On 16 March 2020, ECOSOC agreed (E/2020/L.4) that the theme for the 2020 ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment (HAS) will be “Reinforcing humanitarian assistance in the context of the 75th anniversary of the United Nations: taking action for people-centred solutions, strengthening effectiveness, respecting international humanitarian law and promoting the humanitarian principles”.

The 2020 HAS will be held from 9 to 11 June in a fully virtual format. Since 1998, the Segment has been an essential platform for discussing issues related to strengthening the coordination and effectiveness of the humanitarian assistance of the United Nations, including assessing progress and identifying emerging issues, obstacles and challenges. It also promotes the sharing of experiences and lessons learned at the national and regional level. The organization of the 2020 HAS will include three interactive High-Level Panels, one High-Level Event and be complemented by side-events.

On 8 June, the HAS will be preceded by the annual informal ECOSOC Event on the Transition from Relief to Development, which links discussions between the ECOSOC Operational Activities for Development Segment and the HAS. Side-events will take place also on 8 and 12 June.

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### Day 1 - Monday 8 June

8:00 - 9:30 am  **Side-event:** TBC*

10:00 - 12:30 pm  **ECOSOC Event on the Transition from Relief to Development:** *The multidimensional and interconnected challenges in the Central Sahel region: reducing needs, risks and vulnerabilities for people through closer humanitarian, development and peacebuilding collaboration*

This event, convened jointly by the Chairs of the Operational Activity for Development Segment and the Humanitarian Affairs Segment, will consider some of the intersecting challenges facing the Central Sahel region, such as persistent and increasing insecurity, climate impacts, displacement, food insecurity, transhumance, and protection concerns. The compound risks and impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic for the
region will also be addressed. Panellists will discuss actions taken to strengthen collaboration between humanitarian, development and peace actors, what progress has been made and consider opportunities to further address challenges faced in the region through increased collaboration amongst international, national and local actors to support the region in achieving the SDGs by reducing humanitarian need, risk and vulnerability in a highly challenging environment.

Co-Chairs:
- H.E. Omar Hilale, Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Morocco and Vice-President of ECOSOC HAS
- H.E Juan Sandoval Mendoza, Deputy Permanent Representative of Mexico to the United Nations and Vice-President of ECOSOC OAS

Moderator:
- Mr. Robert Piper Assistant Secretary-General for Development Coordination Office

Panellists (TBC):
- H.E. Ms. Amina Mohammed, Deputy-Secretary-General of the United Nations (deliver a Keynote Address)
- Minister from one of the Central Sahel countries (Mali, Niger or Burkina Faso)
- Mr. Mark Lowcock, UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator (USG/ERC)
- Mr. Moussa Faki, Chairman, African Union Commission
- Ms. Paraskevi Michou, Director-General, European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO)
- Mr. Maman Sambo Sidikou, Permanent Secretary of the G5 Sahel
- Ms. Vera Songwe, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
- Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator from the region (Mali, Niger or Burkina Faso)
- Civil Society/NGO Representative from Burkina Faso, Mali and/or Niger

1:00 – 2:30 pm  Side-event: TBC*

2:30 - 4:00 pm  Side-event: TBC*
Day 2 - Tuesday 9 June

9:00 – 10:00 am  Opening Session of the Segment by ECOSOC Vice President of the Humanitarian Affairs Segment, H.E. Ambassador Omar Hilale, Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Morocco to the United Nations

The Opening Session will reflect on the theme of the Segment “Reinforcing humanitarian assistance in the context of the 75th anniversary of the United Nations: taking action for people-centred solutions, strengthening effectiveness, respecting International Humanitarian Law and promoting the humanitarian principles”. It will consider the factors affecting the humanitarian landscape today and looking forward, particularly in light of the implications of COVID-19. It will reflect on how the humanitarian system is responding and adapting quickly and collaborating with a range of partners, and what more can be done. It will examine the value of collective humanitarian action to multilateralism and to global solidarity for affected people and communities, leading in to the 75th Anniversary of the UN.

Chair:
- H.E. Mr. Omar Hilale, Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Morocco and Vice-President of ECOSOC

Keynote speaker: (TBC)
- H.E. Mr. Antonio Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations (Keynote Address by recorded video message)

Speakers: (TBC)
- Mr. Mark Lowcock, United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator
- Ms. Henrietta Fore, Executive Director, United Nations Children’s Fund
- Ms. Abby Maxman, Chief Executive Officer, Oxfam
- Mr. Qu Dongyu, Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

10:00 - 12:30 pm  High-Level Panel: Addressing the increasing complexity of health challenges in humanitarian contexts

This panel will focus on critical next steps needed to mitigate the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and respond to increasing needs driven by it, recognizing in the trends in recent years of disease outbreaks and epidemics. Panellists will discuss how the UN and its partners are mobilizing responses, and working with local organizations, to respond and adapt to current and future challenges,
identifying emerging needs, addressing access challenges, delivering by remote, implementing preparedness measures to mitigate further risks. They will discuss how to anchor these new approaches in humanitarian principles in a context where humanitarian needs are driven by an ever more complex mix of health, economic, development crises, and increasingly protracted conflicts.

Panellists will discuss the measures that are needed to lower the human costs of these new dynamics, providing first-hand examples of how they are managing to deliver in such challenging environments. They will describe ways they are meeting the urgent existing needs, even as the COVID-19 threatens to drive already historic levels of hunger to new extremes and add hundreds of millions to the ranks of poverty. They will also discuss solutions for facilitating the flow of humanitarian and medical supplies to where they are most needed. Finally, the pandemic’s mental health and psychosocial (MHPSS) impacts will be discussed, along with solutions for affected people, and for front-line humanitarian workers.

Under his authority as Vice-President of ECOSOC, the Chair of the Humanitarian Affairs Segment will present a “Call to Action” in support of the humanitarian response in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, which will amplify the urgency of mitigating the humanitarian impact of the crisis, and prepare to minimize the risks of future epidemics and pandemics.

Chair:
- H.E. Mr. Omar Hilale, Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Morocco and Vice-President of ECOSOC

Moderator:
- Mr. Mark Lowcock, Emergency Relief Coordinator and Under-Secretary for Humanitarian Affairs

Panellists (TBC):
- Ms. Sigrid Kaag, Foreign Minister of the Netherlands
- Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General World Health Organisation
- Mr. David Beasley, Executive Director, United Nations World Food Programme
- Mr. Jagan Chapagain, Secretary General of the International Federation of the Red Cross
- Dr. Christos Christou, International President of Médecins Sans Frontiers
- Dr. John Nkengasong, Director, Africa Centre for Disease Control
- Affected person
High-Level Event: *Combatting and preventing sexual and gender-based violence in humanitarian crises*

This event will assess the disproportionate impact on women and girls in humanitarian crises, and in particular the trends exposed in light of the COVID-19 pandemic; what is being done; and what more needs to urgently be done to prevent and respond to in humanitarian contexts.

The event will bring together key stakeholders including Member States, humanitarians, civil society, and survivors to engage in dialogue about key issues and experiences, and promising practices to address sexual and gender-based violence.

**Chair:**
- H.E. Mr. Omar Hilale, Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Morocco and Vice-President of ECOSOC

**Moderator:**
- Mr. Mark Lowcock Emergency Relief Coordinator and Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs

**Panellists (TBC):**
- Ms. Ine Marie Eriksen Søreide, Minister Foreign Affairs, Norway
- Dr. Natalia Kanem, Executive Director, United Nations Population Fund
- Ms. Henrietta H. Fore, Executive Director, United Nations Children’s Fund
- Ms. Kelly Clements, Deputy United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
- Ms. Elinor Raikes, Vice-President and Head of Program Delivery, International Rescue Committee
- International Committee of the Red Cross
- Ms. Fátima Shehu Imam, Director, Network of Civil Society Organisations in Borno State

2:30 – 4:00pm  
**Side-event: TBC***

**Day 3 - Wednesday 10 June**

8:00 – 9:30am  
**Side-event: TBC***

10:00- 12:30 pm  
**High-Level Panel: Improving humanitarian effectiveness through new technology and innovation: opportunities and challenges***
This panel will discuss concrete ways the humanitarian sector is improving humanitarian effectiveness in a changing landscape through use of new technology and innovation. It will showcase examples of new technology and innovation being used in humanitarian preparedness and response to improve the impact of humanitarian operations, and share best practices and lessons learned.

The panel will discuss how the humanitarian sector is positioning itself to work with partners, including regional, national, and local actors, and the private sector and to identify and roll-out further opportunities. It will also identify some risks and challenges associated with new and emerging technologies and how these can be mitigated. This will include considerations of data protection and protection against privacy breaches, the potential curtailment of personal liberties through the misuse of data, the spread of misinformation and disinformation, and the use of technology to stigmatize or incite tensions, as well as the need to respect international norms.

Chair:
- H.E. Mr. Omar Hilale, Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Morocco and Vice-President of ECOSOC

Moderator:
- Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator

Panellists (TBC):
- Mr. Fabrizio Hochschild, Under-Secretary-General for Digital Cooperation
- Ms. Valerie Guarnieri, Assistant Executive Director, United Nations World Food Programme
- Mr. Balthasar Staehelin, Director of Digital Transformation and Data, International Committee of the Red Cross
- Ms. Adelina Kamal, Executive Director, ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management
- Mr. Christopher Fabian, Senior Advisor on Innovation, UNICEF
- Mr. Patrick Meier, CEO, WeRobotics, The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy
- Mr. Raj Kumar, Founding President & Editor-in-Chief of Devex
- Member State

1:00 - 2:30 pm  Side-event: TBC*
2:30 – 4:00 pm  Side-event: TBC*
**Day 4 - Thursday 11 June**

**8:00 - 9:30 am**  Side-event: TBC*

**10:00 – 12:30pm**  **High-Level Panel: Mobilizing action to improve humanitarian assistance for internally displaced persons and achieve durable solutions**

By the end of 2019, the global population of internally displaced persons due to conflict, violence and disasters reached an all-time high of more than 70 million. In 2020, in the face of the COVID-19 crisis, internally displaced persons are disproportionately exposed to the disease and its impacts, from job losses to food shortages, compounding existing vulnerabilities and reinforcing the need for efforts to strengthen their resilience and advance durable solutions. Ever more people are displaced for ever longer periods of time, reinforcing the need to find solutions to protracted displacement. In several subregions, conflict increasingly intersects with disasters and droughts in driving displacement, complicating the search for durable solutions and testing the resilience of host communities.

This panel will explore concrete ways the international community can better support IDPs, host communities and governments to help IDPs move towards durable solutions to internal displacement. Panellists will share experiences of diverse needs of IDPs and new approaches towards achieving durable solutions and how long-term solutions can be advanced from the very outset of a humanitarian emergency.

**Chair:**
- H.E. Mr. Omar Hilale, Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Morocco, and Vice-President of ECOSOC

**Moderator:**
- Mr. Mark Lowcock, Emergency Relief Coordinator and Under Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs

**Panellists (TBC):**
- Ms. Federica Mogherini, Co-Chair, Secretary General’s High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement
- Government Representative
- Ms. Michelle Bachelet, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
- Mr. Filippo Grandi, UN High Commissioner for Refugees
- Mr. António Vitorino, Director General, International Organization for Migration
• Dr. Asha Mohammed, Secretary General, Kenya Red Cross Society
• Dame Meg Taylor, Secretary-General of the Pacific Islands Forum
• Dr. Nasir Ahmad Andisha, Co-Chair of the Group of Friends on Internal Displacement, and Permanent representative of Afghanistan to the United Nations Office in Geneva
• International Financial Institution
• Affected person/Local actor

1:00 - 2:30 pm  Side-event: TBC*

2:30- 4:00 pm  Action on the draft resolution and closing of the Segment, including the Chair’s Summary of the discussion over the course of the deliberations

Day 5 – Friday 12 June

9:00 - 10:30 am  Side-event: TBC*

11:00 – 12:30 pm  Side-event: TBC*

13:00 - 2:30 pm  Side-event: TBC*

* Side-event themes will be inclusive of COVID-19 impacts: community based engagement, food insecurity; protection including children protection concerns and preventing sexual exploitation and abuse; climate change; anticipatory action; implications of counter-terrorism measures; inclusive humanitarian responses; mental health and psycho-social support, and the use of explosive weapons in populated areas.