

**Panelists – Social Integration Panel
47th session
Commission for Social Development**

**February 4, 2009
3:00 – 6:00PM**

Mr. Wim Kok (Netherlands), Former Prime Minister of the Netherlands (1994-2002)

Mr. Kok is a Member of the Club of Madrid and a representative of “The Shared Societies Project: Leadership for Dialogue, Diversity and Social Cohesion”. The project is a global initiative to promote better understanding of the benefits of social cohesion and the means for its advancement.

Mr. Kok served as a chairman of the European Employment Task Force, established by the European Council and as a chair of the High-Level Group on the Lisbon Strategy. He is currently is a member of several supervisory boards (Supervisory Board on ING Group, KLM airline and others).

Ms. Bience Gawanas (Namibia), Commissioner for Social Affairs, African Union

Ms. Gawanas has been African Union’s Commissioner for Social Affairs since 2003. She is a former Commissioner on the Public Service Commission in Namibia (1991-1996) and an Ombudsman in the Namibian Government from 1996-2003). She has also been a lecturer in Gender Law at the University of Namibia and served as a Director of the Board of the Central bank of Namibia

She worked on advocacy and the harmonization and coordination of regional and continental policies and programmes relating to social development issues including health, HIV/AIDS, malaria and TB, migration, population, culture and sport, drug control, social welfare of disadvantaged groups, labour and employment.

She is the member of the International Board of Trustees of the African Child Policy Forum, an African NGO based in Ethiopia. She has also been active in other NGOs and served as a Secretary-General of the Namibian National Women’s Organization and patron of Namibian Federation of Persons with Disabilities.

Ms. Maria Ines da Silva Barbosa (Brazil), Executive Coordinator Programme, UNIFEM Brazil and Southern Cone

Ms. Barbosa is a former Director of Affirmative Policies of the Presidency of the Republic of Brazil. She was active in institutionalizing the National Politics for Promotion of Racial Equity in Brazil.

Currently she is a member of the United Nations Development Fund for Development – UNIFEM Brazil & Southern Cone team. She coordinates the Programme “Incorporating of Equity of Gender, Race and Ethnic Dimensions” in the anti-poverty programmes in four countries of Latin America.

Ms. Barbosa’s professional experience also includes work on community development, basic education, and health services.

Mr. Bimal Phnuyal (Nepal), Country Director, ActionAid Nepal

Mr. Bimal has been a Country Director of ActionAid Nepal since March 2008. His responsibilities comprise overall management of the organisation including programmes fighting poverty and injustice in Nepal. He is a focal point on HIV and AIDS, one of the key activities in ActionAid Country Programmes in Asia.

Mr. Bimal is a social analyst, non-formal educator and political activist. He has been involved in different social movements, rights advocacy and community education works including innovating participatory learning approaches both in Nepal and internationally. He has contributed articles, book chapters and is an editor of a book “Learning for Social Transformation” in Nepal.