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Economic and Social Council

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Economic and Social Council
2013 Organizational Session
10th & 11th Meetings (AM & PM)

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL FILLS VACANCIES IN 14 SUBSIDIARY BODIES.

ADOPTS DECISIONS ON THEMES FOR 2013 SUBSTANTIVE SESSION

Resuming its 2013 organizational session, the Economic and Social Council met this morning to hold elections to fill vacant seats in its subsidiary bodies and adopt themes for some items of its upcoming substantive session.

Outstanding vacancies to be filled included those in the Statistical Commission, Commission on Population and Development, Commission on the Status of Women, Commission on Narcotic Drugs, Committee for Programme and Coordination, Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, and the Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund.

Other vacancies included the Commission on Social Development, Executive Board of the World Food Programme, Programme Coordinating Board of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), Intergovernmental Working Group of Experts on International Standards of Accounting and Reporting, Committee for the United Nations Population Award, Governing Council of the United Nations Human Settlement Programme, and International Narcotics Control Board.

In the first order of business, the Council elected eight members to the Statistical Commission, all of whom would serve four-year terms beginning on 1 January 2014. Seven members were elected by acclamation: Angola, Cameroon and Libya (African States); Russian Federation (Eastern European States); and Italy, New Zealand and Sweden (Western European and other States). In addition, Brazil (Latin American and Caribbean States) was elected by secret ballot.

Also by acclamation, the Netherlands (Western European and other States) was elected to fill one of the outstanding vacancies on the Commission for a term starting immediately and expiring on 31 December 2016.

Continuing its action, the Council elected to the Commission on Population and Development the following seven members by acclamation, for four-year terms beginning at the Commission's first meeting of its forty-eighth session and expiring at the close of its fifty-first session in 2018: Benin, Liberia, South Africa and Zambia (African States); Pakistan (Asia-Pacific States); and United Kingdom and United States (Western European and other States).

In the absence of other candidates for election to the Commission, the elections of three members from Asia-Pacific States, two members from Eastern European States, three members from Latin American and Caribbean States and one member from the Western European and other States, for two-year terms starting on 1 January 2013, were postponed.

Bangladesh was then elected by acclamation to an outstanding vacancy in the Asia-Pacific region for a term beginning at the first meeting of the Commission's forty-seventh session in 2013 and expiring at the close of the Commission's fiftieth session in 2017.

Afterwards, the Council decided to postpone elections of five outstanding vacancies, including one from Asia-Pacific States, one from Latin American and Caribbean States (both for terms beginning on the date of election and expiring at the close of the Commission's forty-ninth session in 2016), one from Asia-Pacific States and one from Eastern European States (for terms beginning at the first meeting of the Commission's forty-seventh session in 2013 and expiring at the close of the Commission's fiftieth session in 2017). The President asked regional groups to submit nominees for those unfilled seats as soon as possible.

Turning to its Commission on the Status of Women, the Council elected by acclamation the following 12 members to four-year terms beginning at the first meeting of the Commission's fifty-ninth session in 2014 and expiring at the close of its sixty-second session in 2018: Congo, Ghana, Kenya and the United Republic of Tanzania (African States); Bangladesh, India, Kazakhstan, Republic of Korea and Tajikistan (Asia-Pacific States); and El Salvador, Guyana and Uruguay (Latin American and Caribbean States). It then postponed, in the absence of more candidates, the election of one member from the African States, for the same terms.

The Council then turned to the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, electing the following 20 members, by acclamation, to four-year terms beginning on 1 January 2014: Angola, Benin, Nigeria, Togo (African States); India, Indonesia, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan (Asia-Pacific States); Croatia, Czech Republic and the Russian Federation (Eastern European States); Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia and Cuba (Latin American and Caribbean States) and Australia, Belgium, Canada, France and the United Kingdom (Western European and other States).

Next, the Council nominated by acclamation five members for election by the General Assembly to the Committee for Programme and Coordination. Terms would begin on 1 January 2014 and last three years. Candidates nominated were Benin and Ethiopia (African States); China and Japan (Asia-Pacific States); and Haiti (Latin American and Caribbean States). The Council postponed the nomination for election by the General Assembly of two other members, one member from the African States and one member from the Asia-Pacific States.

The President reminded the Council that five outstanding vacancies from previous elections remained open for members from Western European and other States. All of those terms would start on the date of election by the General Assembly. Four would expire on 31 December 2014 and one on 31 December 2015.

The Council then elected seven members to the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues for three year terms beginning on 1 January 2014. Three members were elected by acclamation. They were: Mohammad Hassani Nejad Pirkouhi of Iran (Asia-Pacific States); and Oliver Loode of Estonia and Aisa Mukabenova of the Russian Federation (Eastern European States).

In addition, four further members were elected by secret ballot. Gervais Nzoa of Cameroon and Joseph Goko Mutangah of Kenya were elected to represent African States; Alvaro Esteban Pop Ac of Guatemala to represent Latin American and Caribbean States; and Megan Davis of Australia to represent Western European and other States. Bolivia withdrew their candidate.

The President said that after the Council had elected eight members to the Permanent Forum, he would appoint a further eight, communicating information about his appointees to the Council by letter at a later date.

Turning to the Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund, the Council then elected the

following eleven members, by acclamation, to three-year terms beginning on 1 January 2014: Zambia (African States); China and Papua New Guinea (Asia-Pacific States); Estonia and the Russian Federation (Eastern European States); Antigua and Barbuda and Panama (Latin American and Caribbean States) and Germany, Italy, Netherlands and the United Kingdom (Western European and other States).

The President also noted that Greece and Canada would resign their seats as of 1 January 2014. Japan was elected for a term of office from that date until 31 December 2014 and New Zealand was elected to a term of office expiring on 31 December 2015, both by acclamation.

Next, the Council elected by acclamation the following eleven members to the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme/United Nations Population Fund/United Nations Office for Project Services to three-year terms beginning 1 January 2014: the United Republic of Tanzania (African States); China and Nepal (Asia-Pacific States); Armenia and Montenegro (Eastern European States); Cuba and Ecuador (Latin American and Caribbean States); and Ireland, Netherlands Norway and the United States (Western European and other States).

The President also noted that Japan, New Zealand, Portugal and Spain would resign their seats as of 1 January 2014, with their replacements, all of whom were elected by acclamation, assuming the office from that date. Canada and Belgium were elected to a term of office expiring on 31 December 2014 and Switzerland and Finland were elected to a term of office expiring on 31 December 2015.

Continuing, the Council elected by consensus to its Commission on Social Development the following 12 members by acclamation to four-year terms beginning at the first meeting of the Commission's fifty-second session in 2013 and expiring at the close of its fifty-fifth session in 2017: the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Madagascar, Malawi and Uganda (African States);, China, Kuwait and Pakistan (Asia-Pacific States); Poland (Eastern European States); Argentina, Brazil and Chile (Latin American and Caribbean States); and Finland (Western European and other States). It then postponed, in the absence of more candidates, the election of one member from Asia-Pacific States, one member from Eastern European States and three members from Western European and other States, for the same terms.

Five members were elected by acclamation to the Executive Board of the World Food Programme for a three-year term beginning on 1 January 2014: Burundi and Ethiopia (African States); Pakistan (Asia-Pacific States); Cuba (Latin American and Caribbean States); and Norway (Western European and other States). In the absence of any other candidates, the Council agreed to postpone the election of one member from "List D" for the same term.

The Council then turned to the Programme Coordinating Board of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), electing the following seven members, by acclamation, to three-year terms beginning on 1 January 2014: the United Republic of Tanzania (African States); India and Kazakhstan (Asia-Pacific States); Ukraine (Eastern European States); El Salvador (Latin American and Caribbean States); and France and the United States (Western Europe and other States). In the absence of a second candidate from African States, the Council decided to postpone the election for the remaining slot for that region for the same term.

Filling outstanding vacancies from previously deferred elections, the Council elected, by acclamation, Côte d'Ivoire (African States) and Sri Lanka (Asia-Pacific States) for a term beginning today and expiring on 31 December 2014, and Ghana (African States) for a term beginning today and expiring on 31 December 2015, to the Intergovernmental Working Group of Experts on International Standards of Accounting and Reporting.

Afterwards, the Council decided to postpone elections to the Working Group of 17 outstanding vacancies, including one from Asia-Pacific States and eight from Western European and other States, all for terms beginning on the date of election and expiring on 31 December 2014; and four from Asia-Pacific States, two from Eastern European States and two from Latin American and Caribbean States, all for terms beginning on the date of election and expiring on 31 December 2015.

Continuing, the Council elected by acclamation Nigeria (African States) and Pakistan (Asia-Pacific States) to the Committee for the United Nations Population Award, both for terms beginning today and expiring 31 December 2015.

To the Governing Council of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the Council elected France and Norway (Western European and other States), by acclamation, for a term beginning today and expiring on 31 December 2016. The Council also postponed action on seven outstanding vacancies: two from Eastern European States and one from Western European and other States, all for terms beginning on the date of election and expiring on 31 December 2015; and two from Eastern European States and two from Western European and other States, all for terms beginning on the date of election and expiring on 31 December 2016.

Turning to its Committee of Experts on Public Administration, the Council postponed the appointment of the 24 experts, who would serve in their personal capacity for a four-year term beginning on 1 January 2014.

The Council then postponed to its Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters appointment of 25 experts to the Committee, who would serve in their expert capacity on the Committee for a four-year term beginning on 1 July 2013.

As well, the Council also postponed the election of 24 members of the Executive Board of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, to allow for sufficient time for the nomination process. The current terms expired on 31 December 2013. In line with General Assembly resolution 64/289 of 2 July 2010 on system-wide coherence, the Council President said that 18 members would be elected from the five regional groups and six members would be elected from contributing countries.

Next, the Council elected Sri Suryawati of Indonesia, by secret ballot, to the International Narcotics Control Board, for a term of office beginning today and expiring on 1 March 2017, filling a vacancy arising from the death of Hamid Ghodse of Iran.

In its final action, the Council adopted by consensus two draft decisions on themes for its 2013 substantive session. By way of the first draft, it established "regional perspectives on the post-2015 development agenda" as the theme for its agenda item on regional cooperation. The second decision set "the future of humanitarian affairs: towards greater inclusiveness, coordination, interoperability and effectiveness" as the theme for the humanitarian affairs segment, and decided that two panels would be held in conjunction, including one on "reducing vulnerability, improving capacities and managing risks: an approach for humanitarian and development actors to work together" and another on "promoting humanitarian innovation for improved response".

The 54-member Council is the principal organ for the socioeconomic and related work of the United Nations. Its subsidiary bodies include 14 specialized agencies, nine functional commissions, five regional commissions, standing committees, and expert and related bodies. The Council also receives reports from 11 of the Organization's funds and programmes, serving as the central forum for economic and social issues and as a policy adviser to States and to the United Nations system.

Candidates in today's proceedings were elected on the basis of equitable geographical distribution, and were mostly endorsed by the five regional groups representing African, Asian, Eastern European, Latin American and Caribbean, and Western European and other States.

The Economic and Social Council will reconvene at a time to be announced.

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