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HUMAN RIGHTS BODIES AND MECHANISMS

**REPORT OF THE 2008 SOCIAL FORUM
(Geneva, 1-3 September 2008)**

Chairperson-Rapporteur: Mr. Mousa BURAYZAT (Jordan)*

Summary

The present report contains a summary of discussions and recommendations of the 2008 Social Forum, held in Geneva from 1 to 3 September 2008, in accordance with Human Rights Council resolution 6/13. In that resolution, the Council decided to preserve the Social Forum as a vital space for dialogue between the representatives of Member States and civil society, including grass-roots organizations and intergovernmental organizations, on issues linked with the national and international environment needed for the promotion of the enjoyment of all human rights by all.

Under the main themes of poverty and human rights and the social dimension of the globalization process, the Forum heard expert presentations and held interactive debates on the following topics and their relationship to poverty: the normative framework of human rights and extreme poverty; foreign debt; international trade policies; the role and responsibility of the State, civil society and transnational corporations in poverty eradication; international assistance and cooperation in poverty reduction and eradication; decent and favourable work conditions; good governance/corruption; access to affordable essential drugs and health care; climate change; and food security, the food crisis and the right to food.

* Late submission.

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Social Forum was held in Geneva from 1 to 3 September 2008, in accordance with resolution 6/13 of the Human Rights Council.
2. In its resolution 6/13, the Council decided to preserve the Social Forum as a vital space for dialogue between the representatives of Member States, civil society, including grass-roots organizations and intergovernmental organizations on issues linked with the promotion of the enjoyment of all human rights by all.
3. In December 2007, the President of the Council appointed, from candidates nominated by regional groups, Mousa Burayzat, Permanent Representative of Jordan to the United Nations Office at Geneva, as the Chairperson-Rapporteur of the 2008 Social Forum. The Chairperson-Rapporteur, after consultations with Member States and other stakeholders, announced 1 to 3 September as the dates for convening the 2008 Social Forum.
4. The present report contains a summary of discussions held at the 2008 Social Forum and its conclusions and recommendations, as well as possible themes for the 2009 Social Forum.

II. ORGANIZATION OF THE SOCIAL FORUM

A. Opening of the session

5. The Chairperson-Rapporteur opened the 2008 Social Forum and invited the President of the Human Rights Council to make inaugural remarks. In his statement, the President made reference to the current challenges faced by the international community, including the food crises and continued existence of poverty, which constituted compelling reasons for hosting a meeting such as that of the Social Forum. He encouraged participants to make progress in identifying best practices in the fight against poverty.
6. The Chairperson-Rapporteur then addressed the Forum and highlighted the importance of focusing on the issue of poverty and how to eradicate it within the framework of globalization and human rights. He emphasized that there was a consensus that poverty was not just an economic and social problem, nor was it solely a security or political one; it was also a human rights problem, as it symbolizes the degradation of human dignity.
7. The Chairperson-Rapporteur furthermore stated that globalization could lead to the exacerbation of the problem of poverty if it were not dealt with seriously. It also harmed unsophisticated means of earning, such as traditional agriculture and livestock breeding in the countryside and rural areas. Moreover, privatization by freezing the cost of basic services increases the burden for poor people, not to mention other negative side effects of other well-known tools of globalization on poverty and the poor.
8. It is evident that the policies of economic liberalization have succeeded in increasing the number of the rich; however, they have also contributed to an increase in the number of the underprivileged in many regions, although they are not the sole factor in this regard.

9. The recent world food crisis was an additional alarm bell for the international community and a warning of additional consequences of mounting poverty and the lack of food, as well as the negative possible effects of globalization.

10. The Chairperson-Rapporteur proposed four areas that the deliberations and thematic discussions of the Social Forum could address: (a) raising awareness and international concern regarding the problems of poverty and extreme poverty; (b) practical initiatives that are implementable; (c) technical support and capacity-building for countries and agencies in need; and (d) the need for a more structured role of the United Nations in developing and coordinating international efforts to tackle poverty.

11. The Chairperson-Rapporteur subsequently invited the United Nations Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights to make welcome remarks. In her address, the Deputy High Commissioner drew the attention of participants to the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (A/HRC/SF/2008/2), which was prepared upon the request of the Council as a background contribution for deliberations at the Forum. She also emphasized that poverty was a human rights issue and the gravest human rights challenge facing the world. The Deputy High Commissioner believed that globalization could be given a human face if guided by the fundamental principles that underpin human rights, such as equity, participation, accountability and non-discrimination. Utilizing international human rights standards to influence the direction of globalization and enhance the effectiveness of poverty eradication was highlighted as an important area for further discussion.

B. Organization of work

12. The programme of work of the 2008 Social Forum (see annex II) was prepared under the guidance of the Chairperson-Rapporteur, taking into account the input received from Member States and other relevant stakeholders.

13. Under the main themes of poverty and human rights and the social dimension of the globalization process, the 2008 Social Forum heard 28 expert presentations, followed by interactive debates, on 12 different thematic topics and their relationship to poverty.

C. Attendance

14. See annex III.

D. Documentation

15. The 2008 Social Forum had before it the provisional agenda (annex I), the programme of work (annex II) and the background report (A/HRC/SF/2008/2) submitted by the High Commissioner for Human Rights pursuant to paragraph 8 of Council resolution 6/13.

III. SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS

16. The section below contains a summary of the presentations and statements made during the interactive debate that followed the presentations.¹

A. Poverty and human rights

Normative framework for human rights and extreme poverty

17. The independent expert on the question of human rights and extreme poverty, Magdalena Sepulveda Carmona, recalled that previous sessions of the Social Forum had confirmed that human rights and poverty were linked in three ways: (a) poverty can be both a cause and consequence of human rights violations; (b) the realization of all human rights and efforts to eliminate extreme poverty are mutually reinforcing; and (c) human rights norms and principles provide the framework for poverty reduction and/or eradication. She also emphasized that the elimination of poverty is not a question of charity but an important and pressing human rights issue. Poverty is often linked to the denial or violation of human rights enshrined in the major human rights treaties, which, together with regional instruments, establish the normative framework for addressing the reduction of poverty from a human rights perspective. She further stressed that any initiative to address the situation of those living in poverty must be guided by the principles of equality and non-discrimination, participation, transparency and accountability.

18. The independent expert also referred to the important role of the Social Forum as a sounding board for emerging concerns around the world. Commenting on her expectations on the outcome of the Social Forum, she observed that it was ideally placed to identify best practices in poverty reduction and to promote the incorporation of a human rights approach into policies aimed at poverty reduction and elimination. She stated that the Forum should continue to focus on existing discrimination, as both a cause and a consequence of poverty, and that it should promote the participation of those living in poverty, particularly women. She concluded that the current session of the Forum should also build on the work of the previous sessions and continue promoting the draft guiding principles on extreme poverty and human rights: the rights of the poor, which were prepared in 2006 by the Subcommission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights.

19. The Deputy Chairperson and member of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Ariranga Pillay, focused his presentation on the work of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights with regard to poverty and human rights. He recalled that the Committee had provided a definition of poverty and stated that the international human rights normative framework was essential for sustainable reduction of poverty. He underlined the essential characteristics of a rights-based approach to poverty reduction, such as rights and obligations, accountability, equality, non-discrimination and participation. With regard to accountability, he made special reference to the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights as a justiciability tool for these rights.

¹ The full version of presentations is posted as received on the OHCHR website at the address www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/poverty/speakers_presentations.htm.

Foreign debt and poverty

20. The independent expert on the effects of foreign debt and other related international financial obligations of States on the full enjoyment of human rights, particularly economic, social and cultural rights, Cephaz Lumina, stated that, from a human rights perspective, excessive debt burdens, high dependency on foreign assistance and extreme poverty together pose a major challenge to the realization of human rights in many countries by undermining the human rights obligations of States and the enjoyment of human rights by the poor in indebted countries. Studies indicate that some countries are spending much more each year on servicing debt than on human rights-related public services, such as education and health, combined.

21. The independent expert emphasized that the reduction of foreign debt through debt relief is considered one of the principal ways to contribute to poverty reduction and debt sustainability. However, he drew attention to a number of key concerns in debt relief initiatives, particularly with regard to the conditions attached to debt relief measures. Debt relief alone cannot facilitate development and poverty eradication in low-income countries; it must be complemented by additional development assistance, particularly in the form of concessional loans or grants. In this respect, he pointed out the fact that official development assistance (ODA) has been declining to levels well below the 0.7 per cent target reaffirmed in the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development.

22. The independent expert concluded by underlining the importance: (a) of consistency among trade, aid and debt policies, and that debt relief initiatives be accompanied by concessional aid; (b) that debt relief for poverty reduction be specific to country situations and not undermine the enjoyment of human rights by the poor in low-income countries; and (c) of the promotion of transparency and the participation of civil society and the poor in debt relief programmes.

23. Following the independent expert's presentation, the Chairperson-Rapporteur announced that the speaker to follow, the Secretary-General of the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation of Jordan, Nasser Shraideh, was unable to attend the Social Forum and that his statement would be read out by a representative of the Permanent Mission of Jordan to the United Nations Office in Geneva. Mr. Shraideh's statement focused on the direct and indirect impact of external debt on poverty. He explained that a large foreign debt can directly reduce Government resources available for the poor. High indebtedness can also indirectly increase poverty because it undermines economic growth by increasing uncertainty and reducing expenditure on economic infrastructure. It could also scare away foreign direct investment, which is important for economic growth. His statement also provided information, facts and figures on the efforts of the Government of Jordan to reduce its foreign debt.

The role and responsibility of the State in poverty eradication

24. The Permanent Representative of the People's Republic of China to the United Nations Office in Geneva, Li Baodong, spoke about the role and responsibility of the State in poverty eradication. Observing that poverty is caused by social and historic factors, he emphasized that promoting human rights was an essential component for eradicating poverty.

25. Mr. Li Baodong described efforts and strategies undertaken by the Government of China to eliminate poverty, and emphasized that, by promoting the right to self-sufficiency and development in China, poverty levels had been reduced and the Millennium Development Goals of halving poverty by 2015 had been achieved ahead of schedule. He explained that his State's success was essentially due to the implementation of a nationally-owned development strategy that was people-centred and suited to its national context. He encouraged South-South cooperation in eradicating poverty and stressed that, in pursuing the elimination of poverty, countries should be allowed to follow their own path, taking into account the local context.

International assistance and cooperation

26. The topic of international assistance and cooperation was addressed in a presentation by the Secretary of State of the National Solidarity Fund of Tunisia, Omar Ben Mahmoud. He described the activities and successful experiences of the Fund with regard to poverty alleviation in isolated and rural areas. The Fund is supported by voluntary contributions from the public and finances, such as housing, companies, schools and health centres. The initiative, complementing other governmental poverty reduction strategies, has resulted in a considerable reduction of the poverty level in the country. It has attracted international interest and is now being replicated in other countries.

27. Following the above presentations, the Chairperson-Rapporteur opened the floor and invited the participants to an interactive debate on the topics covered by the presentations. Interventions were made by representatives of Algeria, Brazil, Cuba, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Malaysia, Pakistan (on behalf of the Organization of the Islamic Conference), South Africa, the Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey and Yemen, as well as of the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee, the International Labour Office (ILO) and North-South XXI.

28. There was general agreement that extreme poverty is both the cause and result of human rights violations and should be addressed with a multifaceted approach requiring short, medium and long-term action. It was stated that international human rights norms must be integrated into national poverty reduction plans and reflected in the international trade norms and regulations of international financial institutions in order to create a just and equitable international economic order. The importance of an open, equitable and non-discriminatory international trading system was underlined by several participants.

29. The majority of speakers also welcomed the decision of the Council to preserve the Social Forum as a unique space for interactive dialogue between the United Nations human rights machinery and various stakeholders, including grass-roots organizations.

30. Furthermore, a human rights-based approach to poverty, developed and pursued by the United Nations system, should rely on all relevant instruments, including ILO standards. The human rights content of relevant ILO instruments are particularly evident, especially those instruments concerning workers' rights, discrimination, child labour and forced labour. The linkage between international labour standards and the realization of economic, social and cultural rights was also highlighted.

31. With regard to the definition of poverty, attention was drawn to the fact that often the terms “poverty” and “extreme poverty” are used interchangeably and that this should be avoided by the Social Forum. Similarly, the need to make a clear distinction between material and non-material poverty was emphasized. Measuring poverty by the index of a dollar per day was found to be misleading as the diversity of poverty in different countries cannot be reduced to a universal figure.

32. Commenting on the globalization process, a number of representatives highlighted its negative aspects and effect on poverty, and concurred with the view that the efficiency gains of globalization should be accompanied by social justice. It was stated that, while Governments have the primary responsibility for the implementation of national policies for poverty eradication, the implementation of such policies is often intertwined with a multitude of factors operating at the international level. Domestic efforts to combat poverty must be complemented by a conducive and supportive international framework and cooperation. In this context, the role of international assistance and cooperation was highlighted as a crucial factor in poverty eradication, whereas regrets were expressed for the difficulties of the majority of developed countries in meeting the target of allocating 0.7 per cent of their GDP to ODA.

33. In the view of some speakers, the causes of extreme poverty include lack of good governance and corruption at the national level, while others referred to foreign occupation, unilateral coercive measures and sanctions, which directly affect the social, economic and political development of independent and sovereign States, and pose additional obstacles to the full enjoyment of all human rights by peoples and individuals under their jurisdiction.

34. Many interventions brought examples of best practices drawn from a variety of social programmes or social security schemes implemented at the national level, and shared information on the challenges and successes of national efforts to combat poverty. At the international level, specific measures to contribute to the global fight against poverty included, for instance, the draft guiding principles on extreme poverty and human rights, the campaign “Action against hunger and poverty” and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) fund to combat poverty. In this respect, it was stressed that the fight against poverty from a human rights perspective should remain a key priority of OHCHR.

International trade policies and poverty

35. Addressing the topic of international trade policies and poverty, Jean-Pierre Lehmann, Professor of International Political Economy, IMD and Founding Director of the Evian Group, began his presentation by stating that trade per se would not reduce poverty and that organizations such as the United Nations, the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the World Bank had paid a disservice in suggesting that trade barriers and subsidies had contributed to poverty. While it is true that the reduction of subsidies in Europe and the United States of America will greatly benefit the poor in the developing world, he emphasized that the real problem of poverty is at the domestic level. In his opinion, adequate domestic conditions, such as good governance, human capital formation, entrepreneurship and macroeconomic stability are more important to poverty reduction than trade. South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore were mentioned as positive examples that have shown how to reduce poverty through human capital development and macroeconomic stability.

36. Aileen Kwa, Programme Coordinator of the Trade and Development Programme, South Centre, maintained that most countries have been advised to become more integrated with the global economy through exports, which led to deepening poverty in the least developed countries, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, in spite of increasing worldwide economic growth and trade. She shared statistics on the agriculture and manufacturing sectors in a number of countries to show how imports have surged, resulting in serious drops in production, cuts in employment and reduction in household incomes. Since an exports-based economic policy is not sustainable in the long term for all countries and causes domestic markets to shrink, she advocated the re-agriculturalization and re-industrialization of countries and regions, while reviewing the fundamentals of the trade system in order to place human rights at the centre of trade liberalization obligations.

37. In his presentation, David Luke, Senior Trade Adviser and Coordinator of the Trade and Human Development Unit, UNDP/Geneva, indicated that globalization has resulted, on the one hand, in technological progress, economic and financial integration and higher productivity, and on the other, in widening income inequality across and within countries. He explained the activities and priorities of UNDP in the area of trade and development, and stressed that it had assumed a stronger analytical and substantive role since the 1990s.

38. The Chairperson-Rapporteur then invited the participants to an interactive debate. Statements were made by representatives of Barbados, Mexico, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen. It was recognized that trade as such does not directly mitigate poverty as there is no assurance that trade-generated wealth will have an impact on the poor. It was also noted that international trade has a role to play and that, in that sense, the Doha round was a step in attempting to reduce poverty. It was also emphasized that the realities and history of developing countries must be taken into consideration in the design of trade policies and agreements. Calls were made for the Social Forum to recommend the continuation of negotiations at WTO to conclude an agreement that will contribute to the alleviation of poverty, particularly in the least developed countries.

The role of civil society in the eradication of poverty at the grass-roots level

39. Ingrid Srinath, Secretary-General of CIVICUS, commented that State policies that exclude the marginalized segment of society from the enjoyment of its rights are often the cause of poverty. In her view, civil society exists as an amplifier of marginalized voices. She identified participatory governance as the solution to most of the issues that had been raised during the Social Forum, including poverty. Policies informed by the needs of the most affected and marginalized segments of the society ensure equitable and effective implementation. At the same time, the speaker expressed concern about draft laws in a number of countries that would restrict the freedom of civil society and therefore affect their action and efforts aimed at poverty reduction and elimination.

40. Ms. Perez de Perez and Mr. Genin, both representing ATD Quart Monde, described in detail the work of ATD Quart Monde with poor communities in the Central African Republic and Guatemala. Their experience with these communities demonstrated that people living in extreme poverty are always the first to act to transform their lives, and therefore they must be encouraged to participate fully in local and national strategies for eliminating poverty. Civil

society has a role to play in helping to build bridges between people living in extreme poverty and other segments of the society, particularly national and local authorities and public services in appropriate forums and dialogue.

41. The Chairperson-Rapporteur then opened the floor to participants. Representatives of Franciscans International, the International Council for Women, Atlas and the Union nationale de la femme tunisienne made statements on the theme at discussion. It was stated that civil society had been undertaking a great deal of work to combat extreme poverty; a specific example of the work of an organization in India was provided. References were made to the effect of poverty on women, and it was argued that women are disproportionately affected by poverty owing to structural inequalities. Speakers supported the view that strategies to eradicate poverty should not be generalized; they should take into account the gender dimension of poverty.

The role and social responsibility of transnational corporations in poverty eradication

42. Filippo Veglio, Business Solutions Leader of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development pointed out that the business sector is part of the solution to development challenges. He presented several case studies of companies carrying out projects in developing countries involving and benefiting low-income sectors and promoting sustainable and inclusive business activities with partners from the development community and civil society. It is crucial that the role of business is viewed beyond the provision of resources and reflected as such in the debate on development cooperation. Business should be brought to the table as a key enabler of social and economic progress and as a key stakeholder in efforts to achieve sustainable development.

43. Gerald Pachoud, Special Adviser to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises, believed that the private sector can contribute to poverty alleviation, since business is a major source of investment and job creation. The private sector can generate growth and increase demand for rule of law, thus creating conditions conducive to human rights and breaking the cycle of poverty. He also acknowledged the negative impact of the business sector on human rights, and identified as a solution to ease the impact, the tripartite framework of business and human rights, namely the State's duty to protect human rights and remedy in case of violations, and the duty of business to respect all human rights at all times.

44. The Chairperson-Rapporteur emphasized that the topic under discussion was important and posed a dilemma for the international community, requiring further reflection and examination by the United Nations. He then opened the floor for comments and questions from participants. Statements were made by representatives of South Africa and the Syrian Arab Republic, as well as the Deputy Chairperson of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the independent expert on the question of human rights and extreme poverty.

45. Concern was expressed for the duty of the State to protect against abuses of transnational corporations. It was stated that there were a number of States that could not realistically control corporations, because, at times they have more resources than the State itself. Moreover, it was claimed that, with regard to multinationals, there are no clear rules on the responsibilities and areas needing protection by States.

46. It was further emphasized that economic growth and the creation of employment are important to the reduction of poverty, but certainly not sufficient. People living in poverty do not often benefit from national growth, and they subsist with work that is ill-paid. The fight against poverty needs a multifaceted approach, not solely from the side of the companies.

47. It was also noted that an existing United Nations initiative, the Global Compact, aims at reinforcing the link between human rights, combating poverty and corporate social responsibility. Nevertheless, there is a need for the Global Compact to act with more tangible and realistic initiatives to move it out from the realm of theoretical discourse.

B. Social dimension of the globalization process

Decent and favourable work conditions

48. Focusing on the social impact of globalization, Raymond Torres, Director of the International Institute for Labour Studies, ILO, explained that globalization in the form of free trade and foreign direct investment had brought about new growth and job creation; yet, the benefits have been unequally shared both across countries and within them. Real wages have grown moderately and the labour market is more unstable. Financial globalization has further exacerbated labour market instability, as will be shown in the forthcoming ILO World of Work Report. In this context, attention was drawn to a comprehensive policy package developed by ILO, the Decent Work Agenda, and its four components: promotion of employment; social protection; fundamental principles and rights at work; and social dialogue. The Decent Work Agenda is complemented by two recent ILO initiatives: the 1998 Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its follow-up, and the 2008 Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization and its follow-up.

49. According to Brent Wilton, Deputy Secretary-General of the International Organization of Employers, business and employers welcome globalization. While globalization is evidently concerned with multinationals, it predominantly affects small- and medium-sized enterprises. The vast majority of enterprises remain nationally based, and tend to be small and medium-sized. They are fragile in terms of access to financing, management skills, employee skills and access to markets. Mr. Wilton emphasized that Governments should assist small- and medium-sized enterprises to benefit from globalization. Most importantly, Governments should engage the private sector and encourage the creation of businesses and entrepreneurship. In conclusion, he urged States to support and implement the 1998 ILO Declaration of Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and the 2008 Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization, which was unanimously adopted by all States members of ILO and has the potential to make ILO more responsive to the needs of Member States.

50. In her presentation, Anna Biondi, Director of the International Trade Union Confederation, Geneva Office, also made reference to the 2008 ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization and commented that, with regard to labour issues, the Declaration would help shape the globalization process. She welcomed economic and employment growth, but cautioned that it could come at the expense of neglecting workers' rights, particularly those of women workers, hence the need for instituting reality checks. She further called for the real application of labour legislation, particularly in terms of freedom of association and collective bargaining, and recalled that this had been previously recognized by the employers' organization.

51. The Chairperson-Rapporteur then opened the interactive dialogue. Statements were made by representatives of Belgium, Chile, Ecuador, Italy, Peru and Ukraine, as well as the Association universelle d'esperanto.

52. It was noted that trade agreements have led to important economic success for a number of countries, though at times disregarding workers' rights. Globalization has weakened the collective bargaining power of workers as compared to the situation in the 1980s, and in certain situations has resulted in a worsening of labour conditions. There is a false expectation that economic growth will automatically increase work supply. Concerns were expressed for the situation of migrant workers not enjoying decent work conditions, particularly in the informal economy, where labour standards are not enforced.

53. The Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization was considered a landmark document in that it reaffirms links between economic and social development, sets fundamental commitments for ILO and Member States, and brings an innovative element into the trade labour nexus, namely that the violation of fundamental principles and rights at work cannot be invoked or otherwise used as a legitimate comparative advantage. The effective implementation of the Declaration remains a challenge. Views were expressed in support of incorporating the decent work programme of ILO into the agenda of the Human Rights Council.

Good governance and corruption

54. Nadia Balgobin, board member of Transparency International, Switzerland, stated that corruption is a major cause of poverty and an obstacle to development. Transparency International has developed the concept of an advocacy and legal advice centre, which helps the poor to address corruption and claim their rights through (a) receiving complaints; (b) providing legal advice; (c) advocacy; and (d) capacity-building.

55. Sharing his experience from a small village in South Africa, Derek Luyt, Head of Media and Advocacy at the Public Service Accountability Monitor, stated that a major obstacle to poverty alleviation in South Africa is poor governance, which includes not simply corruption, but also poor performance of Government officials in their management of public resources and a lack of political will to act against underperforming officials. To combat this, accountability monitoring by civil society is most important; the independence of civil society organizations allows them to conduct more effective accountability monitoring of State governance, as well as more independent advocacy around accountability issues. Governments at all levels, especially at the provincial and local levels, needs to be held accountable for efficient and effective planning and budgeting, programme implementation, and oversight and corrective action. The speaker recommended that accountability needs to be part of good governance and that civil society organizations need to be progressively empowered in order to hold Governments accountable.

56. Recalling that the Social Forum refers to poverty as cause and consequence of human rights violations, Nohay El-Mikawy, Policy Adviser of Governance and Poverty at the UNDP Oslo Governance Centre, stated that the democratic governance pillars of UNDP seek to address this by working on inclusive participation of rights holders as well as responsive delivery of equitable policies and services by duty bearers. She emphasized that the democratic governance group, the Bureau for Development Policy, approaches governance and poverty reduction as two

sides of the same coin, and provided examples of tools and programmes of the Oslo Governance Centre, relating to (a) nationally owned governance assessments that are disaggregated to capture the experience of the vulnerable and marginalized and embedded in development processes; and (b) knowledge-sharing from the field and partnership-building for capacity development in cross-cutting issues, such as land governance and the equitable governance of services and Millennium Development Goals sectors.

57. The Chairperson-Rapporteur invited the participants to an interactive dialogue on the above presentations. The representatives of Bangladesh and the Syrian Arab Republic, as well as North-South XXI, made statements, as did the Deputy Chairperson of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the independent expert on the question of human rights and extreme poverty. It was reaffirmed that corruption had a disproportionate impact on poor people, for example, by increasing the cost and decreasing the quality of public services on which people living in poverty depend. A human rights-based approach would greatly benefit the fight against corruption by adding its central elements, such as access to information, accountability and empowerment.

58. It was also noted that the traditional focus on anti-corruption had been entirely on the national Government in developing countries, the corrupted but not corrupters. The latter are often hidden in financial centres, transnational corporations, intermediary lawyers and consultant services. It was stated that, in certain situations, bribes paid by transnational corporations could amount to more than the official development aid given to certain developing countries. Consequently, it was stressed that accountability for corruption at the international level is as necessary as at the national level. Adequate laws, institutions, administrative procedures, Ombudsmen, national human rights institutions and parliamentary scrutiny of public officials are essential to eradicate an environment that fosters corruption.

Access to affordable essential drugs and health care

59. Richard Laing, a medical officer at Policy, Access and Rational Use, Medicine Policy and Standards of the World Health Organization (WHO) made reference to the right to health and stated that one way to measure the enjoyment of this right was through the analysis of access to medicines. He noted that, in order to improve the availability and affordability of essential medicines, it is necessary to have reliable evidence on medicine prices, availability, affordability and price components. He commented on a survey tool developed by WHO and Health Action International that facilitates data collection and analysis and provides a standard method that has been used in more than 50 surveys in all regions of the world. The results have exposed many instances of poor access to medicines including cases of unaffordable medicines for chronic diseases, deficit of important medicines to patients at the local level, Governments not passing on low procurement prices to their citizens, excessive mark-ups in the private sector and taxes and duties being applied to essential medicines.

60. Margaret Ewen of Health Action International highlighted that it was essential that surveys have an impact on policies. She provided several positive examples of policy changes following medicine price and availability surveys. There are multiple policy options to reduce the price of medicines, such as improving procurement efficiency (national pooled purchasing, procurement by generic name), ensuring adequate, equitable and sustainable financing (health insurance

systems that cover essential medicines), and particularly by promoting the use of generic drugs. She also stated that the current challenge is to determine the most effective policy actions in a different context which, in her view, requires examination of country experiences.

61. The Chairperson-Rapporteur opened the floor to participants for the interactive dialogue. Representatives from Brazil, Chile and Malaysia and the Association of World Citizens and People's Health Movement made statements.

62. The issue of access to essential medicine and health care should be discussed in tandem with such issues as the need for affordable technology, international cooperation and intellectual property rights in particular. It was pointed out that intellectual property rights are a barrier to access to essential drugs, especially for developing countries, since research and development is expensive and requires considerable investment. Intellectual property rights raise the final price of medicines, particularly in developing countries. At the same time, essential medicines, with the exception of anti-retroviral drugs, are in general off-patent, hence there is no real intellectual property barrier. In this context, support was expressed for wider dissemination of generic versions of essential medicines. Another speaker highlighted the urgent need to move beyond treating symptoms to address underlying structural determinants of health, for example, access to clean water. Speakers recalled the importance of the 1978 Declaration of Alma Ata on primary health care, which remains an objective still far from realization.

Climate change

63. Theodor Rathgeber of the German Forum on Human Rights identified the negative effects of climate change, particularly the resulting forced migration and the threat to food and water security. He also stressed that climate change has a disproportionate impact on the poorest regions because they are least able to adjust to new conditions. Providing a number of examples of how different communities around the world perceive the changes, the speaker observed that, from the viewpoint of a grass-roots approach, a major problem seemed to be the lack of involvement of local people in decision-making processes and in the design and implementation of initiatives to address climate change at the national, regional and international levels.

64. Tomas Alarcon, President of the Comisión Jurídica para el Autodesarrollo de los Pueblos Originarios Andinos stated that, in his Andean region, water is diverted from the Andes to the cities for mining operations and industrialization, which negatively affects the overall ecosystem and sustenance of Amazonian biodiversity. In this context, he stressed the effective implementation of relevant international conventions, such as ILO Convention 169 and the Convention on Biological Diversity, particularly with regard to respect for traditional methods and knowledge, and obligations to obtain prior consent of local communities prior to any action affecting their livelihood. He also called for the creation of a mechanism for international monitoring of such implementation and for decriminalization of the de facto persecution of local movement and activities against action affecting climate change.

65. Ismail Elgizouli of the Programme on Climate of the High Council for Environment, Sudan, referred to the particular vulnerability of the Sudan to the effects of climate change because of the fragile ecosystem, weak infrastructure and economy, and the fact that 70 per cent of the country is reliant on climate-dependent resources for livelihood. The sectors affected by

climate change include the water sector, agriculture and natural resources, biodiversity, health (vector and epidemic diseases), the industrial economy, and political geography leading to conflict over natural resources. Mr. Elgizouli pointed out that the combination of decades of drought, desertification and overpopulation was among the causes of the conflict in Darfur, because the nomads searching for water had to take their livestock further south to land mainly occupied by farming communities.

66. The Chairperson-Rapporteur then opened the floor to participants. A representative from the Sudan made a statement, as did representatives from the Commission for Legal Aid to Andean and Amazonian People for Development, the International Council on Human Rights Policy and the International Organization for Migration.

67. Reference was made to Council resolution 7/23 on the link between climate change and human rights. There was a suggestion that an international monitoring system for water resources be established. Speakers pointed out the need for continued open debate on human rights and climate change at all relevant forums, including the future sessions of the Social Forum.

68. With regard to migration, it was stated that migration in relation to climate change is not only a failure to adapt, but an adaptation in itself. Migration is motivated for different reasons, one being climate change. Migrants should be regarded as agents of change, not just victims. There is a need to develop a legal framework and apply a rights-based approach to migration to improve the situation of migrants. It was emphasized that, despite the fact that migration transcends borders, responses to deal with migration are regulated by borders; increased cooperation between States is therefore essential.

Food security, the food crisis and the right to food

69. Manzoor Ahmad, Director of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations Liaison Office in Geneva focused his presentation on the food crisis, with particular emphasis on its relationships to poverty and globalization. He noted that, while globalization seems to have reduced overall poverty levels, it has not reduced extreme poverty, and has not helped the fight against hunger, because globalization has acted perversely in agriculture. Huge subsidies in developed countries that provide them with an unfair advantage, a decrease in aid for agriculture and the non-existence of adjustment policies for farmers suffering the adverse effects of globalization are but some of the reasons for the increase in hunger globally.

70. Mr. Ahmad emphasized the need for short- and long-term policies to tackle the food crisis. Urgent action is required to meet the immediate needs, for example, by improving access of the vulnerable to emergency food assistance, nutrition interventions and other social safety nets, boosting smallholder farmer food production and adjusting trade and taxation policies to support immediate food availability. For long-term policies, Mr. Ahmad suggested sustaining growth in food availability through smallholder-led production, increasing coverage and efficiency of social protection systems, and strengthening food security risk management.

71. The Special Rapporteur on the right to food, Olivier de Schutter, referred to the current food crisis and highlighted the benefits of incorporating a human rights-based approach to the efforts to address the crisis. He identified some of the causes of the current food crisis and two

risks the international community is running in its reaction to the causes and the crisis: a focus on levels of prices exclusively, and a focus solely on overall levels of production in agriculture. He believed that a human rights approach would help avoid falling into these traps. The role of good governance, highlighted as an important element, has been ignored in efforts to address the crises so far. The Secretary-General was very reactive by setting up a high-level task force on the issue, however, the right to food was not taken into account sufficiently in the prescriptions for its work.

72. The Special Rapporteur further stated that human rights can guide the response to the crisis and policy development at two levels: they can encourage Governments to ensure adequate mapping of insecurity and vulnerability, and hence ensure targeted responses to the people most at risk and better monitoring and accountability by providing remedy mechanisms to victims. At another level, a human rights approach can encourage other forms of international cooperation, for example by establishing a global reinsurance fund to allow Governments to finance intervention funds and social safety nets to shield the population from negative effects. He concluded by emphasizing once more the role of human rights. He stated that the food crisis is not just a matter for technocrats, in terms of increasing the overall level of production; it is a human rights issue in terms of understanding who benefits and who loses out.

73. Christian Courtis, Legal Officer for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of the International Commission of Jurists supported the added value of applying a human rights approach to the food crisis. Human rights provide a number of procedural safeguards or checks: for instance, if processes are participatory and transparent, if there is access to remedy and information, and if accountability of the Government is ensured. However, he recognized that the most difficult task is to frame substantive rather than procedural issues regarding human rights.

74. Mr. Courtis further explained that distribution of food and natural resources are encompassed in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. There are core obligations and minimum targets that should be addressed, including the focus on those living in conditions of food insecurity.

75. Following the above presentations, the Chairperson-Rapporteur opened the floor for interactive debate. Speakers included representatives of Algeria, Brazil, Chile, France, the Syrian Arab Republic, Viet Nam and Yemen, as well as the organization ATLAS. José Bengoa, a member of the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee and the Deputy Chairperson of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights also took the floor.

76. It was stated that the food crisis is complex, and a combination of various factors have caused it, including high oil prices, a decline in crop yields owing to climate change, increased freight costs, speculation and the rise in food consumption in developing countries. It was also mentioned that the crisis reveals a problem in the distribution and purchasing power of food rather than in its production. A view was expressed arguing that the issue of biofuels should be disassociated from the food crisis. It was explained that, when biofuels are produced in a balanced manner to meet the needs of each country, it can be an important means of production beneficial to grass-roots communities.

77. Protecting the interests of farmers was highlighted as central to the mitigation of the food crisis. Farmers are currently threatened by an increase in the price of seeds and means of production. The need for policies to improve the position of small farmers and the production levels of the agricultural sector was also emphasized. In this connection, guaranteeing land rights was also seen as a key to promoting farmers' rights. It was also stated that more attention should be given to the impact of intellectual property rights on agriculture, the food crisis and exploring innovative ways to alleviate hunger.

78. There were calls for urgent measures by the international community to avoid a situation wherein whole regions of the world are deprived of food and others are plunged into violence. Reference was made to a number of successful national strategies to combat hunger as well as international initiatives, such as the New York Declaration on Action against Hunger and Poverty of 20 September 2004. Also, there were expressions of appreciation for the efforts of the Human Rights Council regarding food security. Reference was made to the prominent role played by the Council in the current food crisis by convening a special session to discuss the matter and at which it adopted resolution S-7/1 on the negative impact of the worsening of the world food crisis on the realization of the right to food for all.

C. Interactive debate with relevant thematic procedures mandate-holders of the Human Rights Council

79. The Social Forum devoted a segment of its session to an interactive debate with thematic procedures mandate-holders of the Council, namely the independent expert on the question of human rights and extreme poverty, the Special Rapporteur on the right to food and the independent expert on the effects of foreign debt and other related international financial obligations of States on the full enjoyment of human rights, particularly economic, social and cultural rights.

80. In inviting the participants to the debate, the Chairperson-Rapporteur recalled the four areas of discussion he had proposed in his statement at the opening of the Forum (see paragraph 10 above). He proposed that the interventions focus on those areas and be made with the view of contributing to the formulation of recommendations and conclusions of the discussions, held during the three-day meeting, and that themes for the 2009 Social Forum be suggested.

81. Cuba, France, Saudi Arabia, the Syrian Arab Republic, and Thailand, as well as the Association of World Citizens, Association universelle d'esperanto, ATD Quart Monde, Franciscans International and the International Federation of Social Workers participated in and made interventions at the debate.

IV. CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND THEMES FOR THE 2009 SOCIAL FORUM

A. Conclusions

82. The conclusions below are based on presentations and statements made during the interactive debate.

83. The 2008 Social Forum welcomed the decision of the Human Rights Council to preserve the Social Forum as a unique space for interactive dialogue between the United Nations human rights machinery and various stakeholders, including grass-roots organizations.
84. The Social Forum should be open to all stakeholders, particularly grass-roots organizations, and efforts should be made to bring to future sessions of the Forum representatives from a broader range of stakeholders, in particular from developing countries and including those living in poverty, particularly women. Civil society organizations are recognized as amplifiers of the voice of the poor.
85. The Social Forum is considered ideally placed to identify best practices and to promote the incorporation of a human rights approach into poverty reduction.
86. There was prevailing agreement that poverty and human rights are linked in at least three ways: (a) poverty can be both a cause and consequence of human rights violations; (b) the realization of all human rights and efforts to eliminate extreme poverty are mutually reinforcing; and (c) human rights norms and principles provide the framework for poverty reduction and/or eradication. In this respect, it was stressed that the fight against poverty from a human rights perspective should remain a priority of OHCHR.
87. A multifaceted human rights-based approach was considered paramount to poverty reduction. Participation of the poor, accountability and access to remedies were highlighted as the most important added values of the human rights-based approach to poverty reduction strategies.
88. Participation of the poor is considered vital in the design and implementation of strategies and programmes aimed at poverty reduction. The Social Forum provides the opportunity to exchange good practices with a participatory approach to development policymaking.
89. International assistance and cooperation play a fundamental role in poverty eradication. In this context, it is regrettable to note the difficulties of the majority of developed countries in meeting the target reaffirmed in the Monterrey Consensus of allocating 0.7 per cent of their GDP to ODA.
90. While it was recognized that trade as such does not directly mitigate poverty and that there is no assurance that trade-generated wealth will have an impact on the poor, it was also noted that international trade has the potential of reducing poverty levels. The importance of an open, equitable and non-discriminatory international trading system was highlighted.
91. The role of the private sector in poverty eradication was recognized as an enabler of social and economic progress since business is a major source of investment and job creation. However, attention was also drawn to the negative impact of the business sector on human rights and to the fact that economic growth and the creation of employment are but contributing factors to the reduction of poverty.

92. Corruption was repeatedly referred to as a critical issue in poverty and human rights. Corruption is a major cause of poverty, an obstacle to development, impairs the enjoyment of all human rights and affects the rights of the poor disproportionately. A human rights-based approach would greatly benefit the fight against corruption by adding its central elements, including access to information, accountability and empowerment. Good governance and anti-corruption efforts are therefore essential in combating poverty.

93. The food crisis is a complex issue caused by a combination of factors, including high oil prices, reduction in crop yields caused by climate change, increased freight costs, speculation and the rise in food consumption in developing countries. It was agreed that the crisis reflects a problem in the distribution and purchasing power of food rather than in production. Protecting the interests of farmers and guaranteeing land rights was highlighted as central to the mitigation of the food crisis.

B. Recommendations

94. **Participants to the 2008 Social Forum proposed recommendations for consideration and action by the Human Rights Council which are summarized below.**

95. **It is essential to ensure a larger participation of grass-roots organizations as well as those living in poverty, particularly women, in future sessions of the Social Forum, particularly from developing countries. To this end, the Human Rights Council could set up a voluntary United Nations fund to provide resources to these organizations so that they can participate in and contribute to the deliberations of future forums.**

96. **The Social Forum should function as an instrument for dialogue and as a think tank on a human rights-based approach to poverty reduction. It should also promote better interaction between developed and developing countries, particularly through concerted efforts to achieve poverty reduction. In this respect, the fight against poverty from a human rights perspective should remain a priority of OHCHR.**

97. **The Social Forum should have a focused discussion on topics which are better defined. The themes to be assigned for future sessions of the Social Forum should be narrower in scope. The Social Forum should continue to focus on discrimination as both a cause and a consequence of poverty.**

98. **The role of the universal periodic review mechanism was highlighted as a useful tool to monitor poverty reduction strategies. The Social Forum recommends that the implementation of poverty reduction policies at the national level be monitored through the mechanism.**

99. **Emphasis was placed on the shared responsibility of all Member States in international cooperation and assistance aimed at poverty reduction. In this respect, the Human Rights Council should urge the concerned States to increase their ODA and to establish adequate mechanisms to ensure that assistance reaches the most poor and is implemented in accordance with the principles of transparency and accountability.**

100. **Governance indicators should be included in poverty reduction programmes. There is a need to develop indicators for the next Social Forum, which could serve as a point of reference for dialogue and on the basis of which concrete results can be achieved.**

101. **The private sector is regarded as an enabler of social and economic progress, but it can also have a negative impact on human rights and development. The role of the private sector in poverty eradication should be taken up with more attention and depth by the United Nations.**

102. **The Council could incorporate into its agenda consideration of the ILO decent work programme.**

103. **Corruption is considered one of the main causes of poverty and violations of human rights. The Council should make efforts to advance a human rights-based approach to the global fight against corruption. The Council should call on States to abide by international conventions against corruption, such as the United Nations conventions against corruption and the African Union convention on corruption, so that they are transposed into national laws.**

104. **The Council should call on States to advance work on the draft guiding principles on extreme poverty and human rights and encourage active participation by all stakeholders in related future events.**

C. Possible themes for the 2009 Social Forum

105. **The following themes were proposed by Member States and other participants for consideration by the 2009 Social Forum:**

(a) National anti-poverty programmes: best practices of States from different regions in implementing social security programmes from a human rights perspective;

(b) Accountability mechanisms: in-depth discussion and sharing of experiences and best practices on accountability mechanisms, including through monitoring based on indicators;

(c) Discrimination and social exclusion, including the economic, social and cultural rights of persons with disabilities;

(d) Participation and empowerment of the poor and best practices at all levels;

(e) International assistance and cooperation in combating poverty, including the obligations of international institutions;

(f) Armed conflict, foreign occupation and unilateral coercive measures, such as sanctions imposed by certain States in contradiction with the Charter of the United Nations, as causes of poverty and violations of human rights;

(g) The human rights perspective of good governance in poverty reduction programmes;

(h) The gap between policies promoted at the macrolevel and the reality of those living at the microlevel;

(i) Anti-corruption initiatives: best practices of States from different regions in implementing anti-corruption programmes from a human rights perspective;

(j) Migrants: first-, second- and third-generation migrants and their fight against poverty.

Annex I

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

1. Opening of the session.
2. Implementation of the mandate contained in Human Rights Council resolution 6/13.
3. Closure of the session.

Annex II

[ENGLISH ONLY]

PROGRAMME OF WORK

MONDAY, 1 SEPTEMBER 2008

10-10.30 a.m. **Opening of the Social Forum**

- H.E. Mr. Martin Ihoeghian Uhomobhi, President of the Human Rights Council, Permanent Representative of Nigeria to the United Nations Office in Geneva
- H.E. Mr. Mousa Burayzat, Chairperson-Rapporteur of the Social Forum, Permanent Representative of Jordan to the United Nations Office in Geneva
- Ms. Kyung-wha Kang, Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights

Poverty and human rights

10.30-11 a.m. **Human rights and extreme poverty**

A. Normative framework

Speakers:

- Ms. María Magdalena Sepulveda, Human Rights Council independent expert on the question of human rights and extreme poverty
- Mr. Ariranga Pillay, Member of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

11-11.30 a.m. **B. Enabling environment**

(i) Foreign debt and poverty

Speakers:

- Mr. Cephas Lumina, Human Rights Council independent expert on the effects of foreign debt and other related international financial obligations of States on the full enjoyment of human rights, particularly economic, social and cultural rights

- Mr. Nasser Shraideh, Secretary-General, Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, Jordan (statement read out by the representative of the Permanent Mission of Jordan)

11.30-11.45 a.m. **(ii) The role and responsibility of the State in poverty eradication**

Speaker:

- H.E. Mr. Li Baodong, Permanent Representative of the People's Republic of China to the United Nations Office in Geneva

11.45-12 noon **(iii) International assistance and cooperation**

Speaker:

- H.E. Mr. Omar Ben Mahmoud, Secretary of State, National Fund for Solidarity, Tunisia

12-1 p.m. **Open debate on the topics**

3-3.45 p.m. **(iv) International trade policies and poverty**

Speakers:

- Mr. Jean-Pierre Lehmann, Professor of International Political Economy, IMD, Founding Director of the Evian Group
- Ms. Aileen Kwa, Programme Coordinator of the Trade and Development Programme, South Centre
- Mr. David Luke, Senior Trade Adviser and Coordinator of the Trade and Human Development Unit, UNDP/Geneva

3.45-4.30 p.m. **Open debate on the topic**

4.30-5.15 p.m. **(v) The role of civil society in the eradication of poverty at the grass-roots level**

Speakers:

- Ms. Ingrid Srinath, Secretary-General of CIVICUS
- Mr. Alain Genin, ATD Quart Monde
- Ms. Rosalbina Perez de Perez, ATD Quart Monde

5.15-6 p.m. **Open debate on the topic**

TUESDAY, 2 SEPTEMBER 2008

B. Enabling environment (*continued*)

10-10.30 a.m. (vi) **The role and social responsibility of transnational corporations in poverty eradication**

Speakers:

- Mr. Gerald Pachoud, Special Adviser to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business corporations
- Mr. Filippo Veglio, Business Solutions Leader, Development Focus Area, World Business Council for Sustainable Development

10.30-11.15 a.m. **Open debate on the topic**

Social dimension of the globalization process

11.15-12 noon **A. National strategies**

(i) **Decent and favourable work conditions**

Speakers:

- Mr. Raymond Torres, Director of the International Institute for Labour Studies, International Labour Organization
- Ms. Anna Biondi, Director of the International Trade Union Confederation, Geneva Office
- Mr. Brent Wilton, Deputy Secretary-General of the International Organization of Employers

12-1 p.m. **Open debate on the topic**

3-3.45 p.m. (ii) **Good governance/corruption**

Speakers:

- Ms. Nadia Balgobin, Board Member of Transparency International/Switzerland
- Mr. Derek Luyt, Head, Media and Advocacy, Public Service Accountability Monitor
- Ms. Nohay El-Mikawy, Policy Adviser for Governance and Poverty, UNDP Oslo Governance Centre

3.45-4.30 p.m. **Open debate on the topic**

B. Global challenges

4.30-5 p.m. **(i) Access to affordable essential drugs and health care**

Speakers:

- Mr. Richard Laing, Medical Officer, Policy, Access and Rational Use, Medicine Policy and Standards, World Health Organization
- Ms. Margaret Ewen, Health Action International

5-6 p.m. **Open debate on the topic**

WEDNESDAY, 3 SEPTEMBER 2008

B. Global challenges (*continued*)

10-10.45 a.m. **(ii) Climate change**

Speakers:

- Mr. Theodor Rathgeber, German Forum on Human Rights
- Mr. Tomas Alarcon, President of the Comisión Jurídica para el Autodesarrollo de los Pueblos Originarios Andinos
- Mr. Ismail Elgizouli, Programme on Climate, High Council for Environment, Sudan

10.45-11.30 a.m. **Open debate on the topic**

11.30-12.15 p.m. **(iii) Food security, the food crisis and the right to food**

Speakers:

- Mr. Olivier de Schutter, Human Rights Council Special Rapporteur on the right to food
- Mr. Christian Courtis, Legal Officer for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of the International Commission of Jurists
- Dr. Manzoor Ahmad, Director, FAO Liaison Office, Geneva

12.15-1 p.m. **Open debate on the topic**

- 3-4 p.m. **Interactive debate with holders of the relevant thematic procedures mandates of the Human Rights Council on issues related to the topics of the Social Forum**
- 4-5.30 p.m. **Conclusions and recommendations to be presented to relevant United Nations bodies**
- (i) Raising international awareness;
 - (ii) International assistance and cooperation;
 - (iii) Specific and action oriented initiatives;
 - (iv) An enhanced role of the United Nations system;
 - (v) Possible themes for the 2009 Social Forum.
- 5.30-6 p.m. **Closure of the Social Forum**

Annex III

[ENGLISH ONLY]

LIST OF ATTENDANCE

States members of the Human Rights Council

Argentina, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Canada, Chile, China, Cuba, Egypt, France, Germany, Ghana, Indonesia, Italy, Jordan, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mexico, Netherlands, Pakistan, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, South Africa, Switzerland, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay, Zambia.

States members of the United Nations

Afghanistan, Algeria, Austria, Barbados, Belgium, Botswana, Bulgaria, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kazakhstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Morocco, Nepal, Norway, Oman, Peru, Romania, Serbia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zimbabwe.

Non-Member States represented as observers

Holy See.

United Nations funds, programmes, specialized agencies and related organizations

United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Population Fund, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, International Labour Office, United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, World Federation of United Nations Associations, World Health Organization.

Intergovernmental organizations

African Union, European Union, International Organization for Migration, International Organization of la Francophonie, League of Arab States, Organization of the Islamic Conference.

National institutions

Commissioner for Human Rights of Ukraine.

Non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

General status: ATD Fourth World, Caritas International, Centre Europe-Tiers Monde, Civicus-World Alliance Citizen Participation, Conseil international des femmes, Franciscans International, New Humanity, Union nationale de la femme tunisienne.

Special status: African Commission on Health Promoters and Human Rights, Association tunisienne pour l'auto-développement et la solidarité, Comisión Jurídica para el Autodesarrollo de los Pueblos Originarios Andinos, Espace Afrique International (EAI), Femmes Africa Solidarité, International Federation of Social Workers, Lutheran World Federation, Mbororo Social and Cultural Development Association, Transparency International, Women's World Summit Foundation.

Roster: Association of World Citizens, Friedrich Ebert Foundation, International Federation of Rural Adult Catholic Movements.

Other non-governmental organizations

Indigenous Peoples and Nations Coalition, Ocaproce International, Public Service Accountability Monitor.
