



संयुक्त राष्ट्र सङ्घका लागि नेपालको स्थायी नियोग  
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TO THE UNITED NATIONS



# Realizing the right to social security: ensuring the sustainable and equitable financing of universal social protection

Side event to 63rd Session of the ECOSOC Commission for Social Development,  
organized by the Government of Portugal, OHCHR and the ILO

New York, 10 February 2025, 13:15–14:30 (EST/UTC-4)

UN HQ Building New York, Conference Room CR-9, Webcast through [UN Web TV](#)

## Background

Realizing the human right to social security is at the heart of the priority theme discussed by the Commission for Social Development (CSocD63), which focuses on strengthening solidarity, social inclusion and social cohesion to accelerate the delivery of the commitments of the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and Programme of Action, leading up to the Second World Summit for Social Development in November 2025. At the same time, the preparations for the 4<sup>th</sup> Conference on Financing for Development in July 2025 also provide an opportunity to overcome key challenges in the process.

To realize the human right to social security, promoting universal social protection is key: countries build and maintain their social protection systems, so that everyone has access to comprehensive and adequate protection over the life cycle, and that these systems are sustainably and equitably financed.<sup>1</sup> The international normative framework, anchored in human rights instruments and international social security standards, guides the development of rights-based social protection systems, and supports practical ways to progressively realize the human right to social security for everyone, including vulnerable groups. Especially in view of current global challenges, such as conflicts, climate change, and economic crisis, and in the context of demographic and technological changes, such internationally agreed guidance is key for respecting,

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<sup>1</sup> ILO [Resolution concerning the second recurrent discussion on social protection \(social security\)](#), 2021, para. 3.

protecting, and fulfilling the right to social security as a key cornerstone of social development in a human rights economy.

In 2024, at its 55th session, the Human Rights Council held a Panel discussion on challenges and good practices to strengthen the fulfilment of the right to social security (A/HRC/RES/52/11), also requesting the Secretary General to prepare and submit a report taking into consideration the outcome of the Panel discussion. Comprehensive social protection systems and an adequate international financial architecture have also been identified, in this framework, as a key element to allow Governments to respond to inequalities and vulnerabilities of the most disadvantaged groups in a context of more persistent and emerging climate, economic and social crisis.

## Objective

With only five years left to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, this event will provide an opportunity to discuss the imperative of realizing the human right to social security as a key lever for social resilience and development, with a special emphasis on the sustainable and equitable financing of social protection systems. The event will aim to unpack related challenges and opportunities and identify possible avenues towards strengthening sustainable and equitable financing mechanisms for universal social protection at the national and international level.

The event will focus in particular on the following aspects:

- ▶ **Enhancing awareness and understanding of the right to social security:** Through the discussion and the launch of the joint OHCHR/ILO publication, the event will increase the understanding of the right to social security, its normative content and human rights obligations, highlighting the importance and complementarities of the two normative frameworks (international human rights and international social security standards) to support the development of rights-based systems, and practical ways to progressively realize this right for everyone. It will also enhance understanding on the challenges that social security systems can help to address, highlighting their impact on vulnerable groups, as well as provide guidance for expanding coverage in line with international human rights instruments and international social security standards.
- ▶ **Harnessing universal social protection as a pivotal policy lever to realize the human right to social security and advance social development.** How can decisive policy action help to close coverage and adequacy gaps and ensure the sustainable and equitable financing of social protection systems?
- ▶ **Strengthening advocacy for sustainable and equitable financing mechanisms for universal social protection:** What is necessary to strengthen financing mechanisms for universal social protection in the face of global challenges, ahead of the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development and the Second World Summit for Sustainable Development?
- ▶ **Strengthening advocacy on the key role of universal social protection for social development and social justice:** How can countries better use their social protection systems to eradicate poverty, promote decent work and foster social inclusion?
- ▶ **How can States guarantee at least a minimum essential level of benefits** to all individuals and families that will enable them to access at least essential health care, housing, water and sanitation, food, and basic forms of education as an immediate core obligation – in other words, a nationally-defined social protection floor?

This event will also be an opportunity to refer to the up-coming report of the Secretary-General on the question of the realization in all countries of economic, social and cultural rights, with a special focus on challenges and good practices to strengthen the fulfilment of the right to social security, taking into consideration the outcomes of the panel discussion convened at the 55th session of the HRC (mandated by A/HRC/RES/52/11), and its recommendations.

## Speakers

- ▶ H.E. Mr. Krzysztof Maria Szczerski, Chairperson of the 63rd Session of the UN Commission for Social Development
- ▶ Ms. Clara Marques Mendes, Secretary of State for Social Action and for Inclusion, Portugal
- ▶ H. E. Mr. Lok Bahadur Thapa, Permanent Representative of Nepal
- ▶ Ms. Ilze Brands Kehris, Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights and Head, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in New York
- ▶ Ms. Shahra Razavi, Director of the Universal Social Protection Department, International Labour Organization (ILO)
- ▶ Ms. Magdalena Sepulveda, Director of the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD)
- ▶ Mr. Thomas Taylor di Pietro, Equality Policy Advisor, International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC)
- ▶ Ms. Ewa Staworzynska, Director of Corporate Responsibility and Labor Affairs, United States Council for International Business
- ▶ Ms. Maryann Broxton, Main Representative to the UN, International Movement ATD Fourth World
- ▶ Ms. Sylvia Beales, Global Coalition on Social Protection Floors