

**ECOSOC Joint Informal Event of the Operational Activities and Humanitarian Affairs Segments
Transition from Relief to Development
PROVISIONAL CONCEPT NOTE**

**The multidimensional and interconnected challenges in the central Sahel region:
Reducing needs, risks and vulnerabilities for people through closer humanitarian, development and
peacebuilding collaboration**

8 June 2020, 10:00am – 12:30pm (New York time), virtual meeting

The ECOSOC Transition Event

In its resolution 58/114, adopted in February 2004, the UN General Assembly encouraged ECOSOC “to consider the issue of the transition from relief to development in an integrated manner, through a possible joint meeting of the humanitarian and operational segments, during its substantive session in the near future, in view of the importance of getting humanitarian and development organizations, including international and regional financial institutions and nongovernmental organizations, to discuss and review more fully the implications of the transition from relief to development in their programming”. The Assembly also invited the Council to “take into account, inter alia, the work in progress by the United Nations system to clarify its role in post-conflict transition situations as well as other relevant information in its consideration”. In addition, in its resolution 72/305, adopted in July 2018, the General Assembly noted “the special event on the transition from relief to development, which addresses the linkages between humanitarian assistance and development, will help the Economic and Social Council to discuss and review more fully the implications of the transition from relief to development and improve the efforts of the international community to respond better to transition situations”.

Objective of the event and proposed discussion

This year, the transition event will focus on the multiple challenges in the Central Sahel and the objective will be to:

- i. Present **achievements and challenges of humanitarian, development and peacebuilding collaboration in the Central Sahel region**; In particular, demonstrate interventions that bring together humanitarian, development and peace actors and actions in the Central Sahel and discuss barriers and opportunities to bring these initiatives to scale.
- ii. Galvanize momentum with the Membership to continue **political and flexible financial support to the humanitarian, development and peace interventions** in the Central Sahel;
- iii. Based on lessons learnt and best practice, **identify opportunities that increase collaboration between international, regional, national and local actors** to support the achievement of the SDGs by reducing humanitarian need, risk and vulnerability;

Format

The Joint Informal Event will take place on Monday, 8 June 2020, 10:00am – 12:00pm, virtually.

The event is co-chaired by the Vice-Presidents of ECOSOC, who will make opening and closing statements. The event will involve an interactive exchange of views between the panelists and the audience.

- **H.E. Mr. Omar Hilale, Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Morocco and Vice-President of ECOSOC**
- **H.E. Mr. Juan Sandoval Mendiola, Deputy Permanent Representative of Mexico to the United Nations**

The suggested high-level speakers for the panel discussion will include:

- **Mr. Achim Steiner, Administrator, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Vice-Chair, UN Sustainable Development Group**
- **H.E. Mr. Laouan Magagi, Minister of Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management, Niger**
- **H.E. Cessouma Minata Samate, Commissioner for Political Affairs, African Union Commission**
- **Mr. Ramesh Rajasingham, Acting UN Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator**
- **Mr. Maman Sidikou, Permanent Secretary of the G5 Sahel**
- **Ms. Paraskevi Michou, Director-General, European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO)**
- **Ms. Vera Songwe, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa**
- **Ms. Metsi Makhetha, UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Burkina Faso**
- **Mr. Albert-Philip Burger d'Haem, Humanitarian Working Group coordinator, INGO Forum Mali**

Moderator: Mr. Robert Piper, Assistant Secretary-General, Development Cooperation Office

The panel will consider achievements, challenges and concrete opportunities to strengthen collaboration in country, at the regional and cross-border and global level. Interventions will highlight progress in sharing analysis of needs, risks and vulnerability in the region, the importance of jointly setting priorities for humanitarian, development and peacebuilding interventions, while underling the need for flexible, multi-year financing and funding to address the multifaceted challenges in the region. Panellists will highlight the synergies and complementarity across the multi-dimensional response efforts and initiatives of governments, regional organizations, UN agencies, NGOs, civil society, donors and International Financial Institutions.

Overview of current challenges and response efforts in the Central Sahel

Current situation and multifaceted challenges in the Central Sahel: The humanitarian situation in the Central Sahel (Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger) has significantly worsened over the last years. Drivers of conflict and instability at national and regional levels remain unaddressed. Vulnerabilities are deepening and increasing due to the convergence of poverty, social exclusion, food insecurity, migration, urbanisation, rapid population growth, violent extremism and conflict compounding underlying development challenges. Climate change is increasingly impacting rural communities and driving conflict dynamics. Forced displacement in the Sahel has reached a new peak with more than 1.2 million people uprooted from their homes. In 2020, a new record high of 7.5 million people will need humanitarian assistance and protection in Mali, Western Niger and Burkina Faso, including 5.5 million people facing crisis or emergency levels of food insecurity. Almost US\$ 1 billion are required to bring the humanitarian response in the Sahel to scale to reach 6.1 million people with timely and adequate life-saving assistance.

Current vulnerabilities are further exacerbated by the recent COVID-19 outbreak, which puts additional stress on some of the weakest health systems in the world and risks to seriously impact the ability to provide humanitarian and development assistance.

Ongoing regional response efforts: In the Central Sahel, governments, regional entities and the international community are providing a range of regional multi-dimensional response initiatives to face the multifaceted challenges of the region. In 2014, Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger created the G5 SAHEL to foster cooperation on development and security interventions in the region. Several donors, including the members of the Sahel Alliance have provided support to implement G5's Priority Investment Programme (2018-2020).

In addition to national humanitarian and development plans and support, the UN has adopted the UN Support Plan for the Sahel to foster coherence and coordination for greater efficiency and results delivery under the United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel (UNISS) framework. Additionally, in December 2019, the United Nations Economic and Social Council adopted a resolution titled “Support to the Sahel Region,” which calls for the UN to increase aid effectiveness by linking its peacebuilding efforts with its development assistance in order to fundamentally resolve security and humanitarian issues in the Sahel region.