



United Nations – General Assembly
Economic and Financial (Second)
Committee



Joint Meeting of the United Nations General Assembly Second Committee and ECOSOC

“The future of everything – Sustainable Development in the Age of Rapid Technological Change”

11 October 2017

United Nations Headquarters, New York

Bios of Speakers



H.E. Ambassador Marie Chatardová

President of the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations

Ambassador Marie Chatardová is the Permanent Representative of the Czech Republic to the United Nations and the President of the Economic and Social Council at its 2018 session. From 2010 to 2015, Ambassador Chatardová was her country’s Ambassador to France and Monaco, and its Permanent Representative to the International Organization of la Francophonie. Between 2013 and 2016, she served as Permanent Representative to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). A career diplomat, Ambassador Chatardová held several positions within the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Ambassador Chatardová holds a doctorate of law from Masaryk University in Brno, Czech Republic.



H.E. Ambassador Sven Jürgenson

Chair of the Second Committee of the General Assembly of the United Nations

Ambassador Sven Jürgenson is the Permanent Representative of Estonia to the United Nations and the Chair of the Second Committee of the General Assembly at its 72nd session. From 2010 to 2015, Ambassador Jürgenson was his country’s ambassador to France and Monaco, during which time he also served as Permanent Representative to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. He served as Foreign Policy Adviser to the President from 2006 to 2010, and from 2003 to 2006, as Under-Secretary for Political Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. From 2000 to 2003, Ambassador Jürgenson was his country’s ambassador to the United States, Canada and Mexico, a position he assumed after a two-year tenure as Estonia’s Permanent Representative to the United Nations. Prior to that, he held several senior positions in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Ambassador Jürgenson holds a master’s degree from Tallinn Polytechnic Institute in data processing and pursued further studies in that field at Ingenieurhochschule Dresden, in Germany. He conducted other post-graduate work in 1992 at the Institut International d’Administration Publique, in Paris.



H.E. Ms. Amina J. Mohammed

Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations

Ms. Amina J. Mohammed was Minister of Environment of the Federal Republic of Nigeria from November 2015 to December 2016, where she steered the country's efforts on climate action, protecting the natural environment and conserving resources for sustainable development.

Prior to this, she served as Special Adviser to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on Post-2015 Development Planning, where she was instrumental in bringing about the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including the Sustainable Development Goals.

Before joining the UN, Ms. Mohammed worked for three successive administrations in Nigeria, serving as Special Advisor on the Millennium Development Goals, providing advice on issues including poverty, public sector reform and sustainable development, and coordinating programmes worth \$1 billion annually for MDG-related interventions.

She is also an Adjunct Professor in Development Practice at Columbia University, and served on numerous international advisory boards and panels, including the UN Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Post-2015 Development Agenda, the Independent Expert Advisory Group on the Data Revolution for Sustainable Development, the Global Development Program of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the African Women's Millennium Initiative, Girl Effect, 2016 African Union Reform and the ActionAid International Right to Education Project.

Ms. Mohammed began her 35-year career in the private sector with architects and engineers responsible for the project management of health, education and public sector buildings.

Panel discussion



Ms. Jennifer Strong

Journalist, Host of "The Future of Everything" Podcast, The Wall Street Journal

Jennifer Strong brings complicated topics to life with sound and storytelling for WSJ Podcasts. Her reporting has been heard on a variety public radio documentaries and programs including Marketplace, The World, and NPR Newscast. Her investigation for PRI on how the U.S. market for poached ivory funded terrorist organizations was recognized by the National Press Club in 2016. Ms. Strong previously worked as an anchor for WSJ Radio on CBS and XM, as an NPR producer, and she spent five years reporting and anchoring for NPR station WAMU in Washington, DC. Ms. Strong has a graduate degree in international affairs journalism from American University and has completed two Knight Science Journalism programs at MIT, on neuroscience and nanotechnology.



Sophia

Sophia is Hanson Robotics' latest and most advanced robot. She has also become a media darling, having given numerous interviews to multiple media outlets, sang in a concert, and even graced the cover of one of the top fashion magazines. One of her interviews has generated billions of views and social media interactions. She has also shown her potential in business, having met face-to-face with key decision makers across industries including banking, insurance, auto manufacturing, property development, media and entertainment. In addition, she has appeared onstage as a panel member and presenter in high-level conferences, covering how robotics and artificial intelligence will become a prevalent part of people lives.



Mr. David Hanson

Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Hanson Robotics

Founder of Hanson Robotics, lead designer and inventor of key technologies including Frubber nanotech, facial expressions and A.I. software. Former Walt Disney Imagineering designer, recipient of numerous awards from NASA, NSF, AAI, Tech Titans' Innovator of the Year, and Cooper Hewitt Design Triennial, heralded as a robotics "genius" by Wired and PC Magazines. BFA film/video Rhode Island School of Design, PhD in interactive arts & engineering/aesthetic studies University of Texas, additional studies at Brown, UCLA & UCSD.



Mr. Stephen Ibaraki

Serial entrepreneur, investor and futurist, founding managing partner of REDDS

With more than 100 top executive roles, global lifetime achievement and innovation awards and recognitions, a few of executive chairman and serial entrepreneur Stephen Ibaraki's positions include: co-chair Practitioner Board Association for Computing Machinery; founding chair Global Industry Council and vice-chair board IP3 International Federation for Information Processing; top 5 blogger IDG-IT World (Canada); founding managing partner REDDS Venture Investment Partners; founder technology advisory board, Yintech Investment Holdings Ltd.; founding member Beyond Initiative (Audi AI Think Tank), founding chairman outreach UN ITU "ICT Discovery" Journal; founding chair-moderator/keynote/organizer UN ITU AI events, ITU UN Briefing New York; founder, founding chairman outreach, founding member steering committee seminal UN ITU AI for Good Global Summit with XPRIZE Foundation, 20 UN Agency partners, 47 media; keynote at the International Conference on Software Engineering (ICSE Austin USA); founding chairman Technology Advisory Council Financial Services Roundtable FinTech Ideas Festival (FSR: 92.7 trillion managed assets, 1.2 trillion annual revenue); invited advisor to board within IEEE; 14 Microsoft Most Valuable Professional Global Awards and 3 global gold awards; 3 founding Fellow awards; nominated founding fellow, past board chair and president government-chartered Canadian Information Processing Society.



Mr. Jeffrey Schnapp

Founder and Faculty director, metaLAB at Harvard University

Prof. Jeffrey Schnapp is the founder and faculty director of metaLAB at Harvard University and faculty co-director of the Berkman Klein Center for Internet and Society. Prof. Schnapp is also the Chief Executive Officer and co-founder of Piaggio Fast Forward, a company devoted to developing innovative solutions to the light mobility and transportation challenges of the contemporary world.



Ms. Rita Kimani

Co-founder, FarmDrive

Rita Kimani, co-founder of FarmDrive and UN Young Leader for the Sustainable Development Goals, is an ambitious changemaker and entrepreneur who strives to make a positive impact in the world and defy every boundary that society has defined for women. She holds a First Class Honours BSc. in Computer Science from University of Nairobi, has expertise in conceptualising and designing solutions for emerging economies and fostering scalable innovations, and is a self-proclaimed data nerd. FarmDrive uses mobile phones, alternative data, and machine learning to close the critical data gap that prevents financial institutions from lending to creditworthy smallholder farmers.



Mr. Dickson Despommier

Professor Emeritus of Public and Environmental Health, Columbia University

Dr. Dickson Despommier, PhD, is a microbiologist, an ecologist, and emeritus professor of Public and Environmental Health at the Columbia University. For 27 years he conducted research on cellular and molecular parasitism and held lectures and courses on Parasitic Disease, Medical Ecology and Ecology. From one of these courses, in 1999, he founded the root for this idea of raising crops in tall buildings; vertical farming. In 2010, he published his widely received book: "The Vertical Farm: feeding the world in the 21st Century", St. Martin's Press, New York. Two years ago vertical farms were regarded as a utopia, but one year ago the first prototypes were built. Among those prototypes are a three-story VF Suwon, South Korea, over 50 (plant factories that qualify as vertical farms) in Japan, a commercial vertical farm in Singapore that opened in 2012, and another in Chicago that was built in an old industrial building. Vertical farms have many advantages: food is organically farmed, urban space is saved, it is possible to farm all year round and in any place, and use of agrochemicals is eliminated. His idea was regarded as visionary several years ago, but today it has become a beacon for all countries where food imports are high.