



PERMANENT MISSION
OF THE KYRGYZ REPUBLIC
TO THE UNITED NATIONS



Special event to mark the observance of the

World Day of Social Justice

20 February 2020

“Closing the Inequalities Gap to Achieve Social Justice”

UN Headquarters, Conference Room 5, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Twenty-five years ago, the World Summit for Social Development adopted the Copenhagen Declaration which pledged to overcome poverty, reach full employment and foster social integration. These bold commitments alongside growing inequalities remain the defining challenges of our time. Recent waves of globalization, notably in international trade and finance, have done much to reduce global inequality, and yet within countries, the gap between richest and poorest is widening. While extreme poverty has been reduced, income and wealth are increasingly concentrated. Most economies are growing, but the labour share of national income is declining, and large portions of the world’s workforce have experienced real wage stagnation.

Despite some progress in achieving social justice and efforts undertaken by member States and the international community, people in vulnerable situations face significant challenges in terms of labour force participation, equal pay and decent work opportunities. There is a need to address the stark levels of inequality that exists within and between countries and in rural, urban and mountainous populations. Inequalities encompass much more than just differences in income, posing a serious obstacle to the achievement of social justice and sustainable development globally.

The lack of decent work opportunities and formal employment exacerbates inequalities among societies, and it weakens social cohesion and people’s trust in governments and institutions. Not only are growing inequalities preventing people from achieving their full potential, and it is also putting a burden on economies.¹

All this has led to the growth of damaging and unacceptable inequalities, a situation where everybody loses. Closing the inequalities gap in the 21st century requires a comprehensive approach, targeting challenges that arise from rapid technological change, climate change and demographic shifts. It is thus a critical time for decisive actions for an equitable future, which requires strong and coordinated responses at the global level to address the multidimensional root causes and to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

¹http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/hdr_2019_overview_-_english.pdf

Member States and the UN system have been strongly committed to implementing social justice in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals. Various informal groups have been established, including the Group of Friends of Mountainous Countries in 2019 under the initiative of the Permanent Mission of the Kyrgyz Republic to the United Nations. The Group aims to implement social justice principles in the framework of special geographic conditions.

On the occasion of the 2020 World Day of Social Justice, the commemorative meeting will explore actions needed at the international, regional and national levels to reduce inequality and identify how the multilateral system can deliver coherent and responsive policies to achieve social justice for all.

Preliminary Programme

Moderator: Mr. Vinicius Pinheiro

Special Representative to the UN and Director, ILO Office for the United Nations

- 10.00 – 10.05 a.m. **Opening Remarks**
H.E. Mrs. Mirgul Moldoisaeva
Permanent Representative of the Kyrgyz Republic to the United Nations
- 10.05 – 10.15 a.m. **Employment and Social Outlook 2020**
Mr. Patrick Belser
Senior Economist, International Labour Organization
- 10.15 – 10.20 a.m. **Global Inequality Video**
- 10.20 – 11.00 a.m. **Reducing Inequalities – The Path to Social Cohesion and Prosperity**
Dr. C. Nicole Mason
President and Chief Executive Officer, Institute for Women’s Policy Research
- Mr. Roberto Simon
Senior Director for Policy, Americas Society/Council of the Americas, and Politics Editor, Americas Quarterly
- Ms. Sakiko Fukuda-Parr
Director, Julien J. Studley Graduate Programs in International Affairs, The New School
- Mr. Ben Slay
Senior Economist, Regional Bureau for Europe and CIS, UNDP
- 11.00 – 11.50 a.m. **Interactive Discussion**
The panel will take questions and comments from the audience.
- Lead discussants:
Ms. Shea Gopaul

*Special Representative to the United Nations, International
Organisation of Employers
Ms. Bettina Luise Rürup (TBC)
Executive Director, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung*

11.50 – 12.00 p.m.

Closing Remarks

H.E. Mrs. Mirgul Moldoisaeva
*Permanent Representative of the Kyrgyz Republic to the United
Nations*

Mr. Vinicius Pinheiro
*Special Representative to the UN and Director, ILO Office for the
United Nations*