



CEMOFPSC ROUND TABLE 2011:
An education of quality in the conflict area, as a way of improving peace and integration



ECOSOC – A Brief Backgrounder

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What is ECOSOC?

The Economic and Social Council of the United Nations was established under its Charter as the principal organ to coordinate economic, social, and related work of the 14 UN specialized agencies, functional commissions and five regional commissions. The Council also receives reports from 11 UN funds and programs. The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) serves as the central forum for discussing international economic and social issues, and for formulating policy recommendations addressed to Member States and the United Nations system. It is responsible for:

- Promoting higher standards of living, full employment, and economic and social progress;
- Identifying solutions to international economic, social and health problems;
- Facilitating international cultural and educational cooperation; and
- Encouraging universal respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

It has the power to make or initiate studies and reports on these issues. It also has the power to assist the preparations and organization of major international conferences in the economic and social and related fields and to facilitate a coordinated follow-up to these conferences. With its broad mandate the Council's purview extends to over 70 per cent of the human and financial resources of the entire UN system.

ECOSOC at Work:



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In carrying out its mandate, ECOSOC consults with academics, business sector representatives and more than 3,400 registered non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The Council holds a four-week substantive session each July, alternating between New York and Geneva. The session consists of the High-level Segment, Coordination Segment, Operational Activities Segment, Humanitarian Affairs Segment and the General Segment.

The High-level segment serves as a forum for Ministers and executive heads of international institutions and high-ranking officials, as well as civil society and private sector representatives to discuss key issues on the international agenda in the area of economic, social and environmental development. Two new features of the ECOSOC, mandated by the 2005 World Summit, are the **Annual Ministerial Review** and the Development Cooperation Forum. The latter takes place every two years only. At the end of the High-level segment, a Ministerial declaration is adopted, which provides policy guidance and recommendations for action.

What is the Annual Ministerial Review?

The Annual Ministerial Review (AMR) is a function ECOSOC mandated by Heads of State and Government at the 2005 World Summit. Its purpose is to:

1. Assess progress made towards the MDGs and the implementation of the other goals and targets agreed at the major UN conferences and summits over the past 15 years, which, together, constitute the United Nations Development Agenda (UNDA).
2. Contribute to scaling-up and accelerating action to realize the development agenda, by serving as global high-level forum with broad-based participation, where lessons learned are exchanged and successful practices and approaches that merit scaling-up are identified.

The AMR session consists of three main elements:

- A global review of the United Nations development agenda,
- A thematic review, and
- A series of national voluntary presentations (NVPs) of both developing and developed countries on their progress in implementing internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

During roundtable discussions, presentations and general debate participants have the opportunity to learn from leading policy makers, practitioners and academics. Participants include Member States, UN System Organizations and other major



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institutional stakeholders, as well as non-governmental organizations, private sector representatives and academics.

The AMR was launched in 2007. Past year's themes include the eradication of poverty and hunger; sustainable development; public health, and gender equality respectively.

Each year the AMR features National Voluntary Presentations to track countries' progress in implementing internationally agreed development goals (IADGs), including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The 11 presenting countries for 2011 are: Bangladesh, Republic of Belarus, Germany, Malawi, Mauritius, Mexico, Pakistan, State of Qatar, Senegal, Turkey, and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

In 2011, the AMR will turn the spotlight on actions and progress made towards achieving the agreed education goals, within the framework of the Millennium Development Goals and the Education for All agenda. The Review aims at promoting practical strategies to increase access to and quality of education around the world as the basis for poverty eradication and sustainable development.

The Office for ECOSOC Support and Coordination of the United Nations Secretariat welcomes the initiative of CEMOFPS to organize a seminar on the theme of "An education of quality in the conflict area, as a way of improving peace and integration" in Madrid on 28 April 2011. It is hoped that the findings of the seminar can be submitted by FPSC to the Council in the Annual Ministerial Review of ECOSOC at its high-level segment in Geneva in July 2011