



**United Nations**

Department of  
Economic and  
Social Affairs



INTERNATIONAL  
DAY OF FAMILIES  
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## *Families and Demographic Change*

**Observance of the**

**2023 International Day of Families**

*Biographical Notes of Speakers*



**Masumi Ono** is the Chief of Social Inclusion and Participation Branch in the UN Department for Economic and Social Affairs. Masumi leads a dedicated team of specialists on issues related to older persons, youth, persons with disabilities and family. Her 25 years of UN experience include supporting the development of Sustainable Development Goals from the Secretary-General's office, mobilizing high-level advocacy work on education finance, preparing reports for the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly on cross-sectoral themes such as gender, poverty eradication and UN system coherence, and managing trade facilitation programmes in the Asia Pacific region. Before joining the UN through the National Competitive Exam (YPP), she worked in Finance having obtained MBA and BA (Economics) both from Cornell University (USA).



**Zitha Mokomane** is a Professor and Head of the Department of Sociology at the University of Pretoria, South Africa. She holds an MA and Ph.D. in Demography from the Australian National University. Her research focuses on family demography, work-family interface, social protection, social policy, and, to a lesser extent, adolescent, and youth reproductive health. With a particular focus on the global South, her research aims to generate a new understanding of how prevailing socioeconomic and demographic changes interact with various family dynamics to impact the welfare, well-being, and functioning of families and their members, particularly women, children, and youth. She has authored more than 50 journal articles and books chapters on these issues and has edited two books: *Family Matters: Family Cohesion, Values, and Strengthening in South Africa* (HSRC Press, 2019) and *Work-Family Interface in sub-Saharan Africa: Challenges and Responses* (Springer Publishing, 2014). Over the last 15 years, Dr. Mokomane has worked closely with various United Nations agencies and other international organizations and has been invited to present at a number of Expert Group meetings on family issues around the world. Many of the recommendations of her research and collaboration with international organizations have been incorporated into global, regional, and national policies aimed at enhancing family well-being, work-family reconciliation, and improving access to social protection.

Dr. Mokomane is rated at the C2 level by the South African National Research Foundation. Those rated at this level are recognized as established researchers who enjoy some international recognition for the quality and impact of their recent research outputs. In 2019 she received the Established Researcher the Year Award from the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Pretoria.



**Ernest Gonzales** is the James Weldon Johnson Professor of Social Work, Associate Professor of Social Work, Director of the MSW Program at NYU Silver School of Social Work, and Director of [The Center for Health and Aging Innovation](#). He is a scholar in the areas of productive aging (employment, volunteering, and caregiving), equity, discrimination, intergenerational scholarship, and social policy. His research advances our understanding of social structures that optimize opportunities to live a long, healthy, and meaningful life.

The National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities, National Institute on Aging, U.S. Social Security Administration, AARP Foundation, The Eisner Foundation, Fan Fox and Samuels Foundation, and other public and private funders have supported his research. Dr. Gonzales publishes in leading scientific journals and he is on several editorial boards. By invitation, Dr. Gonzales served on the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASSEM), Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education (DBASSE). He has been invited to review grants for the National Institute on Aging, as well as other international federal agencies and foundations.

He is the Co-Lead of the American Academy of Social Work & Social Welfare's [Grand Challenge on Advancing Long, Healthy, and Productive Lives](#). He is also a Senior Fellow of the [NYU Aging Incubator](#), a university-wide initiative bringing together faculty and students from across the University from all disciplines who are involved in the study of aging and its impact on society. He works closely with [Generations United](#), is a board member to [CoGenerate](#), and is a member of The Sloan Research Network on Aging & Work, Society for Social Work and Research, the Association for Latina/o Social Work Educators, and Gerontological Society of America.



**Jonathan Perry** is a Social Affairs Officer at the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs in New York. He is one of the lead authors of the UN's annual flagship World Social Report. He started his career in with the UK Government in Bangladesh, before joining UNICEF, working in both Jordan and Iraq during the Syrian refugee crisis. Today he is part of a team conducting research and analysis on emerging issues in social development and providing policy advice to UN Member States in the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly.



**Angela Fallentine** works with the Doha International Family Institute, a global policy and advocacy institute working to advance knowledge of Arab families and promote evidence-based policies at national, regional, and international levels. She also serves on the Board of Directors of Skyline Research Institute and provides training on the communication and application of family science research. Angela previously worked in diplomatic and government relations in Washington, D.C. and Canada. Her research interests include public international law, family skills programming and exploring the critically important role that families play in local, national, and global contexts. Angela earned a bachelor's degree in journalism from Utah State University and a master's degree from Harvard University, where her public policy research focused on strengthening families residing in humanitarian and conflict-affected settings in the Middle East.



**Elisabeth Mueller** is the Vice President of the European Large Family Confederation (ELFAC). There she represents the President and the Board at official meetings and is jointly responsible for the management and representation of the interests of the association. Among other things, she shares responsibility for ELFAC's activities at the European level. Elisabeth is the founder of the Association of Large Families in Germany and continues to be its president. It is important to her that families with 3+ children are recognized in society with all their importance, needs and beauties. She advocates for large families on a national and European level by networking, discussing and exchanging ideas with politicians and representatives of society. She is committed to ensuring that this family model gets appropriate support by politics, and that large families are represented in the media in a multifaceted manner. Elisabeth is married, mother of six adult children and a pharmacist.



**José Alejandro Vázquez Alarcón, PhD.**, as the United Nations representative of the International Federation for Family Development, opens the line of communication between Member States, the Academia, the UN-System, families, and various Civil Society actors to highlight a family perspective and child protection scope in the design of various social policy recommendations. With a PhD in Political Thought and Development, Alex brings a substantial contribution to the global discussion and a practical engagement among stakeholders. He has been an invited expert to several Expert Group Meeting organized by the United Nations on Families, Parenting and Youth Transitions at the UN Headquarters in New York, European Union in Brussels, and other international venues. Alex has been the project manager of comprehensive evidence-based Global Report on Families, Family Policies, and the Sustainable Development Goals in partnership with UNICEF. Now, he manages a global project "Inclusive Cities and Sustainable Families", gathering policy recommendations from almost 200 hundred territories in 3 continents in support of the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Looking forward the 30th Anniversary of the International Year of the Family, he is coordinating together with other transnationals non-governmental organizations the initial draft of the Civil Society Declaration.

Alex has been a visiting scholar of the European Institute of Columbia University in the City of New York and holds a M.A. in Government and Culture of the Organizations at the Enterprise and Humanism Institute of the University of Navarra, Spain. He is also the co-chair of the Non-Governmental Organization Committee on the United Nations Children's Fund as the entity officially mandated to represent civil society and interact with UNICEF's Executive Board. He is contributing with UNICEF to launch and raise awareness the Parenting Month initiative to support parents around globe for better parenting and children care. Alex has advocated for work-family balance, shared responsibility at home and parenting education programmes and support at various United Nations Conferences.