The annual ECOSOC Meeting on the Transition from Relief to Development took place on 20 June 2022 under the theme of “Recurrent crises and sustainable solutions: building resilience and addressing rising food insecurity and displacement” (as adopted by ECOSOC in decision number E/2022/323). The ECOSOC Meeting was co-chaired by H.E. Ambassador Diego Pary Rodríguez and H.E. Ambassador Miia Rainne, Chargée d’Affaires a.i. of Finland. It was held in new format pursuant to General Assembly Resolution 75/290A. The ECOSOC Meeting included a focus on Haiti, South Sudan, and the Sahel region, and participation of wider range of relevant stakeholders, including the Peacebuilding Commission, the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti, international and regional development banks, humanitarian actors, national and international non-governmental organizations and civil society. These contributions informed the in-depth discussion of countries facing humanitarian emergencies and in situations of conflict and post-conflict, including Haiti, South Sudan and the Sahel region.

The Meeting consisted of keynote addresses by H.E. Ambassador Collen Vixen Kelapile, President of the Economic and Social Council, and Ms. Amina Mohammed, Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations, as well as two roundtable discussions and interactive discussions on the topics of building resilience and addressing rising food insecurity and displacement. The keynote speakers focused on the need to build resilience, strengthen preparedness and reduce vulnerability; particularly in countries in conflict, post-conflict and those facing humanitarian
emergencies; and to strengthen collaboration and complementarity across humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding efforts to address acute food insecurity, risk of famine, and displacement. The interlinkages between food insecurity and displacement were reiterated throughout the day’s discussions, particularly in relation to conflict and climate change.

The Deputy Secretary-General outlined violence and conflict as a primary driver of acute hunger, reducing the availability of and access to food and driving displacement by forcing people to abandon their homes, land and livelihoods. She noted that failure to address the current global food crisis, including through joined-up humanitarian, development, and peace action, at-scale, may result in governance failures, social unrest, and further displacement. While food insecurity drives displacement, those who are already displaced are also amongst the most vulnerable to food insecurity. The President of ECOSOC also underscored the importance of discussing displacement and food insecurity together, focusing on building resilience and preparedness and improve the efforts of the international community to respond better to the transition from relief to development.

The discussions outlined the current landscape, in which global hunger and displacement have reached unprecedented levels, and are on the rise, reversing decades of progress. Ongoing disruptions in global supply chains and financial markets, the climate crisis, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, inequities in recovery, economic downturns, and most recently, the conflict in Ukraine, were described as compounding contributors to the current triple crisis in food, energy and finance, which is driving growing food insecurity and displacement. Speakers urged action to address protracted crises, focused on addressing the immediate impacts of food insecurity and displacement, and also on predicting and preventing them through resilience building and sustainable solutions.

**Roundtable Session 1: Recurrent crises and sustainable solutions: building resilience and addressing rising food insecurity**

The first roundtable discussion, moderated by Ms. Heli Uusikyla, Director of OCHA’s Humanitarian Financing and Resource Mobilization Division, focused on addressing rising food insecurity. The following panellists participated in the discussion: Ms. Valerie N. Guarnieri,
This roundtable discussed concerning trends in rising food insecurity, with speakers noting that acute food insecurity is at its highest recorded level. According to the latest analysis from the FAO, between 2016 and 2021, the population facing crisis-level food insecurity or worse, increased by around 80 percent, from 108 million people to 193 million people. A record 49 million people in 46 countries are currently on the verge of famine and over 750,000 people are slipping into catastrophic hunger condition, facing starvation and death as a daily reality. 13.6 million children globally under the age of 5 are suffering from severe acute malnutrition. The number of severely food insecure people has almost doubled in just two years, and this number is expected to increase to 323 million people facing acute hunger due to the ripple effects of the conflict in Ukraine. Food prices are the highest ever recorded by FAO. Violence and conflict remain the main drivers of acute hunger, and conflict levels and violence against civilians have increased in 2022. Gas and fertilizer prices have more than doubled since last year. Disruptions in global supply chains and financial markets, compounded by the impacts of climate change such as droughts, intensify the crisis further.

According to the latest report by the WFP and FAO, Ethiopia, Nigeria, South Sudan, and Yemen are ‘hunger hotspots’ facing catastrophic conditions. Afghanistan and Somalia are facing highly distressing conditions. The situation is dire - for example, at a time when scaled-up action is needed to address food insecurity in South Sudan, the WFP has had to reduce rations in the country due to funding constraints. Increased financing is essential to avert starvation and death.
The situation in the Sahel region is of high concern, where millions of people face the risk of starvation and death due to severe famine and acute malnutrition in the coming lean season. Conflict, climate change, chronic poverty, fragile social services and lack of adequate investments in the local food system all contribute to the region’s food crisis, and urgent action is needed to avert catastrophe. Yet as hunger increases, humanitarian space in the Sahel is shrinking as armed actors impose de facto blockades around certain localities, preventing the delivery of humanitarian assistance and hindering people’s access to pastures, crop fields and harvests. 80% of land is affected by the impacts of climate change, 30% of land is degraded, and water supplies are increasingly scarce. Land restoration efforts by the WFP have been constructive, and continued efforts in this regard are needed. The UN is applying lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic is focusing on strengthening humanitarian, development and peace efforts and impacts in Sahel. Prevention is integrated with stabilization, recovery and transformation. Where borders and cross-border regions are neglected and public policies do not apply, the UN is using platforms such as the Peacebuilding Fund, the SDG Funds and the CERF to supplement government efforts. There is also a deficit of digital capacity in the Sahel, which the UN is supplementing along with assistance in data forecasting.

In Haiti, the situation has worsened. Existing challenges, including the need for reconstruction since the 2021 earthquake and severe flooding. Over 43% of the country is in need of humanitarian assistance, and 4.5 million Haitians face acute food insecurity. Food insecurity is rooted in weakened governance and poor agricultural sector performance. Food shortages are spiking prices and driving inflation to further compound vulnerability and risk. Several speakers applauded the proposals by the ECOSOC Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti. Political solutions and joint efforts are needed to address Haiti’s humanitarian, development and peacebuilding challenges and to meet immediate humanitarian needs as well as long-term economic and social reforms. There is a need for both financial and technical assistance, as well as significant investment in agriculture, education and healthcare. The UN Country Team is working with the government to increase diversification of the economy; improve livelihoods for women and youth; and build strategic partnerships for agriculture and fisheries. Cash transfers and food vouchers are also being used to provide emergency assistance to those in need.
Speakers proposed a variety of short, medium and long-term strategies for addressing food insecurity, including the following:

- **International efforts to address both food insecurity and displacement must focus on finding sustainable solutions and building long-term resilience** for vulnerable populations in order to address the structural causes of hunger and displacement and reduce needs over time.
- **Conflict, particularly protracted conflict, remains the major driver of hunger and displacement.** We must consider how development actors can better operate in fragile or conflict-affected contexts and to mitigate the drivers of conflicts, disaster risk and humanitarian crises.
- **Inequity is one of the main causes of poverty, conflict and food insecurity. Reversing structural gaps** should be a central aim of the multi-sectoral coordinated approach proposed.
- **Responding to the current food crisis requires a multi-sectoral approach** - in addition to the delivery of food aid, it requires urgent scaling up of health, nutrition, safe water, sanitation and hygiene and protection, agricultural production and increasing the support to social protection systems.
- **in order to deliver aid to those most in need, the international community must prioritize protection and ensure safe and unimpeded access for humanitarian workers.** Humanitarian access must be protected through the upholding of international humanitarian law and the carving out of humanitarian exemptions to allow the passage of food and humanitarian supplies.
- **Support resilience building,** and as reflected in the discussions at the UN Food Systems Summit, we must **transform food systems to make them more equitable, sustainable and resilient to shocks.** To build long-term food security and transformation of food systems, we must **invest in agriculture and local sustainable food production;** maintain critical production systems and support agrifood supply chains and markets, supporting incomes, maintaining financial liquidity and the continued supply of critical inputs for agricultural production, keeping trade open in food, reducing food loss and waste, and increasing transparency and the sharing of information and best practices.
• Promote an evidence-based strategy for anticipatory action, investing in qualitative data to anticipate, prevent and mitigate risks. A more anticipatory approach will allow for faster, more cost-effective, and dignified responses to predictable food insecurity and displacement. Early warning mechanisms and early action can protect development gains by allowing action before a crisis spirals out of control.

• Agricultural and food security should be prioritized in development and security agendas, and should feature in country sustainable development cooperation frameworks, national plans and national budgets.

• Strengthening collaboration and complementarity across humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding pillars is essential to addressing acute food insecurity, risk of famine, and displacement. The nexus between humanitarian assistance, reconstruction, peacebuilding, and sustainable development based on economic empowerment at a local level and building resilience and adaptive capacity is becoming increasingly essential to ensuring the dignity of displaced persons. Humanitarian and development solutions are complementary and go hand in hand. Conflict sensitivity has to be incorporated across all activities.

• Humanitarian and development financing are complementary tools that both need to be scaled-up to maximize the impact for affected communities and to be leveraged in a coherent and complementary way. The international community should continue to support innovative financing and anticipatory action. Investments in digital transformation would also deliver greater returns.

• We must strengthen coordination and partnerships at local, national, regional and global levels to facilitate support, capacity building and training as well as the sharing of best practices. Responses must be country-specific and locally owned, informed by local actors and governments and incorporated into national development plans and cooperation frameworks.

• To address food insecurity, we must stabilize global markets, reduce volatility, tackle the uncertainty of commodity prices, and lift restrictions on the trade of food. Food and fertilizer production must be reintegrated into world markets, despite the conflict.

• Women and girls are disproportionately impacted by food insecurity and economic shocks. Although women contribute to over 50% of food produced, they account for 70%
of the world’s hungry. Following economic shocks, women and girls are more likely to lose their jobs, to reduce meals when food is scarce, and to be forced out of school or into early marriages. We must **address gender inequality and advance the economic empowerment of women and girls.** Any comprehensive response to food insecurity must include a gender lens.

**Roundtable Session 2: Recurrent crises and sustainable solutions: building resilience and addressing rising displacement**

The second roundtable discussion, moderated by Ms. Helena Fraser, Director of DCO’s Policy and Programming, focused on addressing **displacement.** The following panellists participated in the discussion: Mr. Robert Piper, Secretary-General’s Special Adviser on Solutions to Internal Displacement; Ms. Kelly T. Clements, United Nations Deputy High Commissioner for Refugees; Ms. Ugochi Daniels, Deputy Director-General, International Organization for Migration; H.E. Ambassador Tarig Ali Bakheet, Assistant Secretary General for Humanitarian, Cultural and Social Affairs, Organization of Islamic Cooperation & Special Envoy of the Secretary General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation to Afghanistan; Mr. Michael Köhler, Director-General a.i, Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid; Ms. Sara Beysolow Nyanti, Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator, South Sudan; Ms. Rose-May Guignard, Présidente du Comité de Liaison Inter ONG, Haiti and Ms. Ghada Eltahir Mudawi, Director of OCHA’s Operations and Advocacy Division, a.i.

Some 100 million people are forcibly displaced globally. This figure has more than doubled over the past decade. Two-thirds of these displaced people are hosted in fragile states as either refugees or internally displaced persons. At the start of 2022, over 53.2 million people were internally displaced due to conflict and violence. A further 7 million people have since been displaced inside of Ukraine. An additional 6 million people are displaced due to disasters, including extreme weather and climate-related events. Conflict has caused new waves of displacement, while the protracted nature of conflicts is causing displacement to become increasingly long-term, with millions of internally displaced persons experiencing displacement for over ten years with limited progress towards self-sufficiency and durable solutions.
Forced displacement is driven by multiple complex causes, including conflict, violence, human rights violations and persecution. At the same time, the adverse impacts of climate change fuel competition and conflicts over increasingly scarce resources, such as water and pasture lands. Internal displacement is increasingly related to the adverse impacts of climate change and disasters. For example, without scaled up climate action, the World Bank warned that by 2050, 216 million people may be displaced by climate-related disasters – this is almost four times the number of people living in internal displacement currently due to conflict, violence and disasters. There were concerns that the impact of global warming, including loss of resources and lack of water and arable land, could shift the world’s most vulnerable people from prolonged to permanent displacement at an unprecedented scale.

Forced displacement is both the cause and the result of humanitarian need and lack of development. The majority of forcibly displaced people live in developing economies with existing development challenges. Basic services and infrastructure which are already stretched are further strained by sudden and massive influxes of displaced people. This in turn leads to humanitarian need. As such, collaboration between humanitarian and development actors is essential to build lasting solutions to forced displacement.

South Sudan has faced a displacement crisis: 2.3 million South Sudanese refugees have been displaced to 5 neighboring countries; and 2 million internally displaced persons are living in South Sudan. In addition, South Sudan is hosting over 300,000 refugees – most of whom from Sudan. Displacement in South Sudan is driven by climate change, severe flooding and droughts, violence and other multidimensional drivers including gender-based violence and weakened governance leading to corruption. Collective outcomes require collective action, engaging a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach. Peace is a precursor for humanitarian access and development. Training and skill development are being provided as a means of boosting livelihoods and economic independence, which is in turn improving social cohesion and turning camps into neighborhoods. Providing seeds and tools to displaced people allows them to farm and feed themselves, which fosters independence and dignity.

In the Sahel alone, close to 2.8 million people have been internally displaced. To address widespread displacement throughout the region, area-based approaches can effectively target people in geographic areas based on needs, regardless of status. In Niger, programs have
been directed towards providing opportunities equally benefiting both displaced persons and host communities in order to help with the relocation and integration of Nigerian refugees. This reinforces host communities’ capacity to support new arrivals.

In Haiti, violence and kidnappings by heavily armed gangs pose threats to civilians and aid workers. 17,000 people have been displaced by gang conflict, violations of human rights and gender-based violence. To restore security in the country and resolve the major problems facing Haiti, the international community must mobilize to support a coordinated and holistic approach. The political crisis must be resolved through inclusive national dialogue to facilitate free, just and transparent elections. Increased efforts are needed to strengthen governance, fight corruption and break the cycle of impunity.

Drawing on lessons learned over the past decade, the following key action points emerged from the discussions:

- The international community must work together to resolve protracted conflicts as well as to anticipate and address the risk of future conflicts unfolding in vulnerable states. Collectively, we need to draw on advanced use of data and shared analysis of conflict and displacement to mainstream conflict sensitivity, prevention and analysis. All humanitarian and development activities have an impact on conflict, and this must be taken into account when developing country cooperation frameworks and humanitarian response plans.

- As called for in the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, we need to mainstream the human rights of internally displaced persons. States bear the primary responsibility to protect the rights of internally displaced persons and ensure the realization of their humanitarian and development needs.

- The Secretary-General’s Action Agenda on Internal Displacement may help to lay a foundation for durable solutions that ensure the protection of internally displaced persons and the prevention of further conflict and new displacements.

- A whole-of-society approach, led by government and informed by local actors, knowledge and understanding, must include collaboration amongst civil society, human rights institutions, internally displaced persons, host communities, the United Nations and
the private sector. Solutions must be both locally and nationally owned. Collective action is essential not only to response, but also to combatting the root causes of displacement.

- This requires collaborative capacity-building and planning to support local authorities and strengthen existing local capacities. A development-oriented approach to address root causes of displacement and support durable solutions can help to strengthen governance, infrastructure, social cohesion, and disaster risk reduction while combating, mitigating and adapting to climate change as a driver of displacement.

- Internal displacement is increasingly an urban phenomenon, requiring improved urban planning.

- International solidarity and responsibility-sharing – two core principles of the Global Compact on Refugees – are needed to mitigate the longer-term social and economic consequences impacting both refugees and their host communities.

- Refugees, internally displaced persons and members of host communities of all ages, genders, abilities and diversities, should be included in peacebuilding activities and decision-making. For example, in Kenya, efforts have been directed towards supporting displaced people from South Sudan in becoming agents of peace. The sharing of information around peace processes helps to address ethnic and political cleavages amongst displaced populations.

- We must find systematic solutions in development financing and work with financial institutions and bilateral donors to achieve more predictable financing. Development partners play an important role in mobilizing investment, loans and scholarships to enable the forcibly displaced and their host communities to live in dignity.

- Greater inclusion of the forcibly displaced can be achieved through development funding targeted at improving access to health, education, and income-generating activities to allow shifts from dependence to self-reliance.

- Increased political commitment is essential to help prevent conflicts and violence from occurring, scale up peace-building efforts and increase investment in climate change adaptation and mitigation.

The Transition Meeting was followed immediately by the Humanitarian Affairs Segment.