

COMMISSION for SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

United Nations Headquarters, New York



Bios of Speakers

Multi-stakeholder Forum on the Priority Theme

Good practices and innovative solutions in promoting social development and social justice

Thursday, 8 February, 3:00 pm-6:00 pm, Conference room 4

Moderator:

Ms. Jean Quinn



Jean Quinn, DW is the Chair of the NGO Committee for Social Development and the Executive Director of UNANIMA International. A member of the International Congregation of the Daughters of Wisdom, Jean also has a background in nursing and studied Family Therapy, Addiction Studies, and Social Housing Studies with the Irish Council for Social Housing. She also Studied Theology and Philosophy with Milltown Institute in Dublin.

As well as holding many Congregational and Professional leadership roles throughout her career, Jean has been actively involved in international social justice through a range of facets for many years. Jean has spent a vast number of years working with the homeless in Dublin and is the Founder of Sophia Housing in Ireland.

Her vision and leadership brought strength and growth to Sophia, which is now celebrating its 25th year as an organization committed to providing a holistic approach in supporting people, specifically women and children on their journey from homelessness.

Jean was a member of the UNANIMA International Board in 2016 and completed an internship that year also. Since joining the UNANIMA International team as the Executive Director in 2017, Jean's passion for justice, peace and Integrity of Creation have continuously been utilized in her international advocacy.

Mr. Danilo Türk



Danilo Türk is a former President of Slovenia. He is also currently serving as the President of Club de Madrid.

He graduated from the University of Ljubljana in 1975 with a degree in law and later obtained his PhD with a thesis on the principle of non-intervention in international law in 1982.

President Türk became Director of the Institute on International Law at the University of Ljubljana in 1983. Additionally, he was a member of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, a UN body of independent experts. In that capacity he served, between 1986 and 1992, as the UN Special Rapporteur on the realization of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. In 1990-1991, Türk took part in the drafting of the Constitution of Slovenia by preparing the draft chapter related to human rights and fundamental freedoms.

From 1992 to 2000, he became the first Slovene Permanent Representative to the UN in New York, and represented Slovenia on the UN Security Council in 1998 and 1999. In 2000, he was invited by Kofi Annan, then Secretary-General, to serve as UN Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs (2000-2005). In 2005, he returned to Slovenia as Vice-Dean of the Faculty of Law at the University of Ljubljana. He was elected as President in 2007 as an independent, being supported by several political parties. Mr. Türk chaired the Global High Level Panel on Water and Peace between 2015 and 2016, which published the report “A Matter of Survival” (2017). In 2016, he was one of the candidates for the post of the Secretary-General of the UN.

Since 2013, has been a Member of Club de Madrid and, in October 2019, he was elected by the General Assembly as the organization’s President for the period 2020-2022. In 2022, Türk was named one of the 12 Eminent individuals invited to be part of the UN Secretary-General’s High-Level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism Comprises, which will be asked to build on the ideas in Our Common Agenda to make concrete suggestions for more effective multilateral arrangements across a range of key global issues.

Mr. Doug O'Brien



Doug O'Brien works with the cooperative community, both domestically and internationally, to deepen their impact and influence. NCBA is the primary voice for cooperatives in the United States for using the cooperative business model to empower people in their businesses and communities. Doug has been with NCBA since 2016 and became president and CEO in January 2018.

Before coming to NCBA CLUSA, Doug led the work of the White House Rural Council and served in top positions at the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Doug has also worked in the U.S. Senate, U.S. House and for two Governors. O'Brien's experience in academia includes teaching and writing at the University of Arkansas and Drake University Law School.

O'Brien was raised on a diversified farm in Dubuque County, Iowa, and holds degrees from Loras College (Dubuque, Iowa), the University of Iowa Law School, and the University of Arkansas Masters in Agricultural and Food Law Program. O'Brien lives in Takoma Park, Maryland, with his wife, Alisa and three children. He enjoys biking, travel, his memberships in a number of consumer co-ops and credit unions.

Ms. Ifeyinwa Ofong



Ms. Ifeyinwa Ofong started her career as a lecturer at the Department of Geography and Regional Planning, University of Jos, Nigeria. She then progressed to the Department of Urban and Regional Planning at the University of Nigeria, where she held various positions, including Senior Lecturer, Head of the Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Senior Research Fellow, and Course Coordinator at the Institute for Development Studies. She is the National Coordinator of Women in Development and Environment: WorldWIDE Network Nigeria. She is also a member of the NGO Committee on Social Development and NGO Working Group to End Homelessness, where she sits on the Executive Committee.

She was a Board Member of Habitat International Coalition, and currently the Convener of HIC- Women and Habitat Africa Working Group. Ms. Ify Ofong is also a Development Consultant, and has facilitated capacity building trainings, studies and analysis on many social issues, including Gender issues, the Elimination of traditional practices that are harmful to women and girls, the Situation Analysis of women and children in urban slums in Nigeria; the Stakeholder Analysis on Social Protection programmes in Nigeria; Poverty Alleviation studies, Housing census, Water Supply and Sanitation Sector Reform Project for Small Towns; Monitoring and Evaluation of Millennium Development Goals in Nigeria; Women's leadership and participation in Decision- making; Strategic Plan development for Civil Society Organizations and Government Agencies. She has authored many publications, attended, and presented papers in many International and local conferences.

She has also received numerous awards for her work and contributions to community development, the advancement and empowerment of women and youths.

Ms. Cathy Feingold



Cathy Feingold is a leading advocate on global workers' rights issues. As director of the AFL-CIO's International Department, Feingold is a committed and passionate advocate, strategic campaigner and policy expert. In 2018, Feingold was elected Deputy President of the International Trade Union Confederation, the organization representing 200 million unionized workers worldwide. She brings more than 20 years of experience in trade and global economic policy, and worker, human and women's rights issues.

In 2022, Secretary Blinken appointed Feingold to his Foreign Affairs Policy Board where she provides input on a worker centered foreign policy agenda. In 2020, Speaker Pelosi appointed Feingold to the Independent Mexico Labor Expert Board, the body created under the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement to monitor and evaluate labor reforms and worker rights compliance in Mexico. Her work in both global and grassroots fora reflect her commitment to strengthening the voice of working people in global policy debates.

Feingold previously directed the AFL-CIO Solidarity Center's work in the Dominican Republic and Haiti, where she worked with local trade union partners to develop innovative campaigns to improve the working conditions of domestic, migrant and informal economy workers. The work led to a growing movement of domestic workers who affiliated to the Dominican labor movement. In Haiti, she developed labor law training programs and helped publish the first Creole language excerpt of the Haitian labor law, accessible to workers. She led the organization's humanitarian response to the January 2010 earthquake in Haiti.

Feingold's professional experience includes work for the labor movement, large international organizations, small grassroots NGOs and a foundation. She leads coalition efforts to shape global labor standards, including the recently ratified International Labor Organization Convention 190 to eliminate violence and harassment at work. She has written about the impact of economic policies on market women in Nigeria and, as a Fulbright scholar in Nicaragua, she researched the impact of structural adjustment policies on women workers. She continues to be a strong advocate for gender equity and working women issues. Feingold holds a bachelor's degree from Pitzer College and an M.P.A. from Columbia University.

Ms. Shea Gopaul



Shea Gopaul is the Special Representative to the United Nations in New York for the International Organisation of Employers (IOE). For over 100 years, IOE has been one of the leading voices for business at the global level and on the ground with more than 150 employer federation members in 146 countries, representing the interests of over 50 million companies. In her role as the Special Representative to the UN, Gopaul has been working on enhancing and increasing private sector engagement with the United Nations at the country, regional and global level. Through dialogues, publications, outreach and communications projects, she seeks to stimulate collaboration and foster partnerships between the public and private sectors in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Gopaul is also the co-chair of the UN Major Group Business and Industry.

Gopaul is the Founder and Executive Director Emeritus of the Global Apprenticeship Network (GAN), a coalition of companies and organizations addressing the skills mismatch and youth unemployment crisis. She has over 20 years of experience in the UN system (ILO, UN, WHO), and has authored numerous articles on private sector engagement, youth unemployment and employer driven education. She is recognized as an IZA Fellow, is a member of the G20/B20 Employment and Education Taskforce and an International Gender Champion. Gopaul holds a master's degree in international education from Columbia University, an Honorary Doctorate degree in Humane Letters and undergraduate degree from Point Park University.