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Current crises call for concerted global action to advance development – UN officials



ECOSOC President Amb. Lazarous Kapambwe of Zambia

10 March 2011 – With the financial crisis having reversed many development gains and the world once again facing rising food and energy prices, top United Nations officials today underscored the need for concerted action to advance development, equity and prosperity for all.

“The financial and economic crisis has reversed many development gains and interrupted progress in economic and social development. Accelerating progress in building a global partnership for development is crucial to overcoming these setbacks and achieving the MDGs by 2015,” said Lazarous Kapambwe, President of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

The eight Millennium Development Goals ([MDGs](#)) range from halving extreme poverty to halting the spread of HIV/AIDS and providing universal primary education, all by the target date of 2015.

Mr. Kapambwe told the annual high-level meeting of ECOSOC with the Bretton Woods institutions, the World Trade Organization and the UN Conference on Trade and Development ([UNCTAD](#)) that the international community is now facing a tremendous challenge of promoting an agreed action agenda to accelerate progress towards achieving the MDGs by 2015.

In addition to a global partnership for development, the two-day meeting is looking at the role of the UN in global economic governance, as well as financial support for the development efforts of the least developed countries and middle-income countries.

“In the absence of effective policy coordination and cooperation among governments around the world, there is a real risk of a new global recession,” said Mr. Kapambwe. “This would add to the already immense human cost of the crisis, which has seriously set back the development efforts of many developing countries.”

[Secretary-General](#) Ban Ki-moon also highlighted the fact that recent spikes in food and energy prices are also putting at risk the progress achieved over the past decade in lifting millions of people out of poverty.

It is also important to recognize the political and economic implications of the recent developments in North Africa and the Middle East, he noted.

“While these are still unfolding, the events have already highlighted once again the nexus between poverty, unemployment, inequality and stability. Inclusive, democratic, honest governance is a crucial part of our quest for social justice and human dignity,” he stated.

“We must respond to these challenges,” he added, “by charting a course for truly sustainable and equitable development.”

Luis Manuel Piantini Munnigh, President of UNCTAD’s Trade and Development Board, also commented on the recent political and economic events, such as the spike in food and fuel prices and the revolts sweeping across the Middle East and North Africa.

All of these “underscore the inescapable reality that fundamental change is upon us,” he said. “These events have highlighted that the old ways of doing business no longer work, and that old assumptions which at one time may have seemed unassailable were, at the end of the day, flawed.”

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