



THE PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA  
MINISTRY OF NATIONAL SOLIDARITY, FAMILY AND THE STATUS OF WOMEN  
in collaboration with  
THE OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS SPECIAL ADVISER FOR AFRICA (OSAA)  
& THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM IN ALGERIA (UNDP)

ORGANISE,

“SOCIAL POLICIES AND THE  
EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN:  
**ALGERIA'S SOCIAL  
ACHIEVEMENTS AS A MODEL**”

TUESDAY, 12 MARCH 2024  
16.00 - 17.30 NY TIME

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)  
One United Nations Plaza New York, NY 10017 USA  
DC-1 Building, 16th Floor, Conference Room

Simultaneous Translation Arabic and English

Onsite participation

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68th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women

SCAN HERE



## **CONTEXT:**

Social policies are an important element of the general policy of governments, enabling them to respond to the needs of vulnerable people, particularly women and children.

The importance for States to invest in social achievements lies in the fulfillment of their international and national commitments regarding respect for human rights. It also lies in the policies they adopt to respond to the aspirations of their citizens by ensuring their well-being and decent living conditions. Social achievements also ensure social security and stability by strengthening social cohesion and justice, which contribute to the development of countries.

The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), an intergovernmental body responsible for promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, can contribute to strengthening social policies by inviting countries to build systems of social protection that meet the needs of women and girls, particularly those in vulnerable situations.

As such, the priority theme of the 68th session of the CSW " Accelerating the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls by addressing poverty and strengthening institutions and financing with a gender perspective " offers an opportunity to recognize that public spending on social infrastructure has positive impacts on society, and to subsequently discuss social policies that promote investment in inclusive and accessible public services to meet the needs of vulnerable people, including women and girls.

## **THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ALGERIAN CASE:**

The social character of the State is one of the founding principles of the doctrine of the Algerian State. Consistently the Algerian constitutions in all the editions have enshrined this principle by ensuring its implementation through various public policies integrating the principles of social development, solidarity, and equity as well as social justice.

The social character of the Algerian State is manifested in particular through: free compulsory education for all children up to the age of 16; universal access to health care; the establishment of several mechanisms and systems to support professional integration and unemployment benefits with social insurance; as well as social protection measures such as the Price Subsidy of basic necessities.

The adoption of social policies has enabled Algeria to achieve significant progress in terms of human development, ranking 91 out of 191 countries, placing the country in the high human development category.

Indeed, since the constitutional amendment of 2020, the Algerian government has achieved significant social achievements through public programs in favor of all segments of society such as workers, young people, women (housewives, women in rural areas, etc.), and people with specific needs, which has contributed to improving the living conditions of vulnerable people and their families.

For example, since the beginning of 2021, housewives and women in rural areas have benefited from a joint national sectoral program, which has been very successful due to five lines of action aiming to enable women empowerment: information and awareness raising; training, and capacity building; guidance on how to benefit from one of the state financing schemes; marketing; and promotion of active contribution of women to the development of the national economy. Two guides on social and economic inclusion of women have been developed to serve as a reference point.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE SIDE EVENT:

- Presentation of the efforts made by Algeria in the field of social achievements/social protection and the social character of the country to fight poverty and strengthen institutions and financing from a sustainable development perspective.
- Examining the challenges of establishing social protection systems that are inclusive and accessible to all, particularly women, in light of sustainable development and social justice.
- Sharing national, regional, and global experiences on social achievements in order to extract best practices with emphasis on the Arab and African regions.

## FORMAT:

High-level panel discussions followed by an interactive debate with the participants.

### The course of the discussion:

- **Presentation of the High-Level Panel;**
- **Screening of a documentary film on social achievements in Algeria (5 mins);**
- **Interventions of the panelists:**

Moderator: Madam Cynthia Samuel-Olonjuwon, Special Representative to the UN and Director of the ILO Office for the United Nations

- Mrs. Kaoutar Krikou, Minister of National Solidarity, Family and the Status of Women
  - Madam Cristina Duarte, UN Special Advisor to the UN Secretary General for Africa
  - Mr. Abdallah Al Dardari, Assistant Secretary-General, Assistant Administrator, and Director of the Regional Bureau for Arab States of the United Nations Development Program
  - African Union Representative (TBC)
- **Questions/Answers:** Interventions by representatives of Member States, regional organizations, and civil society.
  - **Closing:** Concluding remarks by the Panelists.

# PANELISTS:



## **Ministry of National Solidarity, Family and the Status of Women**

Madame Kaoutar Krikou, 41 years old, is a trained jurist with a Master's degree in Business Law, a Certificate of Professional Aptitude to exercise the profession of lawyer, and a Bachelor's degree in Law. She has been Minister of National Solidarity, Family, and Women's Affairs since January 2020. Previously, she worked as a lawyer at the Supreme Court and the Council of State. Kaoutar Krikou has also been a member of the Advisory Council of the Dialogue Committee as well as a member of the National Independent Electoral Authority. She participates in numerous national and international forums and conferences aimed at promoting the status of women. On January 2, 2020, she was appointed Minister of National Solidarity, Family, and Women's Affairs while from June to September 2020, she also served as Minister of Labor, Employment, and Social Security.

## **Ms. Cristina Duarte of the Republic of Cabo Verde - Special Adviser to the UN Secretary General on Africa**

Ms. Duarte has more than 34 years of leadership and strategic management experience in public policy making and in the private sector, coupled with a deep understanding of international and regional cooperation and the challenges facing African countries. She is a Member of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Public Administration and High-Level Advisory Board on Economic and Social Affairs, President Paul Kagame's Advisory Committee on African Union Reforms, the Board of the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) and the Board of the Institute of African Leadership for Sustainable Development at the UONGOZI Institute. She served as Minister of Finance, Planning and Public Administration in the Republic of Cabo Verde from 2006 to 2016. Prior to this position, she worked for the World Bank, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, United Nations Development Programme, Food and Agriculture Programme, the African Development Bank, and the International Monetary Fund. Ms. Duarte joined Citibank in Kenya, as Manager, Financial Institution Relationship and rose to become the Vice President, Country Corporate Officer, and Head of Corporate and Investment Banking of Citibank in Angola.



## **Mr. Abdallah Al Dardari of Syria - Assistant Secretary-General and UNDP Assistant Administrator and Director for the Regional Bureau for Arab States**

Al Dardari has about 38 years of experience. Prior to the current function, he served as UNDP Resident Representative in Afghanistan since 2019, when joining from the World Bank, where he was a Senior Adviser. He started his professional career in 1986 as an international affairs writer and bureau chief of the pan - Arab newspaper "Al Hayat" and then became the Economist at the London office of the League of Arab States. From 1994 to 1997, he served as Programme Officer in UNDP Syria country office and then joined the Arab Trade Financing Programme/Arab Monetary Fund group as Chief of the Trade Promotion section. He was appointed in 2003 as Chairman of the State Planning Commission in Syria, a function he held until 2005, when he became Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs. He further served as Chief Economist with the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia in 2011 and later, Deputy Executive Secretary, where he led the efforts for understanding conflict dynamics in the Arab region.





## **Ms. Cynthia Samuel-Olonjuwon, the ILO Special Representative to the UN and Director of the ILO Office for the United Nations**

ILO Special Representative to the UN and Director of the ILO Office for the United Nations since July 2023. Prior to that, she was the ILO Assistant Director-General and Regional Director for Africa, based in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire.

Ms. Cynthia Samuel-Olonjuwon joined the ILO in 1995 and has undertaken different responsibilities in the field and Geneva, including Deputy Regional Director for Africa, Chief of the ILO Programming Unit for Africa and Deputy Director of the ILO Office in Pretoria.

As a member of the ILO senior management team, with a special focus on Africa, Ms Cynthia Samuel-Olonjuwon played an important role in the development and implementation of regional strategies to deliver high-quality decent work results that advance social justice as well as foster opportunities for regional cooperation; particularly with the African Union and African Development Bank. She served, along with the African Development Bank President, Dr Akin Adesina, on the UNECA-supported High-level Panel on Migration, which was chaired by President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf.

A committed facilitator of strategic collaboration between UN agencies and regional institutions like the African Union, Ms Samuel-Olonjuwon effectively led the AU/ILO/IOM/ECA team that developed the Joint Programme on Labour Migration Governance for Development and Integration in Africa (JLMP), which was adopted by African Heads of States in 2015. This joint programme has led to a strengthened the strategic collaboration between the AU, ILO, IOM and other partners to improve the effective governance of labour migration in the continent, and from Africa to other regions such as Europe and the Middle East.

Among many other pioneering initiatives, she strategically led the ILO/ITU/AU Joint Programme on Boosting Decent Jobs and Enhancing Skills for Youth in Africa's Digital Economy. The vision of the programme is to enable more African young people to access decent work in the digital economy. With a holistic approach that addresses the labour market supply side, the labour market demand side as well as labour market intermediation, the programme provides the comprehensive support that enable the initial nine target African countries to maximize youth decent work opportunities in the digital economy.

Ms Cynthia Samuel-Olonjuwon mobilized a great multidisciplinary team to spearhead the development of the African Regional Social Protection Strategy 2021-2025. As one of her legacies, the strategy aims to double social protection coverage from 17.4% to 40% by 2025. It provides an innovative approach to support constituents, towards initiatives that effectively expand social protection coverage to informal economy workers, rural economy workers, migrant workers, and other groups. It has also involved support to constituents to increase the fiscal space to raise the social protection expenditure necessary to extend coverage.

Ms Samuel-Olonjuwon holds a BSc in Sociology (1980) and a Master's degree in Industrial and Labour Relations from the University of Ibadan in 1982. With about 40 years' experience in the world of work, she had worked as Assistant Director in the Nigerian Employers' Consultative Association (NECA), she was a Senior Researcher and Trainer at the National Institute for Labour Studies, and Lecturer at the Ahmadu Bello University. During her stint in the academia, she was appointed to the Board of the International Sociological Association (Research Committee on Women in Society) from 1986 to 1990.

Ms Cynthia Samuel-Olonjuwon's exemplary leadership has been recognized beyond the UN, she was named as one of the 100 Most Influential African Women in 2019 by Avance Media.