

55TH COMMISSION for SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

“Strategies for the eradication of poverty to achieve sustainable development for all”

The United Nations Division for Social Policy and Development (DSPD),
in partnership with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization,
cordially invites you to attend a high-level panel discussion:

Combating inequalities to end poverty

Friday, 3 February 2017
1:15 - 2:30 pm – CR 12
United Nations Headquarters
New York, NY



Moderator

Ms Daniela Bas

Director, Division for Social Policy &
Development, DESA

H.E. Pauline Irène Nguene

Minister of Social Affairs,
Cameroon

Dr Ndri Assie-Lumumba

Member of MOST Scientific Advisory
Committee
Professor at Cornell University, NY
Member of the Scientific Committee of
CODESRIA

Ms Nada Al-Nashif

Assistant Director-General,
Social and Human Sciences,
UNESCO

Representative of H.E. Carolina

Stanley (tbc)

Minister of Social Development,
Argentina

Mr Cesar Alierta

Global Advisor of the UN's SDG Fund for
Digital Education and Sustainable
Development

Mr Naqesh Kumar

Director, Division for Social Development
ESCAP

For more
information, please visit <http://bit.ly/csocd55>

TOPIC: Combating inequalities to end poverty

FORMAT: Presentations followed by a moderated discussion

CONCEPT:

High and rising inequality not only hinders progress in poverty eradication, but also hampers any efforts to enhance social inclusion and social cohesion. Without appropriate economic and social policies, economic gains tend to benefit a certain segment of the population, further exacerbating existing inequalities. When a large segment of the population remains excluded from development processes or trapped in low-productivity jobs, economic growth slows down. Increasing concentrations of wealth can also increase social tensions and undermine social stability. Addressing inequalities is therefore imperative to end poverty and build a more inclusive, just prosperous and peaceful society.

Reducing inequality in its all dimensions is captured in the 2030 Agenda. Goal 10 (SDG-10) seeks to reduce inequality within and among countries, and Goal 5 (SDG-5) focuses on achieving gender equality. More generally, the commitment to addressing inequalities is embodied in its pledge to “leave no one behind”. No Sustainable Development Goal can be considered achieved if targets are not met for some groups of people based on age, gender, disability, race, ethnicity, national and social origin, religion, socio-economic or migratory status, and others, (including migrants), highlighting the cross cutting nature of inequality in the 2030 Agenda.

In addition to political will and funds, the “world also needs improved understanding which the World Social Science Report 2016 is designed to provide” as indicated by the Director-General of UNESCO, Ms Irina Bokova in the forewords to the Report entitled “Challenging Inequalities: Pathways to a Just World”, launched in September 2016. It is prepared by the International Social Science Council (ISSC) in collaboration with the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) and co-published with UNESCO. Please see the link to the report at <http://en.unesco.org/wssr2016>

As the Director-General of UNESCO points out “This Report is a wake-up call. Let there be no doubt: investing in and closing the knowledge gap in social science research into inequalities will be vital to achieve the cross-cutting ambitions of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Let’s work together now – to ‘leave no one behind’ tomorrow”.

UNESCO’s Management of Social Transformations (MOST) Programme is focusing on bridging the gap between social science and policy-making, including through its flagship activity, the MOST Regional Forums of Ministers of Social Development.

OBJECTIVES AND THEMATIC FOCUS: In addition to presenting the outcome of the MOST Ministerial Forum for Central Africa in Cameroon, October 2016, focusing on “Insecurity and migration: impacts on women and youth”, and informing about the forthcoming MOST Ministerial Forum in Malaysia, March 2017 on “Building Inclusive Societies” this side event will discuss: 1) how addressing inequalities in its all dimensions is one of the key strategies to reduce poverty; and 2) how the social science community could effectively contribute to policy making process in this area through including through the key messages from the WSSR “Challenging Inequalities: Pathways to a Just World”.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- How can the links and interactions between the dimensions of inequality (economic, political, social, cultural, environmental, spatial and knowledge-based) be better understood?
- What is the evidence that high and widening inequality hampers sustained and inclusive growth and has negative impacts on the efforts to reduce poverty?
- What are concrete strategies/policies that have proven to be successful in reducing inequalities?