Mr. President,

I have the honour and privilege of submitting for the consideration of the General Assembly the “Report of the Economic and Social Council for 2005” contained in document A/60/3.

2. Let me avail of this opportunity to present to the Assembly a brief overview of the Council’s activities during this momentous year.

3. The ECOSOC Substantive Session for 2005 was deliberately conceptualized as a part of the preparations for the 2005 World Summit. All segments of the Session focused primarily on the theme of achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs.

4. Both at the Spring Meeting and during the Substantive Session there was an encouragingly high level of participation and involvement from governments, other international institutions as well as civil society.

5. A key innovation introduced at this year’s Session was a segment on Voices against Poverty. It provided a refreshing perspective on development by sending out following four powerful messages:

- the systemic basis for widespread poverty, symbolized by the unfair system of global trade and finance, remains intact;
- Economic growth and poverty eradication requires deliberate policies inter alia to redress the phenomena of jobless growth;
- proliferation of conflicts has generated millions of refugees and internally displaced persons for whom achieving the Millennium Development Goals was remote; and
- the ECOSOC has a unique role in providing system-wide policy coherence and coordination.

6. Several other important messages were conveyed during the Substantive Session of ECOSOC:

First, we are off track on achievement of most of the Millennium Development Goals, in many countries. An accelerated and concerted effort is required to achieve the MDGs.

Second, the UN system has come together behind the MDGs. There is now a UN development agenda. But a fully integrated follow-up to realize the development goals adopted at the several UN conferences is yet to emerge.

Third, international development cooperation remains critical in enabling most developing countries to implement the UN development agenda.

Fourth, security and development are inextricably linked. Without peace and stability, countries are not likely to achieve the development goals.

Fifth, humanitarian emergencies are increasing and need to be addressed through a comprehensive and coordinated response.
Six, there was a wide recognition of the central role that ECOSOC can play in promoting the international development agenda. The ECOSOC should be strengthened to effectively fulfill its Charter mandate.

7. The ECOSOC had a rich discussion on how this could be achieved. Following this, specific proposals were developed, which I had the privilege of submitting to the preparatory process at the 2005 Summit. The Summit recognized the need for a more effective Economic and Social Council and took several decisions to enhance its role in five specific areas:

**First, Policy dialogue and implementation:** The Summit has called upon ECOSOC to promote global dialogue and partnership on global policies and trends and assess progress on the follow-up of the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits. To this end, the Council should hold annual ministerial-level substantive reviews to assess progress, drawing on its functional and regional commissions and other international institutions, in accordance with their respective mandates.

**Second, ECOSOC as a Development cooperation forum:** ECOSOC should convene a biennial high-level Development Cooperation Forum to review trends in international development cooperation, to promote greater coherence among the development activities of different development entities.

**Third, Coherence and Coordination role:** The Council should play a major role in the overall coordination of funds, programmes and agencies, ensuring coherence among them and avoiding duplication of mandates and activities.

**Fourth, Response to emergencies:** The Council should also support and complement international efforts aimed at addressing humanitarian emergencies including natural disasters, in order to promote an improved, coordinated response from the United Nations. In this context, the Council will shortly convene two special events, on the food crisis in Africa and the threat of the Avian Flu to activate the important role the Council can play in sensitizing the international community to existing or potential humanitarian emergencies.

**Fifth, Peace-building:** Based on the experience gained within ECOSOC in the area of post-conflict reconstruction and development, the Council is expected to further promote a coordinated, coherent and integrated approach to post-conflict peace-building and reconstruction by inter-acting effectively with the Peace-building Commission.

8. A discussion on ECOSOC’s role in the follow-up to the decisions adopted at the 2005 Summit was initiated at an informal Summit meeting convened by the ECOSOC Bureau on 15 September 2005. The meeting, chaired by the President of Pakistan, included the participation of several heads of State and Government, the heads of the IMF, IBRD, UNDP, UNCTAD and UNESCAP, as well as senior ministerial representatives. A summary of the high-level discussion was circulated to all Member States.

9. We will need further consideration of ways and means to ensure the implementation of the decisions of the 2005 Summit to strengthen ECOSOC. For this purpose, in my capacity as the President of the Council, I have circulated a working paper, prepared after consultations with key delegations, country groupings and the Secretariat. The working paper offers a set of ideas and suggestions which, I hope, will provide a good basis for discussions in the General Assembly and lead to a consensus on ways and means to implement the 2005 Summit decisions on ECOSOC. I look to your leadership, Mr. President, in this endeavour.

10. In closing, I would like to stress that the Council’s achievements this year could not have been possible without the excellent work of the Council’s four Vice-Presidents, Ambassador Ali
Hachani of Tunisia, Ambassador Agim Nesho of Albania, Ambassador Diego Cardovez of Ecuador, and Ambassador Johan C. Verbeke of Belgium. They carried a major part of the burden of work. I will be remiss also if I do not recall the able and professional support of the Secretariat to the work of the Council I express my sincere gratitude to all of them.

Thank you.