

# CIVIL SOCIETY FORUM 2025



63RD SESSION OF THE COMMISSION FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT



FRIDAY FEBRUARY 14, 2025  
10:00 AM TO 1:00 PM ET  
UN HQ, CONFERENCE ROOM 4

# VISION

Guided by the principles of the [Copenhagen Declaration](#), we are committed to a vision of a world free from poverty and characterized by true prosperity, inclusion, and justice for all.



# MISSION

As members of civil society, we engage NGOs through the work of the annual Commission for Social Development in order to highlight best practices and bring diverse voices to the United Nations. We will champion social development initiatives as we actively work towards the Second World Summit for Social Development in 2025, and aim to sustain the momentum generated during the Summit through ongoing advocacy, collaborative partnerships, and concrete actions.

# VALUES

Inclusion \* Consultation \* Collaboration \* Participation \* Respect

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# WELCOME TO THE CIVIL SOCIETY FORUM 2025



## *A message from the Chair of the NGO Committee for Social Development*

On behalf of the NGO Committee for Social Development (NGO CSocD) and the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung United Nations and Global Dialogue New York Office, welcome to the 2025 Civil Society Forum! Since 2006, the NGO CSocD has organized the Civil Society Forum during the Commission

for Social Development to amplify civil society's advocacy efforts, uplift grassroots perspectives, and foster multi stakeholder collaboration on the Priority Theme and Commission deliberations.

This year, during the 63rd Session of the Commission for Social Development, we come together under the Priority Theme *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 of the World Summit for Social Development as well as the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. This theme serves as a reminder of our collective commitments to the principles at the core of equitable and sustainable social development, and a call to action to address the deepening divides and challenges that hinder progress toward these goals and commitments. This year's Commission also identified the Emerging Issue of Social Resilience, recognizing its vital role in enabling communities to withstand, adapt to, and recover from the unprecedented social, economic, and environmental challenges of our time. As members of civil society, we know first-hand from the grassroots that fostering a community's social resilience is at the core of strengthening social inclusion, ensuring dignity for all, and building societies that are truly cohesive.

2025 is a year of milestones - 30 years since the first World Summit for Social Development and adoption of the Copenhagen Declaration, 30 years since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and the midpoint of the 2030 Agenda, with 5 years remaining to accelerate progress on the Sustainable Development Goals.



Each of these milestones, which will be marked by significant Summits, Commissions, and Forums this year, provide us with critical moments for reflection and action. Actualizing these commitments and goals requires meaningful, intentional multi stakeholder collaboration, and the inclusion of civil society and those with lived experience at the decision-making table.

The 2025 Civil Society Forum takes place at a pivotal moment as the international community prepares for the landmark second World Summit for Social Development in November 2025. The insights, solutions, and partnerships developed here will contribute to a unified civil society strategy to ensure the 2025 Summit is impactful and inclusive in order to truly accelerate action on the commitments of the Copenhagen Declaration and the 2030 Agenda. This Forum is also an opportunity to ensure that the voices of those most marginalized are at the forefront of global efforts to strengthen the three pillars of social development: poverty eradication, decent work, and social inclusion.

We are pleased to share with you the NGO Committee for Social Development's Civil Society Declaration, which is included in six different languages at the back of this program. Our Declaration not only addresses the CSocD63 Priority Theme and Emerging Issue but also highlights civil society's commitment to building upon the fundamental principles of the Copenhagen Declaration. In our call-to-action, we share tangible and cross-cutting recommendations that can make our vision of a world free from poverty and characterized by true prosperity, inclusion, and justice for all a reality.

We would like to thank the grassroots advocates, civil society organizations, UN Member States and representatives, academics, and all other stakeholders who bring their expertise and passion to this Forum. Your participation here today exemplifies the knowledge sharing and collective action required to promote our shared vision of a more just and equitable world. We also extend our sincerest gratitude to our partners who made this Forum possible, notably the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung UN and Global Dialogue New York Office, and the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

As you engage in this year's Civil Society Forum, we encourage you to think boldly, collaborate across sectors, and champion the principles of inclusion and cohesion. Thank you for your dedication and advocacy to ensure no one is left behind. In solidarity, let's seize this moment to build a more inclusive and resilient future for all.



A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Liana Almony".

**Liana Almony**  
Chair, NGO CSocD (2024-2026)



# CIVIL SOCIETY FORUM 2025

63RD SESSION OF THE COMMISSION FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT



The Civil Society Forum, organized by the NGO Committee for Social Development in collaboration with the UN DESA Division for Social Inclusion and the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) United Nations and Global Dialogue New York Office serves as a vital platform for dialogue, collaboration, and advocacy. This Forum offers a unique opportunity to amplify grassroots voices, reinforce intergenerational and multi stakeholder collaboration, and champion this year's Priority Theme:

**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 of the World Summit for Social Development, as well as the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.**

The Forum aims to create an inclusive and participatory space where civil society actors, grassroots advocates, academia, Member States, UN agencies, and other stakeholders can unite behind a shared vision to advance the Sustainable Development Goals, uphold the principles of the Copenhagen Declaration, and build social resilience. Through rich discussions and knowledge-sharing, participants will explore pathways to strengthen solidarity, social inclusion, and social cohesion through collective action.

Diverse panelists will share insights and build momentum for a transformative year in social development, paving the way for meaningful outcomes at the Second World Summit for Social Development later this year.



# 2025 Civil Society Forum

Friday, February 14, 2025 | 10:00AM - 1:00PM ET

Location: Conference Room 4, UN Headquarters / UN Web TV

## Opening Remarks

Presented by Ms. Liana Almony, Chair, NGO CSocD and Deputy Director, UNANIMA International

## Opening Panel

Time: 10:00 - 10:35AM ET

The purpose of this opening panel is to welcome participants, provide introductions and set the overall context for the Civil Society Forum, and hear from key multi-stakeholder leaders on the CSocD63 Priority Theme.

### **Moderator:**

Sr. Marides Santos

- Co-Chair, NGO CSocD Civil Society Forum Subcommittee and UN Representative, VIVAT International

### **Speakers:**

- H.E. Ambassador Krzysztof Maria Szczerski
  - Permanent Representative of Poland to the United Nations and Chair of the Bureau for the CSocD63
- Mr. Navid Hanif
  - Assistant-Secretary General of Economic Affairs, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA)
- Ms. Cynthia Samuel-Olonjuwon
  - International Labour Organization (ILO) Special Representative to the UN and Director, ILO Office for the UN
- Mr. Matthias Jobelius
  - Executive Director, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung United Nations and Global Dialogue (FES)



# Thematic Session 1

## *Grassroots Perspectives and Intergenerational Collaboration in Strengthening Solidarity, Social Inclusion, and Social Cohesion*

Time: 10:45 - 11:40AM ET

This session aims to uplift voices from the grassroots and promote collaboration across generations, communities, and sectors to address social development challenges and drive progress on the Copenhagen Declaration.

Key topics to be discussed include:

- Grassroots experiences and initiatives in promoting solidarity and social inclusion
- Intergenerational approaches to building social resilience
- Strategies for strengthening solidarity within and across communities
- Challenges faced by marginalized groups and potential solutions
- Best practices in community-led social development projects

### **Moderator:**

Mr. Johannes Butscher

- Secretary, NGO CSocD and UN Advocacy Officer,  
Global Forum of Communities Discriminated on Work and Descent

### **Speakers:**

- Ms. Ruth-Monique Gedeus (Haiti)
  - Representative, Major Group for Children and Youth (MGCY)
- Ms. Anne Agar
  - Managing Director, Polycom Girls
- Mr. Roberto Borrero
  - Chairperson, NGO Committee on the Rights of Indigenous People
- Ms. Sylvia Beales
  - Founder, Stakeholder Group on Ageing

## NGO CSocD's Grassroots Subcommittee Video Presentation

Time: 11:40 - 11:50AM

Presented by Ms. Lynne Healy, Chair, NGO CSocD Grassroots Subcommittee

# Thematic Session 2

## ***Towards the Second World Social Summit: Safeguarding the Future***

Time: 11:50 - 12:45PM ET

This session will look ahead to the second World Summit for Social Development (Nov 2025), empowering civil society to:

- Champion their priorities and perspectives, ensuring they shape the Summit's agenda and outcomes.
- Drive transformative change by addressing global challenges—conflicts, environmental crises, and human rights issues—that impact a just and inclusive future.
- Mobilize with purpose, leaving with a clear vision and action plan to make a lasting impact on the Summit and beyond

### **Moderator:**

Ms. Cecilia Schirmeister

- Chair, NGO CSocD World Social Summit Subcommittee and UN Representative, Baha'i International Community

### **Speakers:**

- H.E. Ambassador Sophie De Smedt
  - Permanent Representative of Belgium to the United Nations and Co-Facilitator of the World Summit For Social Development
- H.E. Ambassador Omar Hilale
  - Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Morocco to the United Nations and Co-Facilitator of the World Summit For Social Development
- Ms. Anita Thomas
  - Chair, NGO Committee on Financing for Development
- Mr. Thomas Taylor Di Pietro
  - Policy Advisor, International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC)
- Dr. Sandra Pertek
  - UK Research and Innovation Future Leaders Fellow, School of Government and School of Social Policy and Senior Research Fellow at the International Development Department, University of Birmingham

# Closing Session

Time: 12:45 - 1:00PM

This closing session is intended to tie together the discussions from the earlier thematic sessions and provide a forward-looking, solutions-oriented perspective. This time can also be used for final comments, announcements, and informal reflections.

## **Moderator:**

Ms. Kimberly Happich Moloche

- Co-Chair, NGO CSocD Civil Society Forum Subcommittee and Director of Advocacy, Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd

## **Speakers:**

- Ms. Maryann Broxton
  - Vice Chair, NGO CSocD Vice Chair and Main Representative to the UN, International Movement ATD Fourth World
- Ms. María Luisa Ramírez Coronado
  - Vice Minister of Foreign Relations, Republic of Guatemala
- Mr. Charles Katoanga
  - Director, Division for Inclusive Social Development, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA)





# BIOGRAPHIES



**Ms. Liana Almony (USA)**

**Chair, NGO Committee for Social Development**

**Deputy Director, UNANIMA International**

Liana is the Chair of the NGO Committee for Social Development and the Deputy Director of UNANIMA International. As a civil society representative to the UN, Liana advocates for holistic global policymaking through a human rights-based approach on behalf of women and girls, migrants, and the environment. Previously, Liana's work with organizations like the Wilson Center and Cause Communications sparked a passion for cause-driven work through impactful storytelling. Liana holds a Master's degree in International Relations with a concentration in

International Law from New York University, where she acted as President of the International Relations and Politics Association and Deputy Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Political Inquiry. She also holds a Bachelor's degree in Political Science with a concentration in International Relations, and a double minor in Global Studies and Digital Media Studies, from the University of California Los Angeles.



**Sr. Marides Santos SSpS (Philippines)**

**Co-Chair, NGO CSocD Civil Society Forum**

**UN Representative, VIVAT International**

Marides is a Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters (SSpS) member and represents VIVAT International at the UN. A professional accountant, she began her career as a junior auditor at SyCip Gorres Velayo & Co. (SGV), one of the Philippines' most respected accounting firms. She later served as a financial manager for various SSpS educational and pastoral institutions, particularly among marginalized communities and Indigenous Peoples in the Philippines. Most recently, Marides was the SSpS

Congregational Communications Coordinator in Rome, where she led efforts to position communications as a strategic pillar of the Congregation's mission. Her academic credentials include specialized studies in Strategic Planning in Development Management at the Asian Institute of Management in Manila and Minority Voices Media Training at the University of Mumbai, sponsored by the Minority Rights Group (MRG) International. Currently, as a member of the Executive Team at VIVAT International, Marides focuses her advocacy at the UN on Women and Girls, Social Development, and Financing for Development.





**H.E. Ambassador Krzysztof Maria Szczerski (Poland)**  
**Permanent Representative, Poland to the UN**  
**Chair, Bureau for the CSocD63**

H.E. Ambassador Szczerski brings a wealth of experience in diplomacy, governance, and international relations. Prior to his appointment, he served as Secretary of State in the Chancellery of the President of Poland (2015–2021), leading the International Policy Office and the President’s Cabinet. His extensive career includes roles as a parliamentarian, political adviser, and undersecretary in key government institutions, shaping Poland’s engagement in European and global affairs. A scholar and professor of social sciences at

Jagiellonian University, Ambassador Szczerski holds advanced degrees in political science and has authored numerous works on European integration and international relations. His dedication to diplomacy and policy-making reflects a steadfast commitment to global cooperation, human development, and Poland’s active role in the international community.



**Mr. Navid Hanif (Pakistan)**  
**Assistant-Secretary General of Economic Affairs,**  
**United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs**  
**(UN DESA)**  
**UN sous-Sherpa, G20**

Mr. Navid Hanif is a dedicated leader in advancing global economic and social development. Since joining UN DESA in 2001, he has played a key role in shaping UN strategies on sustainable development, financing for the SDGs, and UN system reforms. His leadership spans from policy coordination at ECOSOC to pioneering the DESA Strategic Planning Unit. A thought leader in sustainable finance,

he has authored influential articles on investing in the SDGs. Mr. Hanif holds an MIA in International Political Economy from Columbia University and an MA in English Literature from Government College University, Lahore.





**Ms. Cynthia Samuel-Olonjuwon (Nigeria)**  
**International Labour Organization (ILO) Special Representative to the UN**  
**Director, ILO Office for the UN**

Ms. Samuel-Olonjuwon is a distinguished leader in advancing social justice and decent work worldwide. With nearly 40 years of experience, she has held key roles within the ILO, including Assistant Director-General and Regional Director for Africa. A champion of strategic collaboration, she has spearheaded groundbreaking initiatives such as the Joint Programme on Labour Migration Governance and efforts to boost decent jobs in Africa's digital economy. Recognized among the 100

Most Influential African Women in 2019, she continues to shape global and regional policies that promote inclusive economic growth and social equity.



**Mr. Matthias Jobelius (Germany)**  
**Executive Director, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung | United Nations and Global Dialogue | New York Office**

Mr. Jobelius brings a wealth of experience in international political analysis, economic justice, and multilateral cooperation. With a background in Political Science from Berlin and Development Studies from London, his career has spanned diverse regions, including Africa, South Asia, Eastern Europe, and the European Union. Since joining FES in 2006, he has led offices in India, the South Caucasus, and Romania, witnessing firsthand the evolving geopolitical landscape and the challenges of growing inequality. Before his appointment in New York,

he held senior leadership roles at FES headquarters in Berlin, overseeing strategic initiatives in North America and the EU. Committed to strengthening multilateralism in an era of global uncertainty, he believes in the power of cooperation to address pressing challenges such as climate change, financial instability, and democratic resilience. Under his leadership, FES New York will continue to foster progressive alliances, promote fair and inclusive policy solutions, and contribute to a multilateral system that prioritizes social justice, human rights, and the rule of law.



**Mr. Johannes Butscher (Germany)****Secretary, NGO CSocD****UN Advocacy Officer, Global Forum of Communities Discriminated on Work and Descent**

a role he has held since March 2021. Based in the Americas, he brings a strong background in international advocacy, economic policy, and peacebuilding. Prior to his current role, he worked in Brussels and Scotland, where he earned a BA in Economics and Politics. In 2017, he relocated to Colombia to pursue an MA in Peacebuilding, contributing to local peace initiatives and organizations, including the CAPAZ Institute. His work

focuses on advancing human rights and social inclusion on a global scale.

**Ms. Ruth-Monique Gedeus (Haiti)****Representative, Major Group for Children and Youth (MGCY)**

Ms. Gedeus is a Haitian social entrepreneur and human rights activist who has been committed since 2019 to empowering young people through entrepreneurship and education. As the Vice-Coordinator of La Maison des Enfants Foundation, she works to promote children's well-being and awareness of their rights. She is also the co-founder of Innovha, an initiative that fosters innovation and entrepreneurship among young people, and is currently developing FERMANHA, a project aimed at integrating youth into the agricultural sector.

She is passionate about the power of grassroots activism and mobilisation, believing that shifting power and resources to local communities is crucial to lift people out of poverty and ensuring everyone - young or old - can realise their full potential.

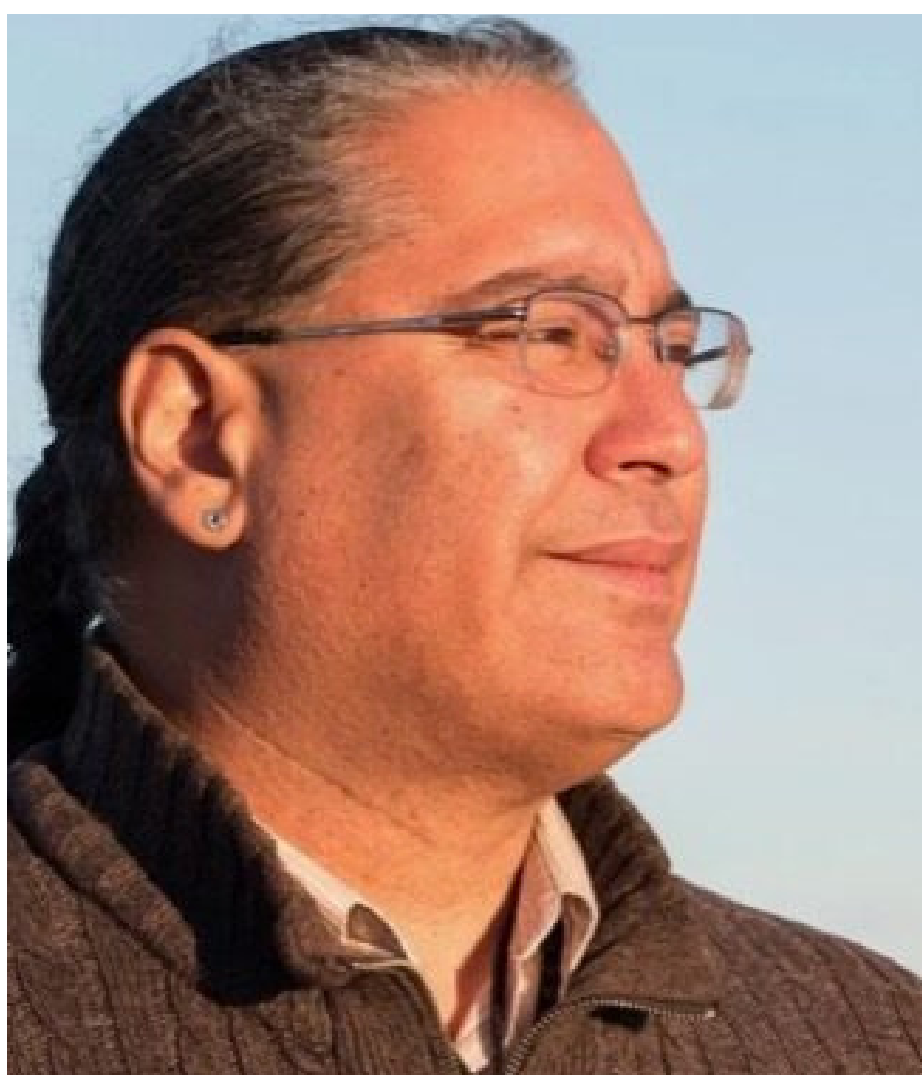


### **Ms. Anne Agar (Kenya)**

#### **Managing Director, Polycom Girls**

Ms. Agar is a dedicated leader and advocate for gender equity and community development in Nairobi County, Kenya. As the Managing Director of POLYCOM Development Project, she is committed to empowering girls and women through education, advocacy, and social initiatives. With extensive experience in humanitarian and development work, she previously served as an Expert by Experience at Comic Relief and contributed to impactful programs at IMA World Health. Anne holds a Master of Arts in Gender and Development from Kenyatta University,

complemented by a background in health records and information management. Passionate about data-driven solutions and community transformation, she continues to champion initiatives that uplift marginalized communities and promote sustainable development.



### **Dr. Roberto Múkaró Agueibaná Borrero (Guainía Taíno Tribe)**

#### **Chief, Guainía Taíno Tribe**

#### **Chairperson, NGO Committee on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples**

Dr. Borrero has a distinguished and diverse background in policy & program development, the arts, and human rights advocacy, including a specialization on the rights of Indigenous Peoples. He retains over 25 years of experience actively engaging the United Nations system in thematic areas such as Sustainable Development and Climate Change, among others. He has served on the staff of the International Indian Treaty Council and the American Museum of Natural History, as well as an independent contracting consultant

for UNESCO, UNDP, UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, PBS, and other notable institutions. A published writer, an accomplished artist, and musician, Borrero is a citizen of the Guainía Taíno Tribe of Borikén and the Virgin Islands. In 2012, he was traditionally sanctioned a kasike (chief) of the Guainía Taíno Tribe. His educational background is in communications and cultural studies. In 2013, Dr. Borrero was awarded an honorary Doctorate Degree, Philosophy in Humanities, from Kayiwa International University, Kampala, Uganda.





**Ms. Sylvia Beales (United Kingdom)**

**Founder, Stakeholder Group on Ageing**

Ms. Beales is a successful analyst, communicator, author and advocate, with a track record in high level policy analysis, public affairs and political relations on the topics of inclusive social development, global ageing, social policy, social protection, gender, inclusion, and human rights. Formerly Head of Strategic Alliances at HelpAge Sylvia was the international policy lead for the 2008 revision of the African Union Social Policy Framework, co-manager with the UNFPA of the global publication 'Ageing in the 21st Century, a celebration and a challenge', and

developed the 2013-5 editions of the Global Age Watch Index. Sylvia is the founder of the Stakeholder Group on Ageing, which represents the community of ageing on SDGs at the United Nations. Sylvia is Director of BealesGelber Consult, a distinguished 'Fellow' of the International Council of Social Welfare, advisor to Widows for Peace and Democracy, member of and Strategic Advisor to Gray Panthers, and Strategic Partnerships Adviser to the Africa Platform for Social Protection.



**Dr. Lynne Healy (USA)**

**Chair, NGO CSocD Grassroots Subcommittee**

**Main UN Representative, International Association of Schools of Social Work**

is a leading expert in social work, human rights, and international development. A Board of Trustees Distinguished Professor at the University of Connecticut School of Social Work, she has taught and advised MSW and PhD students, and directed the Center for International Social Work Studies for 21 years. Dr. Healy holds a Ph.D. in Social Work and Social Policy from Rutgers University, an MSW from

the University of Connecticut, and a B.A. in Asian Studies from Brown University. Her research focuses on human rights, social work ethics, and international development. Her recent publications include The Handbook of International Social Work: Human Rights, Development, and the Global Profession (Oxford University Press) and a forthcoming manual on teaching human rights.





**H.E. Ambassador Sophie De Smedt (Belgium)**  
**Permanent Representative of Belgium to the UN**  
**Co-Facilitator, World Summit For Social Development**

Ambassador De Smedt is an experienced diplomat, she previously served as Director-General for Personnel and Organization at Belgium's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2020–2024) and as Assistant to the Secretary-General (2019–2020). Her diplomatic career includes roles as Consul General in Istanbul, Deputy Head of Mission in Beijing and Seoul, and various positions at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. She also served at Belgium's Embassy

in Rome and worked at the European Commission's EuropeAid Cooperation Office. Before joining diplomacy, she was a professor of French Language and Literature at the University of Szeged in Hungary. Ambassador De Smedt holds a master's degree in interpretation and translation from the University of Brussels.



**H.E. Ambassador Omar Hilale (Morocco)**  
**Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Morocco**  
**to the UN**  
**Co-Facilitator, World Summit For Social Development**

Ambassador Hilale has served as Morocco's Permanent Representative to the United Nations in New York since April 2014. A career diplomat, he previously represented Morocco at the UN in Geneva (2008–2014) and held key positions, including General Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation (2005–2008) and Ambassador to multiple countries. His diplomatic career spans postings in Algiers, Monrovia, Addis Ababa, and

Geneva. He holds a bachelor's degree in political science from Mohammed V University in Rabat.





**Ms. Cecilia Schirmeister (USA)**

**Chair, NGO CSocD World Social Summit Subcommittee  
UN Representative, Baha'i International Community**

Ms. Schirmeister is focusing on youth, social development, and climate change. She serves as Chair of the Subcommittee on the Second World Summit for Social Development and as a Member-at-Large on the Executive of the NGO Committee on Social Development. Her experience spans project management, research, public affairs, and communications at international, national, and local levels. She recently managed public health projects in Africa and Asia and previously worked in

global policy analysis, examining how grassroots social and economic initiatives connect to multilateral decision-making. Her research explores migration, identity, and policy, with a focus on supranational responses to cross-border challenges and human-centered migration policies. Cecilia holds bachelor's degrees in Political Science (International Relations) and French and Francophone Studies.



**Mr. Thomas Taylor Di Pietro (Belgium)**

**Policy Advisor, International Trade Union Confederation**

Mr. Di Pietro works as Policy Officer for the Trade Union Development Cooperation Network of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), which represents 200 million workers across 167 countries. As policy officer Thomas is in charge of ensuring that trade union priorities are strongly voiced within global political fora focusing on sustainable development, including the United Nations and the EU development cooperation policies. Prior to joining the ITUC, Thomas worked as a legal officer for the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) focusing on

defending and advancing labour rights through litigation and advocacy at (quasi-) judicial fora such as the European Court of Human Rights and the Council of Europe's collective complaints mechanism. Thomas also has experience in inter-governmental organisations, having worked in the human rights department of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation (OSCE) in Bosnia, and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) in Tanzania. Thomas studied an LLB in Law with a minor in Politics at Sussex University, later obtaining an MA in Human Rights and Conflict Management from the University of Satn'Anna in Pisa.





**Dr. Sandra Pertek (United Kingdom)**

**Future Leaders Fellow of UK Research and Innovation,  
School of Government and School of Social Policy  
Senior Research Fellow, International Development  
Department at the University of Birmingham**

She is an interdisciplinary researcher and GBV in forced migration specialist and over a decade of experience in humanitarian and development settings. She has served as a Lecturer at the Institute for Global Health and Development, Queen Margaret University and an ESRC Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Birmingham, following her role as an Impact and Policy

Forum in the SEREDA project at the Institute for Research into International Migration and Superdiversity (IRiS). She has led research assignments across Ethiopia, Jordan, Poland, Tunisia, Turkey, the UK, Ukraine, and Zambia. As Senior Policy Advisor on Gender at Islamic Relief Worldwide, she authored its Gender Justice Policy and led a global gender integration strategy. She has consulted for international organizations, including the European Commission, GIZ, and the Islamic Development Bank. She currently leads the £1.3 million UKRI-funded initiative Making Aid Work for Displaced Women, integrating Islamic philanthropy into the international humanitarian system.



**Ms. Anita Thomas (India)**

**Chair, NGO Committee on Financing for Development  
UN Representative, Women First International Fund**

Anita Thomas is a highly experienced professional currently serving as Chairperson of the NGO Committee on Financing for Development since June 2017, where responsibilities include liaising with UN agencies, managing programs, and leading strategic initiatives. As a Representative to the United Nations for Women First International Fund since 2015, Anita advocates for women's economic empowerment and gender equity while organizing key events and partnerships. Additionally,

Anita has held various positions within YWCA Princeton and contributed to multiple organizations focused on social issues, including Conquer Paralysis Now and GMHC. With an academic background that includes Master's degrees in Finance, Public Policy, and Economics, Anita has a strong foundation to influence advocacy and policy in the nonprofit sector.





**Ms. María Luisa Ramírez Coronado (Guatemala)**  
**Vice Minister of Foreign Relations,**  
**Republic of Guatemala**

María Luisa Ramírez Coronado is a distinguished professional with extensive experience in public administration, particularly in the fields of education and foreign affairs. She holds a Master's degree in Leadership and Strategy in Management from Formato Educativo in Spain and a Bachelor's degree in Pedagogy with a specialization in Educational Administration from Universidad Rafael Landívar in Guatemala. Throughout her career, Ms. Coronado has

held significant leadership positions within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Guatemala, serving as Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs and Director General of the Chancellery for over a decade. She has served as Technical Vice Minister of Education, Director General of Educational Quality Management (DIGECAD), and National Coordinator of Educational Delivery Programs, with a strong focus on expanding educational access in rural areas. She has also led initiatives aimed at women's empowerment, such as the PROMUJER Training Program under the Secretariat of Social Works of the President's Wife (SOSEP). Her expertise are further supported by specialized training in public administration, with certifications from INAP Guatemala and ICAP, as well as a diploma in Good Governance and Transparency.



**Mr. Charles Katoanga (Fiji)**  
**Director, Division for Inclusive Social Development,**  
**United Nations Department of Economic and Social**  
**Affairs (UN DESA)**

Mr. Katoanga focuses on youth, older persons, persons with disabilities, Indigenous peoples, and families. DISD serves as the secretariat for the Commission for Social Development and the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. Appointed in September 2024, Katoanga has a 24-year UN career, including roles as Chief of Staff to the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs and with the Economic and Social Commission for Asia

and the Pacific. Before the UN, he worked with the Government of Fiji and New Zealand's development programs. He holds degrees from the University of the South Pacific and Santa Clara University, with executive education from the John F. Kennedy School of Government.



**Ms. Kimberly Happich Moloche (USA)****Co-Chair, NGO CSocD Civil Society Forum****Director of Advocacy, Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd**

Ms. Happich Moloche is a dedicated advocate for gender empowerment and the rights of girls, women, and children. As an NGO Representative, she works to influence policies that promote justice, address systemic exclusion, and combat dehumanization. She is also actively engaged in capacity-building initiatives, mentoring adolescent girls and facilitating their participation in United Nations processes.

Kimberly holds a Bachelor's in Legal Studies, a Master's in International Communication, and a Juris Doctorate. She previously worked in the legal sector, focusing on immigration, real estate, contract, and family law. In addition to her advocacy work, she made history as the first female Class A volunteer firefighter in the Central Islip Fire Department's Engine One Company, serving from 2017 to 2024.

**Ms. Maryann Broxton (USA)****Vice Chair, NGO CSocD****Main Representative to the United Nations,  
International Movement ATD Fourth World**

Mr. Broxton is a dedicated advocate for poverty eradication and social inclusion. As an ATD Fourth World activist, she works to bridge the gap between individuals with lived experiences of poverty and policymakers, fostering collaborative solutions to address systemic inequalities. From 2016 to 2020, she coordinated the U.S. component of the Multidimensional Aspects of Poverty (MAP) participatory research, a global initiative

by ATD Fourth World and the University of Oxford. Her role involved engaging with communities in the U.S. and abroad to elevate the voices of those directly impacted by poverty. Broxton also contributed to the release of the MAP international research results at the OECD in Paris. Currently, she facilitates trainings on multidimensional poverty and inclusive policy development for NGOs, think tanks, and policymakers. Her work is rooted in ATD Fourth World's Merging of Knowledge methodology, which promotes equitable participation of people with lived experiences of poverty. She is also a member of the Community Partnership Group at the Center for Law and Social Policy.





# CIVIL SOCIETY FORUM SUBCOMMITTEE



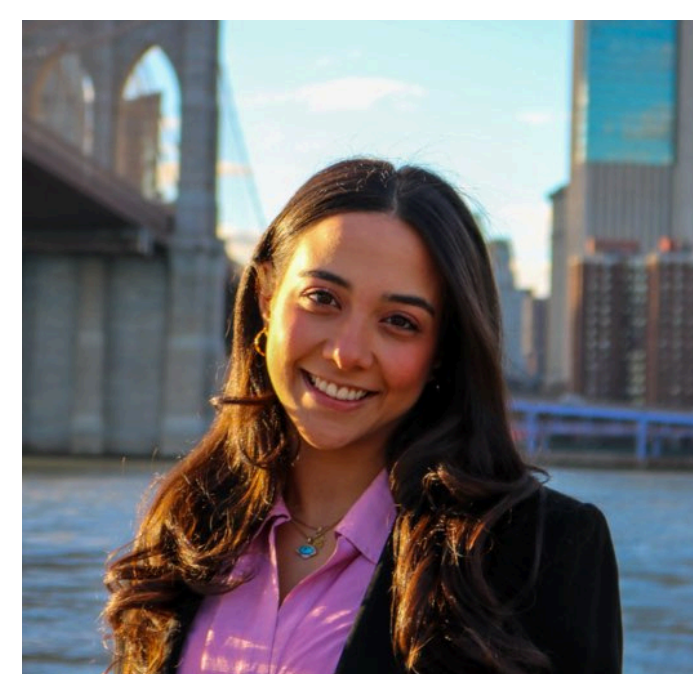
**Ms. Liana Almony**  
Chair, NGO CSocD  
Deputy Director, UNANIMA  
International



**Sr. Marides Santos, SSpS**  
Co-Chair, Civil Society Forum  
UN Representative,  
VIVAT International



**Ms. Kimberly Happich Moloche**  
Co-Chair, Civil Society Forum  
Director of Advocacy,  
Congregation OLCGS



**Ms. Sarah Ben-Farhat**  
Social Development Intern,  
NGO CSocD / UNANIMA  
International



**Sr. Jean Quinn, DW**  
Executive Director,  
UNANIMA International



**Mr. James R. Walters, Ed.D.**  
NGO Representative to the UN,  
Sisters of Charity Federation



**Ms. Alexia Gaube**  
Main Representative to the UN,  
Life Project 4 Youth



**Dr. Ify Ofong**  
Main Representative to the UN,  
WorldWIDE Network Nigeria



**Sr. Janet Palafox, IBVM**  
NGO Representative to the UN,  
Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary



**Sr. Mary Jane C. Caspillo, MMS**  
NGO Representative to the UN,  
Medical Mission Sisters



**Ms. Annemarie O'Connor**  
NGO Representative to the UN,  
Passionists International





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The NGO Committee for Social Development extends its heartfelt appreciation to all our volunteers for their invaluable contributions to making this year's Forum a success. Your collaboration and generosity in welcoming others into UN and civil society spaces are deeply appreciated. We are truly grateful to each and every one of you!

In addition to the NGO CSocD membership's dues, donations were made by the following members to support our activities:

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# CIVIL SOCIETY DECLARATION 2025

## Advocacy Priorities

### Social Inclusion

Transformative social policies and programs that promote social inclusion must provide opportunities for decent work and employment, for access to digital technology, access to public services, especially education, housing, health care, and social protections including universal basic income, within a human rights framework. Meaningful participation of vulnerable communities and individuals is crucial.

### Solidarity

A strong and impactful solidarity demands more than providing resources for the needs of people affected by poverty, climate crisis, disease, forced migration and wars. It requires a perspective of the common good, a system that upholds intergenerational justice and ensures a just, dignified and sustainable way of living

### Resilience

Resilience is defined as the ability of individuals and communities to adapt, recover, and thrive in the face of serious disruptions. Resilience is best nurtured through a human-centered, preventive lens that proactively builds adaptive capacities which we can learn from the wisdom and ancestral knowledge of Indigenous communities

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