



UN-NGO-IRENE UPDATE

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ECOSOC NGO FORUM

COME JOIN US, TO MEET AND GREET, HEAR AND BE HEARD, TO CREATE EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS

The NGO contribution to the ECOSOC High Level Segment 2006 was facilitated by the NGO Section/DESA in partnership with the International Association of Economic and Social Councils and Similar Institutions (AICESIS), Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations (CONGO) and World Federation of United Nations Associations (WFUNA).

The ECOSOC NGO Forum-Part I was successfully held on 6 April 2006 in New York with participation from over 100 attendees, including representatives of the NGO community, academia, private sector, Member States and representatives of the UN system. Presentations and addresses were made by several participants, a film on the issue under concern was presented by the ILO Office and the Forum concluded with a number of action-oriented recommendations aiming at empowering the various stakeholders in their efforts to create a



favorable environment in support of the 2006 High level Segment of the ECOSOC on the theme; *“Creating an environment at the national and*

international levels conducive to generating full and productive employment and decent work for all, and its impact on sustainable development”.

The Forum was covered by UNTV and broadcast live by web-cast at the following address: <http://www.un.org/webcast/2006.html> under the archive portion for 6 April 2006.

Even though the issue of employment is not illustrated as one of the Millennium Development Goals, it is a cross-cutting issue of each of the

eighteen targets of the Goals. Moreover, employment has become an issue of worldwide concern because it affects countries at all levels of development. In addition, with the increasing integration of the world economy, issues of employment and labor standards have assumed a global dimension as trade and investment flows have come to be of increasingly important influence on domestic employment prospects and policy options. Based on their experience and unique expertise, participants, while recognizing the diversity of conditions between developed and developing countries, examined ways to make employment a central goal of public policy.

The Forum was organized by UN-NGO-IRENE/NGO-Section/UNDESA in cooperation with the Conference of NGOs (CONGO) and the World Federation of UN Associations (WFUNA), representatives of the UN system, NGOs, academia, the private sector and other member states. In addition, several member states of ECOSOC also attended the Forum as observers including



Ambassador Ismael A. Gaspar Martins, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Angola and Ambassador Francis Lorenzo, Permanent Mission of the Dominican Republic to the United Nations. Their presence indicated the importance member states are now attributing to the strengthened contribution of NGOs to the work of ECOSOC and the United Nations at large.

The Forum was moderated by Ms. Hanifa Mezoui, Chief of the NGO Section/UNDESA, who underlined the important contribution of the NGOs in partnership with governments and the United Nations to the achievement of the MDGs. Introductory remarks by H.E. Ambassador Ali Hachani summed up the work accomplished in the two-day meeting preceding the NGO Forum at the Informal Preparatory Meeting of the 2006 High-Level Segment of the Council. He underlined that such a meeting provided a valuable opportunity for members of the Council to engage with representatives of all the major stakeholders.

Among others notable speakers were Mr Djankou Ndjonku, Director, Liaison

Office International Labor Organization (ILO), Mr. Sarbuland Khan, Director, Office for ECOSOC Support and Coordination, UNDESA, Mr. Anwarul Karim Chowdhury Under-Secretary General and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, Mr. Hubert Bouchet, Representative of the Association of Economic and Social Council and Similar Institutions (AICESIS), Mr. Ben Morris, Mayor of Slidell, USA, Ms Jackie Shapiro, Vice President of CONGO



(Conference of NGOs in relationship with the United Nations), Ms. Pera Wells, Director of the New York Office of World Federation of United Nations Associations (WFUNA) Ms. Jemma, International Conference of Free Trade Unions, and Representatives from World Society for the Protection of Animals (WSPA), PDHRE, Hadassah Foundation, FUNGLODE, Observatory for Cultural and Audiovisual Communication (OCCAM), University of Oklahoma, World Family Organization, SUNLAND Traders, Fundacion Alvarice, Droit à l'Energie, Mr. Sylvan Barnett from Rotary International and Mr. Christopher Hansen, Inter-American Institute for cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), FORMIT Foundation and Give them a Hand' Foundation

Recommendations from The Informal Preparatory meeting on the Theme of the 2006 High level Segment held on 4-5 April 2006

Recommendation addressed to the Economic and Social Council:

1. In light of the high level of interest and expertise to be found in the academic community particularly in universities with strong international studies programmes offices and given the possibility for support these universities and colleges might offer as partners in development, the Council should wish to consider increase its outreach to such institutions. In light of the system-wide efforts to engage young people in the Organizations activities, the Council might also wish to consider tapping into another huge

source of potential partners in the education system that could bring support to the MDGs, specifically secondary schools, particularly those interested in girls' education through the appropriate superintendents.

2. Noting that although the UN mandate to promote full employment dates back to the charter there has been a tendency for the international economic organizations to pursue their major goals relegating employment to the side as a possible derivative not a central objective. An example of the extent of the divergent policies was taken from a recent World Bank publication which in direct opposition to the standards decent work agenda promoted practices such as offering incentives to facilitate firing young workers and instituting 60 hour work weeks.

In order to improve policy coherence - The Economic and Social Council was urged to exercise its convening authority to bring the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and World Trade Organization, along with the United Nations and its special agencies with a strong social mandate with a view to ensuring better coherence between macro-economic and social policies that will support the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals.

3. Observing that there had been a tremendous civil society campaign last year to 'make poverty history' and that it was very important to ensure the continuing close engagement of civil society in the focus ECOSOC was now giving to work and employment issues. The Forum participants expressed a hope that ECOSOC could develop the capacity to track the extent to which success in achieving the MDGs led to a direct increase in job opportunities, particularly for young people in developing countries.

Recommendations from the NGO Forum:

Participants welcomed the decision taken at the 2005 world summit to adopt the theme of the 2006 ECOSOC High Level Segment:

1. In so far as the Millennium Project Report is being used as the blueprint for MDG-based Poverty-reduction strategies at national level, the Decent Work Agenda with its four-tier definition (covering employment, rights at work, social protection and social dialogue) should be integrated into its methodology of policy interventions and monitoring around a set of goals, targets and indicators. Currently, we have the 8 MDGs, 18 targets, and 48 indicators for the measurement of

progress in achieving the MDGs.

2. ILO indicators should be used to measure progress on policy implementation of MDG-based poverty reduction strategies. Such indicators should include: Trends in levels of unemployment, underemployment, employment in informal unprotected jobs, employment in jobs below the poverty line with data disaggregated by sex and age. The degree of coverage of social protection in the workforce and in the population at large The level of investment in education and skills training The level of resources devoted labour inspection to ensure observance of workers' rights and health and safety standards The level of resources devoted to employment and income-generating programs The level of ratification of ILO core labour standards The level of public and social security expenditure.

POLICY INTERVENTION BASED ON THE DECENT WORK AGENDA:

The vast majority of the working poor – the 550 million workers earning less than \$1 a day – are to be found in low wage employment in the informal sector. Increasing employment opportunities and productivity of labour for the low income groups in the rural and urban informal sector.

3. Governments, as an urgent target of their economic policies should prioritize employment-intensive approaches to job creation for the working poor, in areas such as:
 - a) Infrastructure, including road construction and maintenance to bring rural produce to markets, affordable housing, and public works schemes. Employment-intensive approaches to job creation have the merit of adopting targeted interventions which deliver
 - b) Jobs and services to the poor. Such schemes will result in income transfers to the poor through job-creation, increased market opportunities for local produce, and improved shelter, thereby contributing to securing decent livelihoods, as well as demand-led growth in the local economy.

4. Infrastructure projects should use appropriate procurement procedures to ensure the targeting of socially responsible local entrepreneurship for the supply of inputs, and the contracting of attendant services within the community. This will both maximize local job creation and create positive linkages between small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and larger firms. Such projects should be coupled with longer-term strategies to stimulate the productive base of local economies and overcome supply-side constraints: lack of skills development and credit for small-scale enterprises.

UPGRADING THE INFORMAL ECONOMY:

5. Low productivity, low skills and the limited options and vulnerability of the socially and economically excluded are the overall characteristics of these workers. Governments should establish training, skills-building and development programmes aimed at moving informal sector actors and activities into the formal economic sector.
6. National Governments must ensure that this particularly deprived population will be able to benefit from the upgrading programme by providing health and sanitation facilities, appropriate education and/or training, necessary legal and institutional frameworks social protection. The ILO has begun consulting with over 40 different countries on strategies to develop social and income security systems adapted to their individual situations, and with a view to providing social protection coverage to workers in the informal economy. Such initiatives are strongly supported as are progressively constructed welfare system that extends the rights and protections of the formal economy to the informal economy; thereby effectively formalizing the informal economy; ii). Guaranteed adequate and equal access to health care, including (HIV/AIDS) recognizing the special health needs of women and youth as well as the elderly and disabled that must be met to enable them to pursue productive employment and l
7. Policy developers should explore adopting best practice from the ILO's work in this area, notably the CBT methodology (Community Based Training). The starting point for these programmes is the identification of community interests, needs and potential market opportunities, and the designing of training programmes and credit support schemes

around them.

8. Training programmes should include both vocational and managerial components, as well as gender dimensions. Capacity-building for community organizing and the exercise of leadership with a view to giving workers a voice in local governance and decision-making on development issues affecting the community, should also be a key component of CBT programmes.
9. Governments should take steps to ensure that the necessary rights based legal and judicial to address: the lack of legal recognition for workers in the informal economy who, oftentimes are not covered by labour legislation and social protection provisions. indigenous forms of property rights that fall outside the national legal frame,; gender-based inequities, basic labour, political and human rights
10. A human rights approach is vital to full employment and specific strategies of human rights learning to empower communities to realize their human rights to full, productive and freely chosen employment. Citizens and migrant workers should learn to live in a society in which they are not instruments of production but rather rights holder. They are both the means and the end of sustainable development. Limiting their role to an instrumental one results in exploitation and denial of the core objective of human development as expanding capabilities for all human beings to lead long and healthy lives, to be knowledgeable and to have a decent standard of living.

Through human rights learning communities equip themselves to evolve strategies for development that ensure an integrated approach to realizing all human rights. It is the deficit in human rights learning that creates a gap between what is professed and what is practiced.

11. Increasing the availability of credit to low-income producers must be a priority for the Decent Work Agenda. Micro-finance Institutions (MFIs) have an important role to play in this regard, and progress has been encouraging. However, much more needs to be done.
12. Tools need to be developed to monitor and mitigate risk and to ensure favourable concessional terms on loans, so that loan repayments are not burdensome, and services could be expanded to a much larger

number of poor people.

- a) A regulatory framework must be put in place to simplify procedures for the establishment and functioning of MFIs serving low-income producers and the poor
- b) Measures must specifically target women entrepreneurs and ensure that they are not excluded from opportunities to obtain credit.

COOPERATIVES

13. National governments should engage all the major actors in social dialogues to design policies and programmes that support and maximize the usefulness of cooperatives. Central to the cooperatives concept is the pooling of community resources for sustainable development: skills, capital, know-how, organizational capacity. They provide an effective model for community-centered, participatory development, empowering local communities to take development into their own hands, and overcome the constraints to achieving sustainable livelihoods. Many successful examples can be found, of producer, consumer and marketing cooperatives, cereal banks (so critical to food security), credit unions, and mutual self-help schemes.
14. National governments particularly those with large populations of rural poor should consider supporting agricultural cooperatives to create employment in areas such as production, marketing, credit, insurance and transportation. Promoting cooperative production might also protect small scale farmers and indigenous communities from being destroyed by large corporations.
15. Cooperatives should also be encouraged to provide more quality job opportunities for youth, women, indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities and other marginalized groups. The ability of cooperatives to integrate women and youth into the workforce is particularly important, as these groups face discrimination and poor opportunities for employment.

WOMEN

16. In many parts of the world women bear the primary responsibility of

caring for the family as heads of households and the sole wage earners. Because of their tremendous responsibilities, as well as innumerable gender-based discriminations, it is women particularly difficult for women to take advantage of opportunities to increase their levels of education and skill. The inability of women to work themselves out of poverty limits the educational and life prospects of their children which lead to inter-generational transmission of poverty”

17. Believing that the Millennium Development Goals are not achievable without a focus on ending the poverty of women, participants urged governments to redouble their efforts to: Ensure that women have equal access to resources, wealth and opportunities Empower impoverished women by including them in the review, revision and creation of governmental anti-poverty policies
18. Educational programmes for women including literacy, job training, life skills and building self confidence should be developed with training programmes designed to take into account the gender dimensions. For example, training sites should be in central locations close to where women live, and the duration of learning sessions takes into account women’s need to combine training with the exercise of family responsibilities.
19. National policies should enable women to obtain affordable housing, have access to land and ensure inheritance rights.
20. Decision makers should encourage gender-based research into the root causes and solutions to poverty, disseminate the results and act on the recommendations

YOUTH

21. Almost half of the unemployed people in the world are young people - a worrisome fact - given that youth make up only 25 percent of the working-age population. Young people are more than three times as likely as adults to be unemployed. Recent waves of unrest among youth in some countries, including in Europe and constant threat faced by countries in or emerging from conflict by their inability to find work of any kind for its unemployed youth constitute a “time bomb” for the international community

22. Beyond facilitating job-entry, national youth employment strategies must focus, as a matter of primary concern on developing the young person's ability to stay on the job and progress towards goals of professional development

INDIGENOUS POPULATIONS

23. Economic and Social Council and the United Nations system as well as state agencies and development institutions are called up on to fully recognize and take into account the indicators of Well-Being for Indigenous Peoples developed by the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues as an alternative to definitions of poverty and development based on the needs of the global economy and the multinational corporation it best serves.
24. We therefore welcome the current efforts of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues to develop Indicators of Well-Being for Indigenous Peoples. We call upon ECOSOC and the UN system, as well as states, agencies and development institutions to fully recognize and take into account the results of this groundbreaking effort as an alternative to definitions of poverty and development based on the needs of the global economy and the multinational corporations it best serves.
25. Migrant and immigrant workers from impoverished and indigenous communities who have emigrated to the industrialized North
26. Member states should grant to immigrant and migrant workers, including irregular immigrants, the same rights afforded to other workers, in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Conventions of the International Labour Organization. Migrant and immigrant workers around the world are rarely afforded the same rights under the law as other workers, which create an incentive for employers to seek out immigrants for hire, particularly those without regular status. Most invariably result in both gender and age-based discrimination in hiring practices. This in turn undermines the legal rights of non-immigrant workers by forcing them into a de facto position of competition with the immigrant workforce.

27. Member states, in particular industrialized nations of the global North (receiving states), should ratify the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families. The treaty cannot provide meaningful benefit to migrant workers and their families until it is ratified by those industrialized states that receive the majority of migrants worldwide.
28. Member states should reduce the root causes of worldwide migration by
 - a) Eliminating discriminatory trade and economic policies in the industrialized North.
 - b) increasing employment opportunities for decent work in the rural countries of the South
29. It is clear that trade liberalization between states of vastly different wealth does not lead towards sustainable development. Furthermore, the rhetoric of trade liberalization and free markets often does not match policy: Agricultural subsidies in the global North continue to disrupt local, agriculture-based economies in poor nations, and trade agreements tend to allow for the free flow of goods, capital, and profits across borders, but not the free flow of people (i.e. labour). The economic desperation resulting directly and indirectly from such economic policies exacerbates the irregular migration that receiving states so regularly criticize.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT

30. Agriculture and land based income extreme poverty continues to be mainly a rural phenomenon. the majority of the world's 1.5 billion poor and food insecure live in rural areas, where they depend on agriculture and land-based productive resources, including forestry and fisheries for their livelihoods. Moreover it is projected that by 2025, 83 percent of the expected global population of 8.5 billion will be living in developing countries, (according to UN Statistics).
31. To eliminate poverty and hunger in a sustainable way it is vital to devote resources and target policies to rural areas, especially for the promotion of rural employment.

32. Policy and institutional support should be designed for the reinforcement of rural institutions and capacity-building, including farmers' and other producers' organizations, cooperatives, micro and medium enterprises, workers' unions, grassroots organizations and national institutions, contribute to creating an enabling environment for interventions and at increasing the participation of the poor in decision-making processes. Targeted beneficiaries being Indigenous peoples and other disadvantaged rural groups (women, seasonal workers etc)

PROTECTING LIVESTOCK AND RURAL LIVELIHOODS

33. Livestock production is the largest user of land in the world, a source of nutrition and income for many of the poor living below or near the poverty line. Failure to protect animals can actually endanger people and the economy, as borne out by the 2004 Tsunami, floods in Latin America, and the African drought. This is also an issue in the developed world. Katrina killed over ten thousand uninsured cattle, endangering the economic standing of many modest income families. Animal welfare is also part of sustainable national security. Once the poor lose their livelihoods, they can lose hope and be susceptible to dangerous political influences. At a minimum, they will move to cities, depopulating rural provinces and put pressure on stretched national resources.
34. UN and national disaster systems need to protect both people and animals, which need each other. Adequate resources must be provided to move both people and personal and livestock animals to shelter. Early warning messages must also take into the account the needs of the agricultural community.
35. The UN and national disaster systems need to protect both people and animals, who need each other. Adequate resources must be provided to move both people and personal and livestock animals to shelter. Early warning messages must also take into the account the needs of the agricultural community.
36. UN member states and agencies, when considering peace and security or economic development, craft policies that protect the poor who depend on animals for a livelihood.

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

37. It is important to include NGO's, universities, government agencies and the private sector in addition to the governments and multilateral agencies in the rural development debate and to promote an integrated vision of rural development. Work agendas between actors involved in rural development are best implemented through partnerships with common goals. We are now experiencing a shift within multilateral development agencies toward pro-rural policies due to the importance of the sector in employment, production, exports and the introduction of new technologies, ICT, biotechnologies, agro-tourism and agro-fuel which are creating new opportunities for the rural poor and for societies in general.

38. Receiving States should recognize the contribution to their economies of migrant workers by granting such workers the opportunity to remain with regular status and to integrate into Society, if that is their wish. So-called "temporary migration" programs, while often touted as mutually beneficial, in fact allow receiving states to enjoy a reliable supply of cheap labour while denying those workers the full range of rights, social services, and opportunities that full-time residents have access to. In addition, temporary migration programs require workers to spend long and repeated periods of time separated from their families, and almost invariably result in both gender and age-based discrimination in hiring practices.

TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGY

39. Participants underline the important role that information technology plays in the employment sector, mentioning the formulation of technology-based projects as an example of one of the tools facilitating the creation of jobs.

40. The main target of technological innovation should not only in the creation of new jobs but also in the improvement of the existing ones while taking a greater advantage of the opportunities that technology offered to generate employment adding value to the economies of countries while improving competitiveness and productivity.

"VI INFOPOVERTY WORLD CONFERENCE"

The ECOSOC NGO Forum this year was held in two parts; while NGO Forum Part I was held on 6 April 2006, NGO Forum Part II incorporating infopoverty as a theme titled, 'VI Infopoverty World Conference' was held on 20-21 April 2006. Active participation to the NGO Forum was facilitated by the two pilot countries of the United Nations Public Private Alliance for Rural Development, the Republic of Madagascar and the Dominican Republic. The NGO Forum brought forth participation, recommendations and contributions through videoconferencing and teleconference links from parallel sessions being held in 8 cities by ITA in Moscow, Sambaina in Madagascar, Milan-Politecnio and European Parliament, Arusha-Tanzania, Window Rock-Navajo Nation, Sao Paulo-Brazil and Peru

The NGO Forum in New York was attended by 173 representatives of over 135 organizations. The multi-stakeholder participation brought contributions of civil society and major stakeholders to the 2006 High Level Segment of ECOSOC. The outcome of this meeting will be presented at the HLS of ECOSOC (3-5 July 2006) at Geneva in the form of a coalition statement.

The NGO Forum received valuable contributions from Congresswoman, Ms. Loretta Sanchez, Senator, Mr. John Kerry, Mr. Joe Shirley Jr., President, Navajo Nation, H.E. Ambassador Zina Andrianarivelo-Razafy, Permanent Mission of Madagascar to the United Nations, H.E. Ambassador Francis Lorenzo, Permanent Mission of the Dominican Republic to the United Nations, Mr. Gaddi H. Vasque, Director Peace Corps Mr. Anwarul Karim Chowdhury Under-Secretary General and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, Mr. Sarbuland Khan, Director, ECOSOC Support and Coordination, Ms. Hanifa Mezoui, Chief, NGO Section/ DESA, Mr. Vincenzo Aquaro, CEO, Formit Servizi, Mr. Abdul W. Khan, Assistant Director General, UNESCO, Ms.

Maria Grazia Cavenaghi Smith, Director, European Parliament Office in Milan.



While issues, themes and best practices that can address the digital divide and concerns of Infopoverty remained the focus, the discussions also

brought in strong recommendations towards generating full and productive employment and decent work for all, and its impact on sustainable development including the integration of ICTs as a tool for development and bridging the digital divide by strengthening and identifying Public- Private Partnerships.

Many new Partnerships and Best Practices were showcased at the NGO Forum, foremost being the partnership initiative with United Nations Public-Private Alliance for Rural Development, which in itself was established to identify, highlight, and promote replication of successful business policies and practices that are both profitable and promote social and economic advancement of poor people in rural areas. The prominent projects that were showcased included:

One Dollar for Development', which was based on no-cost software technology transfer from developed to developing countries at the symbolic price of one dollar. The underlying rationale for this initiative is that, sustainable MDG-based strategies of developing countries require significant public investments to spur local scientific innovation and technological development. There are many Countries, which have successfully developed and deployed eGovernment applications in many key areas such as Justice, Security, Healthcare, Welfare, Transport and Education. Without having to reinvest and at a fraction of the initial development costs, most of these applications could be easily duplicated, re-deployed and put in use in developing countries to support local innovation and technological development with far reaching impacts on the national economy in general and in the field of governance in particular. The ODFD initiative aims at making available at no cost eGovernment applications owned by developed countries to developing countries by encouraging the North-South and South-South cooperation as an effective contribution to development and as a means to share and transfer good practices and technologies.

ICT Village-The project has the objective of Creation of a replicable and affordable model to grant to disadvantaged community in the Dominican Republic access to the digital revolution and reap its opportunities for a sustainable development, thanks to the convergence of UN system agencies and programmes, as well as leading private companies and the civil society. To experiment on the field the most advanced technologies, applications and services that are both fit to the needs of the communities and easy to use by all, so that positive effects can be rapidly achieved: providing solutions to emergencies (in fields such as health, education, food & water) and spurring

endogenous development (creating jobs, building capacity, promoting the communitarian participation of all).

In order to realize those goals, the project is intended to provide connectivity to a village in Madagascar to deliver to its population the following advanced services: Telemedicine, E-learning, E-government, E-commerce. The project will be implemented in a village in the Dominican Republic chosen in agreement with the Government of the Dominican Republic and relevant institutions involved in the UN Alliance.

Navajo Nation-The Navajo Nation is now using ICT of its own to deliver distance learning, economic opportunity, telemedicine, e-government and public safety to remote communities throughout its 27,000-squaremile land base. ITU has recognized the work done by the Navajo Nation to bring information, communications and technology to its citizens as one of the most advanced systems in the emerging nations and one that can be reproduced by other indigenous nations. Because of this, the Navajo Nation is expected to take a leadership role to represent indigenous issues to the world beginning with this summit. Today, all 110 Navajo chapters now have free wireless Internet connections and computers where any Navajo can have an e-mail address and get online for free. In addition, every chapter and most Navajo Nation divisions, departments and programs have their own websites. "The most important thing is that our people are communicating with their government, and their government is communicating with them," President Shirley said. "As President, I need to hear from my people, whether they are in a community center or living far away from Navajo land, whether working, in school, or serving in the armed forces in a foreign country."

At the end of the forum a draft declaration was adopted. Additionally, the recommendations called upon all the stakeholders to go beyond access by engaging multi-stakeholders, engaging local participants as partners in the process. The process/initiatives should have cultural relevance; they must be very creative, in reaching out to larger, more diverse populations. Strengthening human capacity in the areas of e-governance and public administration was also emphasized in various recommendations.

As regards job creation and employment generation the ICT tools should be used to stimulate inputs from agriculture and non-traditional sectors. The draft declaration also called upon governments and intergovernmental organizations to use both traditional and ICT methods to enable access to national and

international markets, in order to stimulate the creation of decent work through the growth of small and medium-sized enterprises

UPCOMING EVENTS *Not to Miss!*

- ◆ 1-12 May 2006- Commission on Sustainable Development, fourteenth session - New York As the first year of the second implementation cycle, CSD-14 will review progress in the following areas: Energy for Sustainable Development; Industrial Development; Air pollution/Atmosphere; and Climate Change.
- ◆ 8-10 May 2006- Economic Commission for Africa, thirty-fourth session and twenty-fifth meeting of the Conference of Ministers - Algiers
- ◆ 10-11 May 2006- Economic and Social Council, resumed organizational session - New York
- ◆ 10-19 May 2006- Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations - New York 2006 Resumed Session.
- ◆ 15-26 May 2006- Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues - New York

Globalization and Poverty Eradication: The imperatives of education, social and gender equality, transparency and accountability"

The International Institute for Non-Aligned Studies, an Indian NGO in general consultative status organized a workshop in New Delhi in preparation of the high-level segment of ECOSOC focusing on employment and decent work to be held in Geneva this coming July. Co-sponsored by the DESA/NGO Section, the workshop held a discussion on "Globalization and poverty Eradication: The imperatives of education, social and gender equality, transparency and accountability" on 9 March 2006. The panelists included high-officials from the government as well as parliamentarians and academicians. Ms Michele Fedoroff, Deputy of the DESA/NGO Section addressed the workshop. In her intervention, she reviewed various mechanisms linking globalization, employment and poverty eradication, citing several win-win national strategies reported in various parts of the world. She also gave a power-point presentation on the UN reforms followed by a question/answer session. The meeting gathered over one hundred representatives from non-governmental organizations from various countries.

In addition, Ms Fedoroff addressed a seminar held in Agra on 11 March on "Globalization and Changing Social Conditions Agenda" in which she discussed at length the efforts deployed by the United Nations, and other stakeholders, including governments and civil society in the implementation of the goals worldwide. The Agra meeting gathered local authorities, local NGOs and artisans who are *Dalits* representing minorities living in the region.

USEFUL LINKS:

Infopoverty is a common platform aiming at fighting poverty through the innovative use of the Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), able to provide broadband services such as telemedicine, e-learning, e-government, etc. to disadvantaged communities. Infopoverty is a Programme born in the ambit of the United Nations and coordinated by OCCAM, the Observatory for Cultural and Audiovisual Communication created by UNESCO in 1997.

<http://www.infopoverty.net/>

Recommendations submitted on behalf of 700 academic experts from 46 countries participating from 420 organizations to the High Level Segment through the International Telecommunication Academy, a non-governmental organization in special status with the Economic and Social Council

On April 19-20, in Moscow the International Telecommunication Academy held its Jubilee International Congress ITA'06 "InfoCommunication Technologies in the Global Information Society of the 21st Century".



The Congress was technically, socio-economically oriented and the main goals were the analysis of the basic development tendencies. At the opening prominent guests were Representative of the UNNGO Section, DESA, Director of the Outreach Division, DPI UN, R. Sommereyns, Head of the Russian Federal Agency on Information Technologies V. Matyukhin, Director General of the "Svyazinvest" JSC V. Yashin, Vice-President of the "Company TransTeleCom" JSC A. Zemtsov, Vice-President of Siemens Russia R. Armes.

The Jubilee Congress was attended by representatives of the United Nations, International Telecommunication Union, UNESCO, Ministries and Governmental institutions of the Russian Federation as well as top managerial staff of the biggest Russian and international infocommunication companies.

The International Telecommunication Academy is 10 years old. During its ten years, ITA exercised high technologies that are a basis for an information society development, both in the world and in the Russia. For the last ten years, ITA worked on education, medicine, environment, women and children in the world, practicing the energies in advance for their time. Human computer



interaction is turning to human computer corporation. The jubilee was celebrated taking into consideration the High Level

Segment theme of ECOSOC. The expansion of full and productive employment and decent work has increasingly been seen as the key area of global concern and the need to place employment at the center of economic and social policies. ITA knows that ICT has tremendous potential for improving the employment of a new generation to come.

The Congress emphasized that high technologies was a basis of an information society development, both in the world and in Russia. The science, technical art, business and social economics were components of man's activity whose association provided sustainable development to all human society. The International Telecommunication Academy as the

scientific integrator and the distributor of infocommunication knowledge in Russia and international Infocom made a contribution to development. The Congress confirmed that in the next decade grandiose tasks are set in front of the Academy, namely: forming an Information Society Development Strategy in the 21st century on the basis of monitoring digital and economic divide, forecasting a development of infocommunication technologies and their influence on society development, synergetic in infocommunications, harmonization of social and economic relations and stability of development during GIS epoch and many other things.

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HELP HANDICAPPED INTERNATIONAL

AN NGO IN SPECIAL CONSULTATIVE STATUS WITH
THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Help Handicapped International (HHI) aims to rehabilitate such people through fitting of the Jaipur foot prosthetic-an artificial limb designed and developed in India and very appropriate for the tens of thousands of amputees in Asia and Africa.

The prosthetic not only makes the physically challenged mobile but also imparts a sense of dignity to them as they feel they are “complete” and ready to face the challenges of life. This positive mental attitude is half the battle won in their quest for productive employment.



Their activities are, hence, in complete sync with the theme for the 2006 high level segment of ECOSOC-namely-“Conducive to generating full and productive employment and decent work for all and its impact on sustainable development”. The aim is to rehabilitate the physically challenged-a segment large not only by numbers but also by its impact on society as a whole.

Another significant highlight of their work is the locations in which they implement our projects. These are either conflict areas (Afghanistan, Sudan, Burundi, Kenya) where the people are victims of landmines, internal strife or external aggressions or areas which have been ravaged by natural disasters like floods and earthquakes (Pakistan is a recent case after its earthquake of 2005).

To become disabled under such economically and socially depressing circumstances is like adding “fuel to the fire”. The process of rehabilitation under such mitigating circumstances is therefore, doubly satisfying. In the case of Pakistan a large number of those injured in the earthquake have lost their limbs and these amputees are now ready for prosthetics. This would be the first step in their rehabilitation. To take another case-a country like Afghanistan-ravaged by instability for more than two decades with no worthwhile economic activity. A landmine victim under these conditions would feel as if his world has ended. To



be able to walk, run and cycle within a few hours of entering a Jaipur foot camp is nothing short of a miracle for such beneficiaries.

An NGO which not only believes in miracles but are trying to create a few hundreds at each camp!!!!

SOUNDS OF NEW ORLEANS

THE LEGENDARY PRESERVATION HALL JAZZ BAND

Sounds of New Orleans' was a fundraiser organized on 11 April 2006, 6:00 pm, in the ECOSOC Chamber , United Nations to help support the 'Slidell Senior Citizen's Center' Slidell, Louisiana. The Concert was supported by NGO Section, DESA.



Give them a Hand' Foundation (GTAH) was organized initially for disaster relief and charitable purposes. It came into existence in August 2004 in response to the disaster relief activities for Haiti and Grenada. This was largely done by donations from individuals and

organizations. Gradually, 'Give them a Hand' Foundation' grew to become an informal community based partnership initiative, which brings together Member States, NGOs, Private Sector, Artists and UN staff towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and promoting the humanitarian causes of the United Nations.

All proceeds were placed in care of UN Staff Relief Fund earmarked to fund the rehabilitation and opening of the Slidell Senior Citizen's Center as well as other projects identified by 'Give Them a Hand Foundation', in areas ravaged by natural disasters including hurricane Katrina. The center normally serves a population of over 5000 elderly persons in the local New Orleans area, dispensing more than 500 meals daily.

We welcome your statements, comments, remarks and information on your success stories, please email us at mezoui@un.org. If your organization wishes to share information with the IRENE community kindly add us to your mailing list.