



OPENING SEGMENT

SIXTY-FOURTH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

MONDAY, 2 FEBRUARY 2026, 10:00 A.M.-11:00 A.M., CONFERENCE ROOM 4, UNHQ



**H.E. MS. KHRYSTYNA
HAYOVYSHYN**

H.E. Ms. Khrystyna Hayovyshyn, Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Envoy of the first class, is a Ukrainian diplomat with 20 years of experience in the national diplomatic service. She is the current Chair of the Bureau of the Commission for Social Development. In August 2022 she was appointed Deputy Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations and served as Chargée d’Affaires from February to May 2025. Prior to her current appointment she held various positions in the Office of the President of Ukraine and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine. She also served as Adviser to the Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on Conflict Issues and at Ukraine’s Permanent Mission to International Organizations in Vienna. Her expertise spans multilateral diplomacy and conflict resolution.



**MS. AMINA
MOHAMMED**

Ms. Amina J. Mohammed is the Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations and Chair of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group. Prior to her appointment, Ms. Mohammed served as Minister of Environment of the Federal Republic of Nigeria where she steered the country's efforts on climate action and efforts to protect the natural environment. Ms. Mohammed first joined the United Nations in 2012 as Special Adviser to former Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon with the responsibility for post-2015 development planning. She led the process that resulted in global agreement around the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the creation of the Sustainable Development Goals. Ms. Mohammed began her career working on the design of schools and hospitals in Nigeria. She served as an advocate focused on increasing access to education and other social services, before moving into the public sector, where she rose to the position of adviser to four successive Presidents on poverty, public sector reform, and sustainable development. Ms. Mohammed has been conferred several honorary doctorates and has served as an adjunct professor, lecturing on international development. The recipient of various global awards, Ms. Mohammed has served on numerous international advisory boards and panels.



**H.E. MR. LOK
BAHADUR THAPA**

H.E. Mr. Lok Bahadur Thapa assumed office as the Permanent Representative (Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary) of Nepal to the United Nations on 1 September 2023 and presented his Letters of Credence to UN Secretary-General António Guterres on the same day. Mr. Thapa joined the Foreign Service of Nepal in 1990 and has over three decades of diplomatic experience. He previously served as Ambassador of Nepal to the BENELUX countries and Head of Mission to the European Union (2016–2020). During this period, he was also Nepal's Permanent Representative to the OPCW, WCO, CFC, and CBI. Prior to his current role, he was Head of the North-East Asia Division at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He has also served as Director General of the Department of Passport (2014–2016), Deputy Chief of Mission in Canberra (2009–2014), Protocol and Liaison Officer at the Office of the President of Nepal (2008–2009), and in various diplomatic postings including Beijing and Riyadh. Throughout his career, Mr. Thapa has participated in numerous high-level bilateral, regional, and multilateral meetings and negotiations. He holds a master's degree in Diplomacy from Lancaster University, UK, and a master's degree in Public Administration from Tribhuvan University, Nepal, and has completed several professional training programs in Nepal and abroad.



**H.E. MS. ANNALENA
BAERBOCK**

H.E. Ms. Annalena Baerbock served as Germany's Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs from December 2021 until May 2025. Throughout her career she has been a strong advocate for the multilateral system with the United Nations at its core. She was an elected member of the German Parliament (Deutscher Bundestag) from 2013 until June 2025. In 2018, she was elected co-chairperson of the Green Party and held the position of party leader until 2022. Prior to becoming an MP, Annalena Baerbock advised her party's parliamentary group in the German Bundestag on matters of foreign and security policy and served as chairperson of her party in the federal state of Brandenburg. From 2005 to 2008 she worked for a Member of the European Parliament. Annalena Baerbock holds a Master of Laws (LLM) from the London School of Economics and Political Science and an undergraduate degree in Political Science from Hamburg University.



**MS. BJØRG
SANDKJÆR**

Ms. Bjørg Sandkjær is the Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) effective 24 March 2025. Prior to her appointment, Ms. Sandkjær served as Deputy Minister for International Development at the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs since 2021. In that role, she has been responsible for the development of Norway's strategic vision and engagement in international development cooperation issues and played a key role in the negotiations on Norway's budgetary allocations for official development assistance (ODA) while also leading her country's engagement in multilateral processes and fora, including the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. Ms. Sandkjær began her career at the UK Stakeholder Forum for Our Common Future, organizing the civil society input into the 1999 European Ministerial conference on Environment and Development. Since then, she has held positions in the civil society, private sector, government and multilateral organisations, including serving as the deputy leader of the Standing Committee on Health and Welfare of the Oslo City Council (2019 – 2021), and holding positions at the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad), Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), and the Church of Norway. She brings to the position experience and commitment to inclusive and sustainable development, as well as dedication to multilateral cooperation in the service of Member States. Ms. Sandkjær holds a master's degree in Demography from the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) and an undergraduate degree from the University of Oslo. She is fluent in Norwegian and English.



**MS. GILLIAN
D'SOUZA-NAZARETH**

Ms. Gillian D'Souza-Nazareth is Chair of the NGO Committee for Social Development, an inter-NGO coalition working with the United Nations to advance inclusive, people-centred social development policy. She is a seasoned civil society diplomat and human rights advocate with expertise in global public policy, social justice, and gender equity. Gillian serves as Director of Global Partnerships and Principal Representative to the United Nations for the Red Dot Foundation, where she leads engagement with international stakeholders and champions social protection and community empowerment initiatives. Her work focuses on expanding advocacy and public education on social protection, inclusive development, and equity at the UN and with civil society partners worldwide.



**MS. RIZA
FRANCHESCA
REGALA**

Ms. Riza Franchesca Regala is a migration scholar and youth leader from the Philippines working at the intersection of migration, development, and youth participation. As the Global Forum on Migration and Development Lead at the Migration Youth and Children Platform, the migration constituency of the UN-mandated Major Group for Children and Youth, she champions meaningful youth participation in multilateral processes by strengthening young people's capacity to engage in policy dialogue. Her work promotes intersectional, rights-based, and whole-of-society approaches to migration governance that address contemporary social issues and advance sustainable development. Beyond her advocacy work, Franchesca is pursuing a PhD in Sociology at the Polish Academy of Sciences, where her research focuses on transnational migration and mobility. She holds a Master's degree in Migration Studies from the Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne and the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales. Franchesca speaks English, Filipino, French, and Spanish, and is also an oil painter, engaging creatively with questions of social complexity.



**MR. CHARLES
KATOANGA**

Mr. Charles Katoanga leads the work of the Division for Inclusive Social Development (DISD), which serves as the UN system focal point on Youth, Older Persons, Persons with Disabilities, Indigenous Peoples, Families, Cooperatives, the social dimensions of the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) and Sport for Development and Peace, and coordinates follow-up to the 1995 World Summit for Social Development. DISD is the substantive secretariat for the Commission for Social Development, Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, and Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. He was appointed Director of the Division by the Secretary-General in September 2024, following a 24-year career in the United Nations Secretariat. Prior to his appointment, Mr. Katoanga was the Chief of Staff of the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs. He has served in the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and the Department of Management. Before joining the United Nations Secretariat, Mr. Katoanga worked for the Government of Fiji and the New Zealand Official Development Assistance bilateral programmes in Fiji and Tuvalu and its Pacific Regional programme. Mr. Katoanga is a graduate of the University of the South Pacific and Santa Clara University as well as executive education programmes of the John F. Kennedy School of Government. He is of Fijian and Tongan descent and a national of Fiji.

