



**JOINT MEETING OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL AND THE
PEACEBUILDING COMMISSION**

**The development and peace dimensions of forced displacement:
Countries' best practices in creating durable solutions**

**Monday 1 July 2024, 3:00 PM – 6:00 PM
ECOSOC Chamber**

Opening Remarks

by

H.E. Paula Narváez Ojeda, President of the Economic and Social Council

Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,

I am pleased to welcome you this afternoon, along with Ambassador Sérgio França Danese, Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission, to the joint meeting of the Economic and Social Council and the Peacebuilding Commission.

We gather here today to examine the development and peace dimensions of forced displacement through sharing of best practices in forging durable solutions for people forced to flee their homes.

This discussion is very timely, ahead of the 2024 High-level Political Forum (HLPF) under the auspices of ECOSOC, that starts next week, and the Summit of the Future in September.

According to UNHCR's latest Global Trends report, over 120 million are forcibly displaced, mainly as a result of conflicts and our collective failure at maintaining peace. Over half of these are internally displaced people.

Most forcibly displaced people remain in low-and middle-income countries. And three out of four refugees originated from just five countries. The underlying causes, including those related to underdevelopment and fragility, remain unaddressed.

Forcibly displaced persons are often on the move and are therefore at a higher risk to their physical safety. Vulnerable groups such as women, girls, the elderly, and children are at heightened risk of violence across countries of origin, transit, and destination. Moreover, organized criminal networks often exploit forcibly displaced individuals, subjecting them to extortion, and abuse as they seek safety, security, and humanitarian assistance.

Women and girls constitute approximately half of any population of refugees, internally displaced persons, or stateless individuals. Among them, those who are unaccompanied, pregnant, heads of households, disabled, or elderly are particularly at risk. They face a heightened risk of gender-based violence throughout their journeys, from origin countries to transit points and final destinations. This violence can take many forms, including physical, sexual, and emotional abuse. Their situation not only leaves deep physical and psychological scars but also restricts their access to education, economic opportunities, and participation in society. Addressing the specific needs of women and girls is essential in creating durable solutions for forced displacement. This includes ensuring their safety and security, promoting their access to education and livelihoods, and including them in the design and implementation of solutions. Moreover, addressing these gender dimensions is critical to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Excellencies,

The current global landscape is marked by numerous ongoing conflicts that continue to drive forced displacement. From the protracted crises in Syria, Yemen, and Afghanistan to the recent escalations in Ukraine, Sudan, and Gaza, millions are being uprooted from their homes daily. These conflicts not only cause immediate human suffering but also have long-term impacts on regional stability and development. Addressing the needs of those displaced by these conflicts requires comprehensive strategies that go beyond immediate humanitarian aid and focus on long-term development solutions that foster resilience, peace, and stability.

The international community must act urgently to tackle the root causes of forced displacement. We need to demonstrate our political will to fulfil the promise of leaving no one behind of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This requires concerted and coordinated humanitarian, development and peacebuilding actions to address the underlying causes of displacement and strengthen relevant institutions, with and alongside affected communities.

Member States must address this through working in complementarity with international and regional financial institutions, the private sector, as well as forcibly displaced people themselves, through inclusive national planning. We need to leverage the Global Compact on Refugees and the Global Refugee Forum process as tools to renew multilateral commitment to long-term peace and durable solutions.

Excellencies,

As a central platform for dialogue, coordination and policy coherence across economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development, the Economic and Social Council plays a critical role in promoting sustainable development and peaceful societies.

Together, ECOSOC and the Peacebuilding Commission can work to ensure that peacebuilding efforts are enhanced by initiatives that promote economic and social inclusion—essential for ensuring the sustainable reintegration of displaced populations.

At last week's ECOSOC Meeting on the Transition from Relief to Development, the Council addressed the record-high levels of internal displacement and emphasized the need to address root causes rather than relying on temporary relief. The importance of integrated approaches that combine humanitarian action, development and peace efforts to address internal displacement was highlighted. Furthermore, the meeting underscored the need for improved funding mechanisms and active involvement of local communities to ensure effective and comprehensive support for displaced populations.

It is crucial to highlight that forced displacement is not solely a humanitarian issue but also a profound development challenge. Sustainable development is intrinsically linked to peace and stability, and addressing the development needs of displaced populations is essential for fostering resilience and self-reliance. This involves investing in education, training, and economic opportunities for displaced individuals, ensuring they can contribute to and benefit from economic growth in their host communities. By viewing displacement through a development lens, we can create environments where displaced persons can rebuild their lives with dignity, ultimately contributing to the socio-economic fabric of their new communities and helping to stabilize regions affected by displacement.

Building upon the discussions we encountered last week, today's meeting will aim to provide concrete insights into how governments have created and implemented durable solutions and complementary pathways for

displaced persons. Innovative solutions and best practices from different regions will offer valuable views and lessons learned.

We look forward to your active participation, recommendations and ideas on creating durable solutions, to support people forced to leave their homes and communities.

Thank you.