



With breaking stories and
newswire products from

UN NEWS CENTRE



Malaysian envoy elected to lead UN Economic and Social Council for 2010



Outgoing ECOSOC President Sylvie Lucas of Luxembourg (right) hands over gavel to Hamidon Ali of Malaysia

19 January 2010 – The Malaysian diplomat Hamidon Ali was **elected** today to serve as the next President of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), making him responsible for leading the world body's principal organ for coordinating work in those two fields.

Mr. Ali, who succeeds Ambassador Sylvie Lucas of Luxembourg, is a career diplomat and has twice been Malaysia's Ambassador to the UN.

Addressing the 54-member body after his election, he outlined ECOSOC's work for 2010, and called for special attention on the situation in Haiti since last week's earthquake.

"I pledge the strong support of **ECOSOC** to Haiti and its people who have been pummelled by a series of crises, the most recent being the devastating earthquake, which hit the country about a week ago," Mr. Ali said, noting that the Council and its Group on Haiti would have to see how to support the country in this difficult time. Ms. Lucas also expressed her deepest sympathy to the people of Haiti.

Mr. Ali urged ECOSOC to continue strengthening its role and capacity to respond to emerging issues and crises. "The Council should continue to provide a forum to enhance understanding of the implications of all crises on development efforts and to promote and enhance a coordinated response of the United Nations system," he said, underlining that the

challenge is to keep the focus and follow-up on current and future crises and to promote initiatives to mitigate their impact and prevent more disastrous consequences.

Highlighting the theme of the 2010 Annual Ministerial Review (AMR), which is “Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to gender equality and the empowerment of women,” Mr. Ali said that the Council will highlight the gender-related Millennium Development Goals (**MDGs**), tackle the challenges that hamper their achievement and focus on those dimensions that need to be taken into account for the implementation of effective policies.

Mr. Ali announced that ECOSOC will also hold its second Development Cooperation Forum (**DCF**) in July.

“The current financial crisis and the implications for the global aid architecture, makes the work of the DCF even more urgent,” he said, stressing his hope that the 2010 process will produce practical results and policy recommendations in key areas of development cooperation.

Mr. Ali also confirmed the readiness of the Council to play a key role in the upcoming General Assembly High-Level Plenary Meeting on the MDGs, to be held in September.

Also **addressing** ECOSOC was Deputy Secretary-General Asha-Rose Migiro, who pointed out that strides have been made in combating extreme poverty, boosting school improvement and child health and expanding access to clean water, among other areas.

“Yet, despite this success, we are not on track to meeting all the MDGs,” she cautioned, underscoring ECOSOC’s key role in the identifying the gaps that remain in achieving the targets.

Also during today’s meeting, ECOSOC elected its vice-presidents, Hernando Muñoz of Chile, Somduth Soborun of Mauritius, Alexandru Cujba of the Republic of Moldova, and Morten Wetland of Norway.

News Tracker: past stories on this issue

General Assembly elects 22 new members of UN Economic and Social Council