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# COMMISSION for SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

United Nations Headquarters, New York

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## 60<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission for Social Development

### Ministerial Forum: “Strengthening multilateralism to deliver well-being and dignity for all by addressing food insecurity and the eradication of poverty, including through the promotion of sustainable food systems”

Tuesday 8 February 2022, 10:00am – 12:00pm  
Virtual meeting

#### Draft Concept Note

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#### 1. Background

The Commission for Social Development will convene its sixtieth session from 7 to 16 February 2022, under the priority theme of “Inclusive and resilient recovery from COVID-19 for sustainable livelihoods, well-being and dignity for all: eradicating poverty and hunger in all its forms and dimensions to achieve the 2030 Agenda”. The theme was decided by ECOSOC in its resolution E/RES/2021/8 on the methods of work of the Commission.

The resolution “*Invites* the Bureau of the Commission to continue to propose interactive dialogues, such as high-level events and ministerial and expert workshops that engage Member States and relevant stakeholders, so as to encourage dialogue and enhance the impact of its work, including by addressing the implementation of, follow-up to, and review of the social dimension of the 2030 Agenda” (para 10).

In accordance with this resolution, the Bureau decided that the Commission organize a Ministerial Forum on “Strengthening multilateralism to deliver well-being and dignity for all by addressing food insecurity and the eradication of poverty, including through the promotion of sustainable food systems,” to take place on 8 February 2022, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. The Forum will provide an opportunity for Ministers and/or senior Government officials to share their national experiences in addressing food insecurity and the eradication of poverty, including through the promotion of sustainable food systems, and discuss how to strengthen multilateralism to promote well-being and dignity for all in their efforts to recover better to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the decade of action.

## **2. Context - Multilateralism to deliver well-being and dignity for all by addressing food insecurity and the eradication of poverty, including through the promotion of sustainable food systems**

At the World Summit for Social Development (Copenhagen, 1995), Member States pledged to eradicate poverty, promote full and productive employment, and foster social integration/inclusion to achieve stable, safe, and just societies for all. They affirmed their commitment to social justice and solidarity and strengthened cooperation in social development through the United Nations system. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted at the UN Sustainable Development Summit, recognized that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development. Member States pledged to leave no one behind in the implementation of the Agenda and to endeavour to reach the furthest behind first.

With less than ten years left to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the COVID-19 crisis is reversing hard-won development gains and hampering progress towards achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and all its Goals, in particular, SDG1 (end poverty) and SDG2 (end hunger). It has reinforced pre-existing inequalities and exacerbated multiple forms of deprivation, affecting disproportionately the poorest and the most vulnerable. Ensuring labour shortages and mitigative mobility restrictions have also negatively impacted the entire food systems, in particular, food services and food processing and distribution, where informal workers and women are more heavily concentrated.

At the joint informal high-level meeting of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council to commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Social Summit (December 2020), Member States acknowledged that the visions, principles, and commitments made at the Summit remained valid and were crucial for addressing emerging global challenges, including those posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, and that recovery from the COVID-19 crisis provided an opportunity to build more inclusive, resilient and sustainable societies.

Social policy has played a key role in mitigating and overcoming the negative socio-economic impacts of the COVID-19 crisis. As countries move forward to recovery phases, it is critical to renew their commitment to ensuring equal opportunity and universal protection that foster the economic security of all people. This requires developing integrated long-term policy frameworks that aim to simultaneously reduce poverty, hunger, and inequalities, enhance people's capabilities and well-being, and ensure sustainable livelihoods for all. A multi-dimensional analysis of poverty and hunger should inform these recovery strategies.

Strengthening food systems to be more efficient, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable is necessary to deliver healthy diets to end hunger and improve food security and nutrition.

Further, to support national efforts to achieve the objectives of the 2030 Agenda, there is a need to strengthen international solidarity, multilateral cooperation, and genuine partnerships among all stakeholders. A global response based on unity, solidarity, and renewed multilateral cooperation is required to end poverty and hunger, strengthen food systems, combat inequalities, ensure equal access to basic services, including quality education and universal health coverage, and achieve the objectives of social development and the 2030 Agenda.

### **3. Objectives**

The objective of the Ministerial Forum is to facilitate the exchange of national and regional good practices and innovative approaches for addressing food insecurity and the eradication of poverty, including through the promotion of sustainable food systems, in order to draw lessons and to identify common challenges and effective policies and measures to deliver well-being and dignity for all. Particular focus will be placed on identifying opportunities to strengthen multilateralism to support national efforts in this regard, and in their efforts towards more inclusive and resilient recovery. The insights drawn from the exchange will support national governments to accelerate the implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action agreed at the World Summit for Social Development, and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular, SDG1 and SDG2.

### **4. Structure and format of the panel discussion**

The Ministerial Forum will be moderated by the Chair of the 60<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission for Social Development. The forum will field two panel discussions, each followed by an interactive dialogue. The Chair will open the session with brief remarks and introduce the panellists. The Chair will invite the first group of panellists to make presentations, followed by a period of interactive discussion with questions and comments from the floor. This will be repeated for the second panel.

Panellists are expected to structure their presentations around concrete policies and strategies that have proven to be successful in addressing food insecurity and the eradication of poverty, including the promotion of sustainable food systems. They will highlight innovative approaches and lessons learned at the national and regional levels. The Chair/panellists will identify common challenges and effective policies and strategies to address them.

The outcomes of the discussions will be reflected in the Chair's summary, which will be one of the key inputs of the Commission for Social Development to the ECOSOC, in particular, its high-level segment, and the 2022 High-Level Political Forum to be convened under the theme: "Building back better from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development".

### **5. Guiding questions**

- i. What policies and measures put in place to counter the impacts of COVID-19 have been effective in addressing food insecurity and the eradication of poverty?
- ii. Building on unprecedented fast-acting temporary measures to weather the crisis, how can we develop nationally adequate social protection systems for all, including floors, so that no one is left behind?
- iii. How can international solidarity and multilateral cooperation be strengthened to support countries being hit hard by the crisis so that they can deliver well-being and dignity for all in their efforts to make an inclusive and resilient recovery?
- iv. How can we promote sustainable food systems to address food insecurity and promote more nutritious and healthy diets for all?
- v. How can we galvanize political will towards a renewal of the social contract to address the root causes of poverty and hunger so that countries can build back better to achieve social development and the 2030 Agenda for all?

**The time allocation for the panel discussion is as follows:**

<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Suggested speaking time</b>
Chair: Opening remarks and introduction of Minister panellists Group I	3 minutes
Group I Panellists (4): Presentations	7 - 10 minutes per panellist
Moderated interactive discussion	15 minutes: Q & A and open discussion (Interventions limited to 3 minutes, followed by responses from panellists)
Chair: Introduction of Minister panellists Group II	2 minutes
Group II Panellists (4): Presentations	7- 10 minutes per panellist
Moderated interactive discussion	15 minutes: Q & A and open discussion (Interventions limited to 3 minutes, followed by responses from panellists)
Concluding remarks and closing by the Chair	5 minutes
	Total duration: 2 hours