Economic and Social Council Changes Theme, Sets Date of 2019 Session, Elects Members of Six Subsidiary Bodies

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The Economic and Social Council decided to change the theme of its 2019 session to “Empowering people and ensuring inclusivity and equality,” bringing it into line with that of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development — one of three decisions taken in a day that also featured elections to various subsidiary bodies.

Mexico’s delegate said the decision on the Council’s theme will have an impact on its subsidiary bodies.  It must therefore be clear in instructing the Commission on Social Development, the Commission on the Status of Women, the Commission on Population and Development and the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, and others, that their multi-annual plans must align with those of the Council and High-level Political Forum.

In other action, the Council decided to change the dates of its humanitarian affairs segment, which will now be held from 24 to 26 June 2019 in Geneva.  And on the recommendation of the Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters, contained in the report (document [E/2019/45](https://undocs.org/en/E/2019/45)) on its seventeenth session (16-19 October 2018), the Council decided that the eighteenth session will be held in New York from 23 to 26 April 2019, and approved its provisional work agenda.

The Council then moved on to fill vacancies on several of its subsidiary bodies, electing Brazil, Iran and Mali to the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission — with Iran elected by secret ballot — for terms beginning on the day of election and ending on 31 December 2020, or until that country ceases to be a Council member.  Iran’s delegate expressed disappointment that a single delegation had requested the vote, which went against established tradition.

The Council next elected Portugal, by acclamation, to the Commission on Social Development for a four-year term beginning at the first meeting of the Commission’s fifty-eighth session in 2019 and expiring at the close of its sixty-first session in 2023.

It postponed action on the following vacancies:  one from the Western European and other States, for a term beginning on the date of election and expiring at the close of the Commission’s fifty-eighth session in 2020; two from the Western European and Other States, for a term beginning on the date of election and expiring at the close of the Commission’s fifty-ninth session in 2021; and two from the Asia-Pacific States and one from the Western European and other States for a four-year term beginning at the first meeting of the Commission’s fifty-eighth session in 2019 and expiring at the close of its sixty-first session in 2023.

Turning to the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, the Council elected South Africa, by acclamation, for a term beginning on the date of election and expiring on 31 December 2020.  It postponed the election of one member from the Eastern European States for a term beginning on the date of election and expiring on 31 December 2021.

The Council likewise elected Ecuador, by acclamation, to the Commission on Science and Technology for Development for a term beginning on the date of election and expiring on 31 December 2022. It postponed the election of one member each from the African States and Latin American and Caribbean States, for terms beginning on the date of election and expiring on 31 December 2022.

The Council elected Guatemala, by acclamation, to the Intergovernmental Working Group of Experts on International Standards of Accounting and Reporting for a term beginning on the date of election and expiring on 31 December 2020.  It postponed elections on the following vacancies:  one member from African States, two members from the Asia-Pacific States, two members from the Latin American and Caribbean States and seven members from the Western European and other States, for a term beginning on the date of election and expiring on 31 December 2030; and one member from African States, one member from Asia-Pacific States and one member from Latin American and Caribbean States for a term beginning on the date of election and expiring on 31 December 2021.

Rounding out the day, the Council elected Fiji, the Gambia, Iceland, Indonesia, Panama, Romania and Thailand by acclamation to the Committee for the United Nations Population Award for a term beginning on the date of election and expiring on 31 December 2021.  It postponed the election of one member each from the African States and Latin American and Caribbean States, both for terms beginning on the date of election and expiring on 31 December 2021.

At the meeting’s outset, the Council elected Mona Juul (Norway) and Kira Christianne Danganan Azucena (Philippines) as Vice-Presidents of its 2019 session.  President Inga Rhonda King (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines) later announced that the regular round of subsidiary body elections will take place during the management meeting on 7 May 2019.