

COMMISSION for SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

United Nations Headquarters, New York

EVERYONE INCLUDED

Bios of Speakers

Interactive dialogue with senior officials of the UN System on “Preparations for the World Social Summit under the title of the Second World Summit for Social Development”

Thursday, 13 February 2025, 10:00 am – 11:30 am, Conference room 4

Moderator:
Mr. Navid Hanif



Mr. Navid Hanif is the Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA). He is also the UN sous Sherpa to the G20 finance and main tracks.

He joined UNDESA in 2001. He was Senior Policy Adviser in the Division for Sustainable Development and member of the team for the World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg in 2002. He served as the Chief of Policy Coordination Branch and later Director in the office for Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) support and the Director for Financing for Sustainable Development Office. He was the first head of the DESA Strategic Planning Unit established in 2010.

He was Principal Officer in the Office of the United Nations Secretary-General, Vice-Chair of the UN High-Level Committee on Programming (HLCP) and Co-Coordinator of the UN team on repositioning of the UN Development System that led to major reforms in 2018.

He has contributed several articles on financing and investing in the SDGs in various journals and reports. He holds MIA, International Political Economy, Columbia University (NY), & M.A., English Literature, Government College.

Mr. Claver Gatete



Prior to his appointment as Under-Secretary-General and Executive Secretary of the ECA, Mr. Gatete was the Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Rwanda to the United Nations in New York. A seasoned economist, he brings to the position extensive strategic leadership expertise, coupled with international experience in the political and financial landscape of the African continent. Mr. Gatete has served in senior government positions, notably as Minister of Infrastructure (2018-2022) and Minister of Finance and Economic Planning (2013-2018).

He has also served as Governor (2011-2013) and Deputy Governor (2009-2011) of the National Bank of Rwanda, Rwanda's Central Bank, and Secretary General and Secretary to the Treasury at the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning in Rwanda (2003-2005). He was Director General for Economic and Social Affairs in the Office of the President of Rwanda (2000-2003), during which time, he served as the President's Representative to the New Partnership for Africa's Development and Coordinator of the National African Peer Review Mechanism.

Mr. Gatete began his diplomatic career in 2005 and was based in London until 2009 as Rwanda's Ambassador to the United Kingdom, Ireland and Iceland. Prior to this, he served as National Economist of the United Nations Development Programme in Kigali (1998-2000) and Economist of Agriculture and Agri-Food and of Statistics Canada, in Ottawa, Canada (1993-1997).

Mr. Gatete holds a Bachelor's and a Master's degree in agricultural economics from the University of British Columbia in Canada. He is fluent in English with working knowledge of French.

Ms. Rola Dashti



Ms. Rola Dashti is the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Africa (UNESCWA). Ms. Dashti, a leading Kuwaiti economist and long-time champion of women's rights and gender equality, is currently serving as member of the Supreme Planning Council in Kuwait. From 2012 to 2014, she was Minister for Planning and Development and Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs. Ms. Dashti played a pivotal role in advocating for the decree to allow Kuwaiti women to vote and run for parliamentary elections, and in May 2009, she with three other women became the first women to be elected to Kuwait's parliament.

She has also held key positions in research and development institutions such as the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research and worked for major local and international financial and development institutions such as the National Bank of Kuwait and the World Bank.

Ms. Dashti holds a doctorate degree in population dynamics from Johns Hopkins University-Baltimore, a master's degree in economics and finance from California State University-Sacramento, and a bachelor of science in agriculture economics from California State University-Chico.

Ms. Laura Thompson



Ms. Laura Thompson is the Assistant Director-General for External and Corporate Relations at the International Labour Organization. She was re-elected as Deputy Director General of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) on 19 June 2014 by the Organization's Council of Member States for a second five-year term. With more than 20 years of experience in diplomacy, multilateral negotiation, development, and humanitarian affairs, she has provided leadership for multilateral initiatives and negotiations across the fields of migration, refugees, humanitarian assistance and human rights, and the environment.

She was the Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Costa Rica to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva (2007-2009). Previously, she served as Counsellor (1996-1998) and First Secretary (1994-1996) at the Permanent Mission of Costa Rica to the United Nations in Geneva, and as Cultural Attaché (1989) at the Delegation of Costa Rica to UNESCO in Paris.

During her diplomatic career, she has held leadership responsibilities within humanitarian affairs at key governing bodies, including Chair and Vice-Chair of the Executive Committee of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (2007-2009), Chair of the Executive Committee of the IOM (1996-1997), and Vice-Chair of the Council of the IOM (1997-1998). She also acted as chair or vice-chair of governing bodies of the United Nations Compensation Commission, the World Intellectual Property Organization, and the International Labour Organization.

**Ms. Magdalena Sepúlveda
Carmona**



Ms. Magdalena Sepúlveda is the Director of the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD). Before taking up this position, she was Executive Director of the Global Initiative for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Her 22-year career has focused on the intersection of poverty, development, and human rights and has bridged research and policy formulation. She worked as a researcher at the Netherlands Institute for Human Rights, a staff attorney at the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, as the Co-Director of the Department of International Law and Human Rights of the United Nations-mandated University for Peace in Costa Rica (2002-2004) and as a Research Director at the International Council on Human Rights Policy, in Geneva (2006-2012).

Ms. Sepúlveda was the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights (2008-2014), Member of the High-Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition of the United Nations Committee on World Food Security (2013-2017) and Member of the United Nations High Level Panel on International Financial Accountability, Transparency and Integrity for Achieving the 2030 Agenda.

She holds a Ph.D. in International Law from Utrecht University in the Netherlands, and an LL.M. in human rights law from the University of Essex in the United Kingdom.

Mr. Srinivas Tata



Dr. Srinivas Tata is currently serving as the Director of the Social Development Division of ESCAP over the last four years. The division promotes social protection, fosters gender equality, and strengthens social inclusion of persons with disabilities, older persons, youth and migrants, among others. He has 16 years of experience of working with the United Nations.

Dr. Tata is a physician by qualification with experience in social policy, public health, finance and taxation, and programme management.

He has served in wide range of positions in the United Nations, including as the Chief of the Capacity Development in UNESCAP, and as the Chief of Social Policy and Population Section in the Social Development Division from 2012 to 2016, focusing on population ageing, demographic change, migration and health. He was also posted as the Deputy Chief of the Regional Commissions New York Office from 2010 to 2012.

Mr. Rodrigo Martinez



Mr. Rodrigo Martinez is a Senior Social Affairs Officer of the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean – ECLAC.

He is a Chilean Sociologist with more than thirty years of experience in research and technical assistance in social policy institutions and management, social protection, social spending, hunger and malnutrition.

His latest publications include: “Social policy institutions in Latin America and the Caribbean: central axis to advance towards inclusive social development”; “Automation and labour inclusion in Latin America: potential impacts, vulnerabilities and public policy proposals”; “Stratification and social classes in Latin America: dynamics and characteristics in the first two decades of the 21st century”; “Disasters and inequality in a protracted crisis: Towards universal, comprehensive, resilient and sustainable social protection systems in Latin America and the Caribbean”; “Inclusion and urban mobility with a focus on human rights and gender equality”; “Proposal for measuring public investment in children and adolescents: application in three countries: Chile, Costa Rica and Peru”; “Social and economic impact of the double burden of malnutrition”; “Inclusive social protection in Latin America. A comprehensive, rights- based approach”.