



**Commission for Social Development
Fifty-fifth session**

Concept Note

**High-level panel discussion on the priority theme
“Strategies for Eradicating Poverty to Achieve Sustainable Development
for All”**

Wednesday, 1 February 2017, 3:00pm – 6:00 pm
Conference Room 4

1. Background

The fifty-fifth session of the Commission for Social Development is the review session of the two-year cycle under the priority theme of “Strategies for eradicating poverty to achieve sustainable development for all”, which was decided by ECOSOC in its resolution E/RES/2016/6. This resolution also affirmed that the Commission will contribute to the follow-up of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,¹ within its existing mandate, by supporting the thematic reviews of the high-level political forum on sustainable development on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. The 2017 high level political forum has the theme of “Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world”. The Council further reaffirmed that the Commission shall continue to review issues related to the follow-up and implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development, and advise the Council thereon. The high-level panel discussion on Wednesday 1 February 2017 from 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm is organized by the Commission in the context of this resolution to lead off its deliberations on the priority theme.

The new global development agenda, “Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” adopted in 2015 provides the new context in which commitments made at the Social Summit, namely the eradication of poverty, promotion of full employment and decent work for all, and social integration based on the enhancement and protection of all human rights, will be further implemented. The 2030 Agenda affirms that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development. The new Agenda includes goals and targets aimed at the promotion of sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all, and reduction of inequalities within and among countries. By placing poverty eradication at the centre of global development, the Agenda pledges to “leave no one behind” and to “reach the furthest behind first” so that all people, regardless of their background, can fulfil their potential in life, and lead decent, dignified and rewarding lives in a healthy environment. To this end, SDGs indicators are disaggregated, where relevant, by income, sex, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability and geographic locations, or other characteristics.

¹ General Assembly resolution 70/1.

The objective of eradicating poverty is addressed as Goals 1 among the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It is also mainstreamed in all other goals and targets. The Agenda underscores the need for a coherent and coordinated approach to all policies and strategies to eradicate poverty, from analysis, policy formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation across all sectors, integrating its social, economic and environmental dimensions.

This Note is prepared in support of the high-level panel discussion. It should be read in conjunction with the Secretary-General's report on the priority theme submitted to the Commission (E/CN.5/2017/XX). The report provides a review of progress so far made to eradicate poverty as well as various strategies that have been implemented by countries, ranging from integrated social and economic policy for inclusive and pro-poor growth, investing in agriculture and rural development, investing in social services, in particular, education, healthcare, safe drinking water and sanitation and social protection, to promoting structural economic transformation and generating decent work opportunities. The report also highlights challenges encountered and includes recommendations to accelerate the eradication of poverty in all its forms, including extreme poverty.

2. Objectives

The high-level panel discussion will provide an opportunity for members of the Commission and other key stakeholders, including civil society organizations, to engage in a substantive dialogue on policy options to make further progress on the eradication of poverty, building on the experience in implementing the Copenhagen Programme of Action adopted at the World Summit for Social Development.

The specific objectives of the high-level panel discussion are to (1) share concrete policies, strategies and measures that have been effective at eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, and preventing people from falling into poverty in various national contexts; (2) explore/identify, based on evidence, innovative approaches to eradicate poverty that can leverage the interlinkages between the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development; (3) propose policy recommendations as substantive contributions to the 2017 ECOSOC annual theme and the 2017 high-level political forum.

3. Structure and format of the panel discussion

The panel discussion will be chaired by XXX, the Chair of the Commission for Social Development. It will be informed by the report of the Secretary-General on strategies for eradicating poverty to achieve sustainable development for all (E/CN.5/2017/3)

The panel will consist of four to six panelists and one moderator. Invited panelists will include high-level government officials, subject experts from academia and think tanks, as well as from civil society, taking into consideration of gender and geographical balance.

The Chair of the Commission will open the meeting with brief remarks and introduction of moderator and panellists. The moderator will conduct the interactive panel discussion, starting with a keynote speaker who will set the stage by providing an overview of the theme (about 20 minutes). Other panellists will be invited to make focused 5 -10 minutes presentations, addressing the guiding questions. Following their presentations, the moderator will facilitate an interactive dialogue among panellists, then open the discussion and invite questions and comments from the floor.

Panellists are expected to structure their presentations around concrete strategies that have proven to be successful in eradicating/reducing poverty, and to highlight innovative approaches and lessons learned at the national level. Panellists and all other participants are strongly discouraged from reading prepared statements.

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 2017 high-level political forum to be convened under the theme of "Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world".

4. Guiding questions

The Commission for Social Development may wish to consider the following questions in its deliberations on the priority theme at its fifty-fifth session:

- a) What are the policy implications of the commitment to eradicate poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty? Are additional measures required to ensure that no one is left behind and to reach the furthest behind first? How can countries strike a balance between promoting universal policy approaches and addressing the specific needs of those furthest behind?
- b) What strategies have proved most effective at significantly reducing poverty? What are the key policies and/or factors that have fostered the success? Have different strategies been applied to eradicate extreme poverty, and reduce relative poverty and preventing impoverishments?
- c) How can countries create an enabling environment, including institutional mechanisms to ensure policy coherence and integration for eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions?
- d) What strategies have been applied to address cross-cutting issues, such as issues related to youth, older persons, persons with disabilities, and other vulnerable groups? What is key to establishing an effective multi-stakeholder partnership to ensure the implementation of poverty eradication strategies?
- e) What are the strategies to secure financing to poverty eradication from a mix of financial resources? What innovative sources of financing can countries tap into to fight poverty?

The time allocation for the panel discussion is as follows:

Speaker	Suggested speaking time
Chair: Opening remarks and the introduction of panellists	5 minutes
Moderator: introduction/context-setting	5 minutes
Keynote speaker	20 minutes
Panellists (4-6): Presentations	5 - 10 minutes per panellist
Moderated interactive discussion	--Dialogue among panellists (15-20 minutes)
	--Open discussion with questions and comments from participants of the Commission (Interventions limited to 3 minutes, followed by responses from panellists)
Concluding remarks by moderator Closing by the Chair	10 minutes
	Total duration: 3 hours

Keynote speaker

Prof. Martin Ravallion, Edmond D. Villani Professor of Economics,
Georgetown University

Panellists

H. E. Mrs. Ana Helena Chacón, Vice-President of Costa Rica

Hon. Mrs. Aisha Jumai Alhassan, Minister for Women Affairs and Social
Development of Nigeria

H. E. Mrs. Michelle Muschett, Vice Minister of Social Development of Panama

Mr. Michel Servoz, Director-General of the Directorate General for
Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, European Commission

Dr. Ifeyinwa Ofong, Development consultant and a National Coordinator of
Women in Development and Environment in Nigeria

Moderator

Ms. H. Elizabeth Thompson, Executive Director of the Center for Leadership
& Sustainable Development, UWI-SUNY, and Former Executive Coordinator
(Developing Countries), UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20)

Discussant (from the floor)

H.E. Mr. Alberto Beltrame, Vice-Minister for Social and Rural Development of
Brazil

Profiles of Speakers

Prof. Martin Ravallion holds the inaugural Edmond D. Villani Chair of Economics at Georgetown University, prior to which he was the Director of the World Bank's research department. He has advised numerous governments and international agencies on poverty and policies for fighting it, and he has written extensively on this and other subjects in economics, including five books and over 200 papers in scholarly journals and edited volumes. His latest book, *The Economics of Poverty: History, Measurement and Policy*, was published by Oxford University Press in 2016. He is President of the Society for the Study of Economic Inequality, a Senior Fellow of the Bureau for Research in Economic Analysis of Development, a Research Associate of the National Bureau of Economic Research, USA, and a non-resident Fellow of the Center for Global Development. Amongst various prizes and awards, in 2012 he was awarded the John Kenneth Galbraith Prize from the American Agricultural and Applied Economics Association, and in 2016 he received a Frontiers of Knowledge Award from the BBVA Foundation.

H.E. Mrs. Ana Helena Chacón is the Vice President of Costa Rica. Through the Social Council and the Innovation and Human Talent Council of the Presidency, she coordinates Ministries and public institutions in their effort to reduce poverty and achieve social development. Vice President Chacón has held positions in both private and public institutions, where she has consistently defended human rights. For over 20 years, she has worked on disability, poverty, infancy and gender, as director or board member in organizations like FUNDECOR, Paniamor Foundation, Coalition of Women Leaders against the feminization of HIV, Solidarity Triangle Program, Association for People with Down Syndrome and National Council of Rehabilitation and Special Education. In addition, she has been a speaker at seminars on different issues including gender, citizen participation, national security and citizenship, disability, tourism, sexual and reproductive health, childhood, adolescence, older people, education, national and international politics; feminization of HIV / AIDS, poverty, social exclusion, and sexual exploitation.

Hon. Mrs. Aisha Jumai Alhassan is the Minister for Women Affairs and Social Development of Nigeria. Prior to her current position, she was Senator of the Federal Republic of Nigeria from 2011 to 2015. Hon. Mrs. Aisha Jumai Alhassan is a lawyer by profession, having been enrolled as a Barrister and Solicitor of the Supreme Court of Nigeria in 1986. She started her career as a Magistrate Grade II and rose to the position of Chief Magistrate in the FCT Abuja Judiciary. After reaching the peak of the Magistracy she moved to judicial administration and was the first female Deputy Chief Registrar (Litigation) in the High Court of the FCT Abuja. She was also the first female Secretary to FCT Judiciary Service Committee, the first female Chief Registrar of the High Court of FCT; and the first female Attorney General of Taraba State, Nigeria. At one time she was the only female Magistrate in the FCT.

H. E. Mrs. Michelle Muschet, is the Vice Minister of Social Development of Panama, previously served as Deputy Minister in Charge and Technical

Secretary of the Social Cabinet from March to June 2016. During this time, she worked with the Minister of Social Development and succeeded in promoting initiatives aimed at institutional strengthening through a results-based management, multi-sectoral articulation of social policies through the Social Cabinet, the adoption of tools aimed at better targeting and measurement of social policies and the inclusion of intercultural dimensions in the design of social interventions. Vice Minister Muschett holds a Master in Public Administration with a special focus on Social Politics and International Development from Cornell University.

Mr. Michel Servoz, Director-General of the Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, European Commission, was previously Deputy Secretary-General of the Commission, involved in the coordination of the EU semester, including the Annual Growth Survey and of the proposals for the next multi-annual financial framework. From 2005–2010 he was the Director of Policy Coordination for the Secretariat-General where he worked on the elaboration of the Europe 2020 strategy for growth and jobs and on the preparation of the European Economic recovery plan.

Dr. Ifeyinwa Ofong is a Development Consultant and the National Coordinator of Women in Development and Environment, Nigeria. Prior to this, she has held various positions at the University of Nigeria such as Senior Research Fellow at the Institute for Development Studies and Head, Department of Urban and regional Planning.

H.E. Mr. Alberto Beltrame has been the Vice-Minister of the Ministry of Social and Agrarian Development of Brazil since May 2016. Previously, he was National Secretary of Healthcare at the Brazilian Ministry of Health from 2008 to 2011 and from 2015 to May 2016. From 1999 to 2003, he coordinated the High Complexity Systems and the National Transplants System at the Ministry of Health. Mr. Beltrame was also Director of Medical Assistance at the Social Security Institute of the State of Rio Grande do Sul in two separate administrations in the early 1990s and Director of Labor at the Secretariat for Labor, Citizenship and Social Assistance of the State of Rio Grande do Sul from 1996 to 1997.

Ms. H. Elizabeth Thompson is recently appointed Executive Director of the Center for Leadership & Sustainable Development (a joint initiative of the University of the West Indies and State University of New York). Prior to this position, she was Senior Advisor to the SG's Sustainable Energy for All (SE4ALL) initiative. Ms. Thompson is also a former Assistant Secretary-General of the UN as one of two Executive Coordinators of Rio+20 responsible for building support for the themes, objectives and outcomes of the Conference. She was an elected Member of Parliament of Barbados from 1994 to 2008 and a Minister for 12 years having served as the Minister of Environment, Minister for Physical Development and Minister for Health. She also led Minority Business in the Barbados Senate from 2008. For Rio+20 Ms. Thompson also championed the Higher Education Sustainability Initiative (HESI), aimed at developing more practitioners of sustainability.