

**Special Address of the President of
ECOSOC**

H.E. Mr. Lok Bahadur Thapa

**Solutions session at the
Second World Social Summit:
“Trust as the foundation for social
development – Insights from the World
Social Report 2025**

**5 November 2025, 15:00
Room 5, QNCC, Doha, Qatar**

**Excellencies,
Distinguished Representatives and Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I commend UN-WIDER, DESA, and the Government of Finland for convening this session on “Trust as the Foundation for Social Development.”

Trust in governments, institutions and between people, is a **fundamental enabler of inclusive and sustainable development**.

Allow me to recognize Finland for its consistently high levels of societal trust.

But globally, trust is in free fall.

The UN’s World Social Report 2025 confirms what many already feel: trust in governments, institutions, and each other is collapsing.

Political polarization is rising.

Confidence in public institutions is fading.

Multilateralism is under pressure.

These trends are undermining our ability to act,
together and effectively.

The stakes are high.

Poverty remains entrenched.

Humanitarian needs are surging.

Social investments are insufficient.

Economic and social policies are often misaligned.

Climate impacts are accelerating—hitting the poorest and most vulnerable first and hardest.

Small island developing States and mountainous countries are bearing the brunt.

We have just witnessed the destruction in Haiti, Jamaica and Cuba.

Conflict and economic stagnation are compounding the damage.

People are losing faith.

They see systems that are not delivering.

They feel unheard, unprotected, and uncertain about the future.

We must respond—urgently and decisively.
**The foundation is clear: equity, inclusion,
justice, and dignity.**

These are not abstract ideals.

They are the policy levers that drive sustainable development.

They are the conditions for trust.

The 1995 Copenhagen Declaration put people at the center of development.

That vision shaped the 2030 Agenda and its core promise: to leave no one behind.

The Second World Summit for Social Development is our opportunity to turn that promise into policy.

We've heard strong commitments—on poverty eradication, reducing inequality, and building sustainable economies.

Now is the time to act.

We must scale up investments in social protection, universal health coverage, education, and decent work.

These are not costs.

They are catalysts for resilience, stability, and growth.

**Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

As ECOSOC approaches its 80th anniversary, it stands ready to lead.

With its Charter-based mandate, ECOSOC is uniquely positioned to bring governments, the UN system and civil society, including women and children, together to shape and drive integrated, evidence-based policies that put people and planet first.

It is an inclusive platform for consensus, coordination, and accountability.

Looking ahead to UN80 and the 2027 SDG Summit, we have a window to reset.

To rebuild trust.

To reimagine stronger multilateralism.

To align our policies with the aspirations of the people we serve.

This is our chance to strengthen trust and solidarity between people and governments.

Let us seize this moment.

Let us deliver on the promise of the SDGs.

Let us restore trust—by showing that governance can work, that cooperation delivers, and that no one is left behind.

Thank you.