



Permanent Mission of The Republic of Zambia To The United Nations  
237 East 52nd Street, New York, NY 10022  
Tel: (212) 888-5770 Fax: (212) 888-5213  
E-mail: zambia@un.int

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Excellency,

I wish refer to your letter dated 17<sup>th</sup> March, 2016 regarding the invitation to provide substantive contributions of the Commission on Population and Development in preparation for the integration segment.

Please find attached a brief prepared to highlight the current work of the Commission on Population and Development regarding policy innovation and integration the implementation of the 2030 Agenda accordance with the Commission's mandate. I thank you for the opportunity.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "Dr. Mwaba P. Kasese-Bota".

Dr. Mwaba P. Kasese-Bota (Mrs)  
**AMBASSADOR/PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE**

H.E. Mr. Sven Jurgenson  
Vice-President of ECOSOC  
Office for ECOSOC Support and Coordination  
Room S-2571  
United Nations Secretariat  
NEW YORK

# COMMISSION ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT

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## **Contribution by the Chair of the Commission on Population and Development to an analytical paper by ECOSOC for the Integration Segment of the Council**

H.E. Ambassador Dr. Mwaba Patricia Kasese-Bota

Chair of the forty-ninth session of the Commission on Population and Development  
and  
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Zambia to the United Nations

### **Introduction**

The following text highlights the current work of the Commission on Population and Development, particularly vis-à-vis the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and discusses how the Commission, through policy innovation and integration, might also engage in the review and follow-up of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and thereby further strengthen its relationship with the Council.

### **Relationship of the Commission with the Economic and Social Council**

The Population Commission was established by ECOSOC in its resolution 3 (III) of 3 October 1946 to provide “advice and assistance on matters affecting or affected by population changes”. Following the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development, in order to follow-up on the implementation of the Programme of Action (PoA), the General Assembly (GA), through resolution 49/128, created a three-tiered intergovernmental mechanism consisting of the GA, through its role in policy formulation, ECOSOC, through its role in overall guidance and coordination, and a revitalized Commission, which was renamed the Commission on Population and Development.

Since then, the Commission has worked to maintain close relations with the Council, although the work of the Commission is not always well reflected in the Council’s deliberations, and the respective agendas and work programmes of the two bodies are not always well aligned. Some examples of lessons learned and best practices in interacting with the Council are as follows:

#### **(a) Separate agenda item dedicated to ECOSOC**

Starting in 2009, the Commission added an agenda item in order to consider the contribution it could make to ECOSOC’s annual ministerial review (AMR). The annual session included this agenda item through the end of the AMR in 2015. The agenda item was maintained for 2016, but it is now devoted to a general discussion on the contribution of population and development issues to ECOSOC’s annual theme. Despite these efforts to link the work of the Commission to that of ECOSOC, in most years few Member States spoke under this agenda item, and some have questioned its relevance.

#### **(b) Multi-year work programme**

To assess the progress achieved in implementing the PoA, the Commission decided in 1995 to adopt a four-year work programme for 1996, 1997, 1998 and 1999, culminating in a quinquennial review and appraisal of the PoA in 1999. That decision was subsequently endorsed by the Council in its resolution 1995/55. Subsequent work programmes, however, have had shorter time horizons. The Commission’s 2006 resolution on its methods of work specified a two-year planning horizon, a practice that was maintained through 2013. Since 2014, however, the Commission has been deciding its annual theme only

one year in advance, in an attempt to abide by GA resolution 68/1, which calls for the functional commissions to contribute to the work of ECOSOC “in keeping with the agreed theme” of the Council. Regrettably, the admirable goal of aligning the work of the parent body with its subsidiaries has limited the Commission’s ability to plan ahead by more than a year.

#### (c) Reporting to ECOSOC

Per rule 37 of the rules of procedure of the functional commissions, the Commission submits a report to the Council on the work of each session, containing a concise summary of recommendations and a statement of issues calling for action by ECOSOC or brought to its attention. Although General Assembly resolution 68/1 called for the subsidiary bodies to include in their reports an executive summary, clearly identifying the conclusions, recommendations and issues that might require attention and/or action by the Council, the summary that the Commission submits often lacks substance and has typically fallen short in terms of providing policy recommendations that could be taken forward by the Council. In fact, many Member States consider that a negotiated resolution is the only outcome of value coming from the annual session, and they do not want to add a substantive summary prepared under the authority of the Chair or anyone else. Regrettably, the exclusive focus on a negotiated outcome has restricted the kinds of information that can be transmitted formally by the Commission to ECOSOC.

#### (d) Interaction with the Council and other functional commissions

Over the years, the Chair of the Commission has regularly attended the annual meeting between chairs of the various functional commissions and the Bureau of ECOSOC. Furthermore, the Commission has invited representatives of other functional commissions to speak during its annual session on subjects of mutual interest and has encouraged its Chair to make presentations at other functional commissions. These activities have helped to foster a useful exchange of information and experience across functional commissions.

#### **Future work of the Commission pertaining to policy innovation and integration for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda**

In response to ECOSOC decision 2015/252 of 22 July 2015, the Commission is currently reviewing its methods of work, guided in part by a note on this topic prepared by the Secretariat. As Chair of the current session, I have tabled a zero-draft resolution including various recommendations and have asked the Commission to take action on this resolution by 14 April 2016.

The zero-draft resolution addresses four aspects in the Commission’s methods of work that can be considered policy innovations in terms of integrating the 2030 Agenda into the Commission’s work:

##### (a) Multi-year work programme

The zero-draft proposes that the Commission shall choose the special theme of its annual session as part of a multi-year work programme, covering the substantive topics of the PoA and the related Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda in an integrated manner, keeping in mind the four-year cycle of the high-level political forum.

##### (b) Provisional agenda

In addition, the zero-draft resolution calls for continuing the practice of having two agenda items devoted to the consideration of the special theme: the *first item* being a general discussion of the topic focusing on actions for the further implementation of the PoA and on contributions to the review of the SDGs and to the annual theme of ECOSOC; and the *second item* being a general debate on national experience in matters of

population and development. By focusing on actions for the further implementation of the PoA while including a sub-item on the SDGs, the Commission will be giving priority to the fulfilment of its core mandate (follow-up and review of the PoA) while also contributing to the thematic reviews of the SDGs taking place in the high-level political forum.

(c) Participants, roles and responsibilities

With a view to encouraging the engagement of all relevant stakeholders, the zero-draft resolution calls for active participation in its annual sessions by national ministries, including technical experts, the regional commissions and other relevant entities of the UN systems, ECOSOC-accredited NGOs, international and regional financial institutions, other functional commissions, and other multilateral bodies and forums.

(d) Outcome and reporting

The zero-draft resolution reaffirms that a negotiated document is the preferred outcome of the annual session. However, without prejudice to the negotiated outcome, the Commission could in some manner authorize the Chair to prepare an executive summary of the substantive deliberations of the session, which would become part of the report submitted to ECOSOC and could be transmitted to the HLPF as a contribution to the review of Goals and targets related to the special theme of the session.