

ECOSOC management segment
Tuesday, 21 July 2020, 10.00 a.m. – 1 p.m.
(by video conference)

Talking points

Vice-President of ECOSOC Ambassador Munir Akram,
Excellencies, delegates,

My name is Junya Nakano. I am from the Japanese Permanent Mission, representing the Asia and Pacific Group in the Bureau of the 53rd session of the Commission on Population and Development. I am pleased to brief the Council on the Commission's outcomes.

The Chair of the 53rd session of the Commission, Ambassador Christian Braun of Luxembourg, was unable to attend and has asked me, in my role as Rapporteur, to represent the Bureau.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Commission was unable to hold any formal meetings, originally scheduled for the week of 30 March to 3 April.

Instead, the Commission conducted its business through correspondence and virtual informal consultations and considered proposals through a silence procedure pursuant to the relevant Council decisions.

Not being able to hold in-person meetings was quite unfortunate, as the Bureau had introduced some important innovations. We had envisioned holding two multi-stakeholder panels as well as two interactive discussions, which would have included experts from UN entities as well as national delegations. We were also planning to involve civil society to a greater extent. Hopefully these innovations can be applied next year.

Another important initiative of the Bureau this year was to launch a brainstorming exercise on the future role and organization of the Commission. The inability of the Commission to reach consensus on the outcome document in four of the past six years makes such a reflection both timely and necessary. The Bureau has proposed to add an agenda item on the future role and organization

of the Commission to the provisional agenda for the fifty-fourth session. The Secretariat prepared an informal note on this issue, which was distributed on 10 July. Member States have been invited to send inputs by the end of July.

Excellencies, distinguished colleagues,

The Commission's theme this year was "Population, food security, nutrition and sustainable development". Following consultations within the Bureau and with Member States, Chair substituted the original zero draft of the resolution on the special theme with a short and concise draft declaration on population, food security, nutrition and sustainable development in the context of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. Because of the extraordinary circumstances this year, the Commission decided that a full consideration of the special theme for the fifty-third session would be postponed to the fifty-fourth session in 2021.

Unfortunately, the Commission was neither able to find consensus on the declaration nor did they mandate the Chair to prepare a summary of the discussions on the theme, which would have been included in the report.

Let me nevertheless highlight some key messages from our informal deliberations.

In terms of challenges, the pandemic is undermining and even reversing progress made towards ending hunger, achieving food security and improving nutrition by 2030. Delegations expressed concern that a reallocation of health resources due to the pandemic would have a negative impact on satisfying the unmet need for family planning, eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls, and ending harmful practices. Concerns were also voiced that measures to curtail the spread of the virus could have major consequences for global trade and supply chains and for the movement of food and food-related items.

In terms of policy responses, Member States stressed the need for strengthening social protection mechanisms, improving national health systems, and addressing the needs of the most vulnerable. Access to safe, sufficient and nutritious food and the enjoyment of a diversified, balanced and healthy diet would help to reduce the risk of malnutrition in all its forms, including overweight and obesity. The Food Systems Summit and the Nutrition for Growth Summit, both planned for

2021, were considered important opportunities for putting in place inclusive, sustainable and resilient food systems and for moving towards diversified, balanced and healthy diets for all.

Excellencies, distinguished delegates,

In terms of draft decisions to be adopted:

The Commission recommends the Economic and Social Council:

- to take note of the report of the Commission on Population and Development on its fifty-third session, and
- to approve the provisional agenda for the fifty-fourth session of the Commission.

In terms of matters brought to the attention of the Council:

The Commission decided that:

- The special theme for its 54th session, in 2021, will be “Population, food security, nutrition and sustainable development” and
- For the 55th session, in 2022, the Commission will consider the theme of “Population and sustainable development, in particular sustained and inclusive economic growth”.

Thank you for your attention.

I would be happy to address any questions.

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