

2006/15 (Ref. E/2006/26)

Promoting youth employment*

The Economic and Social Council,

Reaffirming the resolve of Heads of State and Government, as contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration,¹ to develop and implement strategies that give young people everywhere a real chance to find decent and productive work and, as contained in the 2005 World Summit Outcome,² to make the goals of full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people, a central objective of their relevant national and international policies and their national development strategies, including poverty reduction strategies, as part of their efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals,

Recalling and reaffirming the commitments relating to youth employment made at the major United Nations conferences and summits since 1990 and their follow-up processes,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 54/120 of 17 December 1999, in which the Assembly took note with appreciation of the Lisbon Declaration on Youth Policies and Programmes adopted at the World Conference of Ministers Responsible for Youth in 1998,³ which set forth important commitments regarding youth employment, and recalling also Assembly resolutions 56/117 of 19 December 2001 and 57/165 of 18 December 2002,

Recognizing that young people are an asset for sustainable economic growth and social development, and expressing deep concern about the magnitude and disproportionate effect upon youth of unemployment and underemployment throughout the world and its profound implications for the future of our societies,

Recognizing also that Governments have a primary responsibility to educate young people, to encourage them to seek training so as to increase their employability and to create an enabling environment that will promote youth employment,

Recognizing further the need to promote, protect and fully respect the basic rights of young workers as defined by relevant International Labour Organization and other international instruments,

1. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on the global analysis and evaluation of national action plans on youth employment;⁴

2. Also takes note of the report of the Economic Commission for Africa entitled Economic Report on Africa, 2005: Meeting the Challenges of Unemployment and Poverty in Africa;⁵

3. Further takes note of the relevant provisions on employment of the Declaration of Mar del Plata of 5 November 2005 adopted at the Fourth Summit of the Americas, and the conclusions of the Presidency of the European Council of

* For the discussion, see chap. III, paras. 34-37.

¹ See General Assembly resolution 55/2.

² See General Assembly resolution 60/1.

³ See WCMRY/1998/28, chap. I, resolution 1.

⁴ A/60/133.

⁵ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.05.II.K.9.

23 March 2005, in which it was agreed that the European Youth Pact would be an integrated part of the Lisbon strategy;

4. Encourages the international community to provide technical and capacity-building support to developing countries, as appropriate, in supporting national development strategies, including poverty reduction strategy papers, where they exist, mainstreaming youth employment;

5. Encourages Governments that have prepared national reviews and action plans on youth employment to move forward to implementation and also encourages Governments that have not yet prepared their reviews, national action plans or progress reports to do so as soon as possible;

6. Also encourages Governments to develop their national action plans through collaboration among governmental bodies, representative youth organizations, employers' and workers' organizations and civil society, to promote partnerships among public authorities, the private sector, educational institutions and civil society and to integrate these action plans into their broader national development programmes, including poverty reduction strategy documents, where they exist, in order to create a methodology to evaluate the plans and strategies and to prioritize therein the necessary resources for their implementation;

7. Further encourages Governments to contribute to the possible development by the appropriate intergovernmental bodies of the United Nations of new policy-oriented indicators to better monitor and evaluate progress in implementing their national action plans, and invites the Youth Employment Network to contribute to this process, taking into account young people, including students and those who are unemployed, underemployed, working in the informal economy or who may have dropped out of the labour market altogether;

8. Urges Governments to consider youth employment as integral to their overall strategies for development and collective security, and within this context to give renewed attention to the United Nations Millennium Declaration¹ commitment concerning decent and productive work for young people as key to achieving the Millennium Development Goals;

9. Renews the invitation contained in General Assembly resolutions 57/165 of 18 December 2002 and 58/133 of 22 December 2003 to the International Labour Organization, in collaboration with the United Nations Secretariat, the World Bank and other relevant specialized agencies, within the framework of the Youth Employment Network, to assist and support, upon request, the efforts of Governments in the elaboration and implementation of national reviews and action plans;

10. Encourages Governments to improve the education, training, mobility, vocational integration and social inclusion of young people and, where appropriate, to promote entrepreneurship and facilitate the reconciliation of family life and working life, in order to support the integration of young people into the labour market;

11. Encourages Governments to facilitate interaction among educational institutions and the public and private sectors to prevent unemployment and the low returns on investment in training that result from a skills mismatch, and in this regard calls for technical support from relevant United Nations organizations and the international community for national and regional programmes such as the New

Partnership in Africa's Development⁶ and other regional economic groups in order to facilitate public-private integration;

12. Underlines that non-formal and informal learning are complementary elements to the formal educational process and are useful instruments in facilitating the transition from education to employment;

13. Invites new countries and partner organizations to join the Youth Employment Network, encourages the lead countries to strengthen the work of the Network as a peer exchange, support and review mechanism, and, in support of the further development of this mechanism, invites the International Labour Organization, in close cooperation with the World Bank and the United Nations Secretariat, within the framework of the Youth Employment Network, to undertake regular updates of the global analysis and evaluation of progress made in the development and implementation of national reviews and action plans on youth employment;

14. Recommends that the Youth Consultative Group of the Youth Employment Network be strengthened so that, in addition to its overall advisory role, it can play a more active role at the country level through its constituent youth organizations in supporting the development and implementation of national action plans;

15. Encourages Governments to promote the participation of national youth organizations in supporting the development and implementation of their national action plans on youth employment;

16. Notes with appreciation the provision by some Member States of expertise and financial resources to support the activities of the Youth Employment Network, and invites all Member States and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to contribute to the Network in support of action taken at the country level within the framework of the Network;

17. Requests the Secretary-General to include in his comprehensive report on the implementation of the cluster entitled "Youth in the global economy" of the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond,⁷ to be provided to the General Assembly at its sixty-second session, and the substantive session of the Economic and Social Council in 2007 through the Commission for Social Development at its forty-fifth session, information on the implementation of the present resolution, including progress achieved by the Youth Employment Network.

39th plenary meeting
26 July 2006

⁶ A/57/304, annex.

* For the discussion, see chap. III, sect. B.

⁷ General Assembly resolution 50/81, annex.