DRAFT CONCEPT NOTE

ECOSOC Joint Informal Event of the Operational Activities and Humanitarian Affairs Segments

Transition from Relief to Development

“Preventing the looming risk of multiple famines and addressing rising acute food insecurity: taking action to save lives and reduce people's needs, risks and vulnerabilities through closer humanitarian, development and peacebuilding collaboration”

22 June 2021, 16:00h-18:00h (Geneva time), Hybrid [in person at the Palais des Nations Room XX for Geneva-based delegations as well as virtual participation]

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.”

Format
The Joint Informal Event will take place on Tuesday, 22 June 2021, 16:00h – 18:00h (Geneva time), in a hybrid format in Conference Room XX at the Palais des Nations and virtually participation (this decision is pending the guidance of national authorities and the United Nations Office in Geneva). The event will involve an interactive exchange of views between the panelists and the audience.

The event is co-chaired by the Vice-Presidents of ECOSOC H.E. Ms. Pascale Baeriswyl, Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the United Nations and Vice-President of ECOSOC and H.E. Mr. Sergiy Kyslytsya, Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations and Vice-President of ECOSOC, who will make opening and closing statements.

Co-Chairs :
- H.E. Ambassador Pascale Baeriswyl, Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the United Nations and Vice-President of ECOSOC
- H.E. Ambassador Sergiy Kyslytsya, Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations and Vice-President of ECOSOC
**Moderator:** Mr. Robert Piper, Assistant Secretary-General, UN Development Coordination Office

**Speakers:**
- H.E. Mr. Ali Betti, High Commissioner for 3N Initiative, Niger Government (TBC)
- Mr. Ramesh Rajasingham, Acting Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator
- Mr. Qu Dongyu, Director-General, Food and Agriculture Organization (TBC)
- Mr. David Beasley, Executive Director, World Food Programme (TBC)
- Ms. Dabagai Dabagai, Country Director - Nigeria, Action Against Hunger
- Ms. Mona Luqman, Executive Director, Food4Humanity

**Objective and proposed discussion**

This year’s Transition Event will focus on the urgent need to take action to prevent multiple famines from occurring in 2021 and to reduce acute food insecurity. It will draw on lessons to prevent famines and reduce acute food security into the future. It will provide a focus on collaborative effort across humanitarian, development and peacebuilding. The Event will also consider complementary actions which save lives, leave no-one behind, and help achieve the 2030 Agenda. The panel discussion will:

- outline the scope and scale of the current situation of famine risk and global food insecurity and present the major challenges faced
- draw lessons and identify good practices and opportunities in collaboration among humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding actors, at the country-level in the context of reducing risk, needs, and vulnerabilities over time and achieving the SDGs
- help galvanize understanding and action needed by the international community, humanitarian, development, and peace actors to prevent famine, mitigate acute food insecurity and to protect and rebuild development gains and achieve the SDG 2 in particular
- explore how the UN development system reforms are being operationalized to tackle underlying drivers of acute food insecurity

**Context**

Today the world faces the looming threat of multiple famines and rising acute food insecurity. This year some 142 million people in 40 countries and territories are projected to be in Integrated Food Security Phase Classification IPC Phase 3 (Crisis) or worse. More than 28 million people in Integrated Food Security Phase Classification IPC Phase 4 (Emergency), or worse, were already facing emergency levels of acute food insecurity and who are highly vulnerable to face famine or famine-like conditions without urgent life-saving action, including over 155,000 people living in famine or famine-like conditions.

Conflict remains the overwhelming driver of famine, with violations of international humanitarian law destroying objects indispensable to the survival of the civilians, causing displacement, and preventing access to humanitarian assistance, including safe and affordable food, water, nutrition, healthcare, and protection. The use of starvation as a method of warfare continues, and without political solutions, famines are also the result of prolonged and protracted crises. Conflicts continue to displace people, exacerbating vulnerabilities, and threatening the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, leaving millions of people behind.
At the same time, the world was seeing concerning levels of acute food insecurity in recent years. Climate-related risks and impacts, including widespread droughts and floods, are threatening food production and food systems. The secondary impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have had a profound impact and are reverberating globally, with serious consequences on economies, including severe impacts agriculture and livelihoods, and exacerbating inequalities and compounding risks and vulnerabilities. Women and children are disproportionately impacted. The protracted nature of most food crises shows if current trends are not reversed, food crises will increase in frequency and severity. A radical transformation of our food systems is needed to achieve the SDGs. The Transition Event also offers the opportunity to contribute to thinking ahead of the UN Food Systems Summit.

Efforts are being made to better predict risks, share analysis, take more anticipatory approaches, and enhance collaboration across humanitarian, development, and peace efforts. Addressing root causes, risks and vulnerabilities is needed more than ever. Strengthening respect for international humanitarian law and facilitating humanitarian access is fundamental. Development efforts are essential to building resilience, to supporting governments – national and local – and community actors, and to helping countries and communities withstand future climate-related and other shocks. Provision of basic services, including social protection, livelihoods support, nutrition, health and WASH services, investment in sustainable agriculture, addressing underlying inequalities and supporting durable solutions for displaced people, in dialogue and collaboration with governments, will be important. The significance of gender dimensions must be recognized, understood and incorporated throughout, including the impacts on women and girls who are highly vulnerable to food insecurity, and also the critical role they play in food systems and as agents of change. Early, flexible, unearmarked and multi-year funding is critical to save lives today as well as to avert even more suffering, displacement, inequality and loss of livelihoods. The annual informal Transition Event will draw from the experience of field practitioners, governments, and global thought leaders across the humanitarian and development and peace spectrum to explore concrete and actionable ways to avert famine, reduce famine risk, and reduce acute food insecurity and malnutrition.