member States must intensify efforts to promote the participation of women in decision-making and leadership positions, especially in political and economic areas.

The United Nations continues to act as a role model to the international community in achieving gender parity and having women in decision-making and leadership roles. Gender mainstreaming cannot simply be the creation of separate United Nations bodies to deal with the process of gender equality; it is creating a perspective on the issue and acting upon it. With the recent increase in female peacekeepers, the United Nations looks to other departments to follow that lead and truly start to mainstream a gender perspective, not only in their policies, but by putting women to work in active leadership roles.

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

- How did the role of ECOSOC evolve since adopting the gender mainstreaming agreement in 1997?
- What are the current and future trends and challenges that need to be addressed by the Council?
- What measures and new approaches can be taken by the international community to further develop the strategy of gender mainstreaming?
- What can international organizations and non-governmental organizations do to improve the effectiveness of the mainstreaming efforts?

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ADDITIONAL WEB RESOURCES

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www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/ – Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
www.un.org/millenniumgoals/gender.shtml – Millennium Development Goals, Goal 3