

## Second World Summit for Social Development: 4-6 November 2025

The world today is vastly different yet, in many ways, very similar to the one that gathered in Copenhagen 30 years ago for the first World Summit for Social Development (WSSD). Delegates attending the Second World Summit for Social Development acknowledged that notable progress has been made in expanding education, healthcare, and social protection systems. However, they also warned that widening inequalities, recurring crises, and geopolitical tensions are reversing many of the gains achieved. Many considered this Summit both timely and necessary to renew the global commitment to social justice, inclusion, and sustainable human development.

Delegates at the “World Social Summit” opened the three-day event with the adoption of the Doha Political Declaration, through which world leaders reaffirm their commitment to building a more just, inclusive, equitable, and sustainable world by addressing social challenges such as poverty, unemployment, and exclusion. In the Declaration, which was negotiated in the lead up to the Summit, world leaders commit to, among others:

- adopt a holistic approach towards poverty eradication, including through measures to address the root causes of poverty and underlying causes of inequality;
- achieve universal health coverage and realize universal, equitable and affordable access to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health and well-being for all;
- invest in inclusive, equitable, and quality education at all levels, skills development, digital literacy education, vocational education and training, and life-long learning;
- promote equitable access of developing countries to global markets, investments and technologies;
- explore opportunities to mobilize additional public and private finance, while ensuring that additional private finance mobilized is not a substitute for existing commitments;
- invest in resilient, inclusive and sustainable food systems that ensure access to affordable, sufficient, safe and nutritious food for all, and reduce food loss and waste;
- address the adverse impacts of climate change, biodiversity loss, desertification, drought and environmental degradation; and
- take comprehensive measures to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls.

To ensure full implementation of the social development agenda, leaders commit to a five-year follow-up process on both the newly-adopted Doha Political Declaration and the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action, which was adopted at the WSSD in 1995. The follow-up process will start in 2031 and will include a high-level plenary meeting convened under the auspices of the UN General Assembly (UNGA).

Following the adoption of the Doha Political Declaration, world leaders expressed their views on the state of social development globally and identified key updates to the 1995 agreement that must be addressed to accelerate progress. A strong and recurring theme was that social protection should be viewed as an investment in human capital and stability, not a fiscal burden. Many countries reported expanding social protection systems, including universal health coverage, pension reforms, child allowances, and targeted support for vulnerable groups. Many also highlighted the need for comprehensive reform of the international financial architecture to ensure fairer representation of developing countries and greater access to concessional financing.

Multiple countries underscored that peace is a fundamental prerequisite for achieving social development. They emphasized that conflicts, including those in Palestine, Ukraine, the Sahel, Sudan, and other parts of the world, devastate communities, exacerbate poverty, and divert resources away from social priorities. Extreme weather events such as Hurricane Melissa, which devastated several Caribbean islands two weeks before the Summit, were further highlighted as compounding factors that deepen vulnerabilities and reverse development gains.

Delegates urged the Summit to mark a shift from words to implementation, stressing the need for follow-up mechanisms and concrete timelines. While closing the three-day event, Annalena Baerbock, President of the 80th session of the UNGA, underlined that the initiatives and partnerships showcased during the Summit need to be implemented at scale to lift the remaining population living in extreme poverty.

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The Summit also featured High-level Round Table sessions on:

- strengthening the three pillars of social development: poverty eradication, full and productive employment and decent work for all, and social inclusion; and
- assessing progress and addressing gaps and challenges in the implementation of the commitments of the [Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and its Programme of Action](#) and giving momentum towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The Summit took place from 4-6 November 2025, in Doha, Qatar, and was attended by approximately 14,000 participants, including over 40 Heads of State or Government, over 230 ministers and senior officials, and leaders of governmental, non-governmental, private sector, and intergovernmental organizations.

### A Brief History of the Social Summit

In December 1992, the UNGA adopted Resolution 47/92, "Convening of a world summit for social development," and set the process in motion for organizing a meeting of Heads of State or Government to tackle the critical problems of poverty, unemployment, and social integration. The first [World Summit for Social Development](#) took place in Copenhagen, Denmark, from 6-12 March 1995. It was, at its time, the largest gathering of world leaders ever assembled.

Discussions at the Summit were organized under themes including enabling environment, poverty eradication, gender and women's participation, employment and problems of unemployment, and social integration. The Summit adopted the [Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and its Programme of Action](#), which aspired to "place people at the center of development by ensuring full participation by all."

Almost 30 years later, by its resolutions [78/261](#) and [78/318](#) and decision 79/556, the UNGA decided to convene the "World Social Summit" under the title "the Second World Summit for Social Development" in Doha in November 2025. The UNGA also agreed that the Summit would adopt a declaration that would be agreed in advance by consensus, through a UN intergovernmental negotiating process.

### Report of the Second World Summit for Social Development

Opening the Second World Summit for Social Development on Tuesday morning, 4 November, UNGA President Annalena Baerbock introduced draft UNGA resolution [A/80/L.5](#), which contained the draft Doha Political Declaration. Delegates adopted it by acclamation, following which they proceeded to deliver statements in a plenary session that spanned the three days of the Summit. World leaders also convened in two roundtable sessions, and numerous side events.

This report summarizes the discussions during the plenary session and roundtable discussions. It also provides a summary of the Doha Political Declaration.

#### Plenary Session

In her opening statement, UNGA President Annalena Baerbock called for holistic strategies to tackle multidimensional challenges that hinder progress in social development. She highlighted the climate crisis as the single largest obstacle to social development.

UN Secretary-General António Guterres called for a peoples' plan that accelerates the fight against poverty and inequality, and underlined that the clean energy revolution can cut emissions while growing economies. He called on countries to reach, during the UN Climate Change Conference in Belém in November 2025, a credible agreement to achieve the goal of mobilizing USD 1.3 trillion annually by 2035 for developing countries.

Tamim bin Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, Emir of Qatar, urged nations to honor their commitments under the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and the newly-adopted Doha Political Declaration, and turn them into tangible action by addressing implementation gaps. Underlining that social development cannot be achieved without lasting peace and security, he called for an end to the violence in Palestine and Sudan.

Lok Bahadur Thapa, President of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), warned that distrust fueled by misinformation and disinformation is fracturing social cohesion and undermining progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). He called for renewed cooperation among nations, inclusive development, and respect for the dignity of every person, noting that addressing these issues is at the heart of ECOSOC's mandate.

The GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA (G-77/CHINA) said the international community stands at a pivotal moment that demands concrete progress in advancing the welfare and dignity of all people. Emphasizing that the Summit should serve as a step towards deeper cooperation and solidarity among nations, the Group reaffirmed that the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities must remain central, as international cooperation and solidarity are indispensable to addressing today's challenges. The G-77/CHINA also welcomed the inclusion of combating racism as a cross-cutting issue in the Declaration, highlighting the urgent need to eliminate all forms of racial discrimination, xenophobia, and intolerance.

The AFRICAN GROUP emphasized that poverty, unemployment, and social exclusion require urgent action as matters of "justice, not charity." They called for shared prosperity and renewed trust in multilateralism, and fair representation for Africa across all multilateral institutions, including permanent and non-permanent seats on the UN Security Council.

Heads of State or Government and leaders and representatives of non-governmental and intergovernmental organizations then reaffirmed their commitment to eradicating poverty, promoting full employment, and fostering social integration, underlining these pillars as essential for building equitable societies.

On *Eradicating Poverty and Reducing Inequality*, KENYA highlighted transformative reforms addressing poverty and inequality, including recruiting 760,000 teachers, allocating funds for repayment programmes and enabling market reentry, extending social protection to 1.7 million vulnerable families, and expanding universal health insurance from 8 to 27.2 million beneficiaries, while calling for renewed global solidarity and resistance to fragmentation through the UN's holistic vision.

UZBEKISTAN presented five key proposals, including establishing a global social justice fund, implementing mechanisms to address unemployment, expanding educational opportunities, strengthening protection for labor migrants, and addressing climate change impacts on vulnerable groups, while expressing full support for the Doha Declaration.

ZIMBABWE said the three pillars of social development remain the bedrock of people-centered sustainable development. He noted progress made with poverty eradication, improvements in productive employment, increased access to primary education, and improved life expectancy. He called for reform of the international financial architecture, and trade systems that promote fairness and inclusion.

NAMIBIA emphasized the country's commitment to social justice, poverty eradication, and effective service delivery, highlighting six national development plans prioritizing

sustainable agriculture, water, education, energy, infrastructure, health, and private-public partnerships to create employment opportunities. He announced the elimination of tuition and registration fees for all students and the launch of a youth development fund providing collateral-free loans. He also noted that women hold majority positions in cabinet, with both President and Vice President being women, demonstrating Namibia's commitment to inclusive governance and youth empowerment.

MOZAMBIQUE noted that global economic and social advances have not yet produced the desired impact on social development, with millions remaining in poverty. She highlighted Mozambique's progress since Copenhagen through cross-cutting measures including long-term strategies and five-year plans focused on peace, equity, justice, and economic diversification, while supporting the Doha Declaration and emphasizing the importance of multilateralism for inclusive development.

NEPAL reported on progress made in social protection, education, and inclusion, noting over 95% of the population has access to clean energy, but emphasized that limited resources and institutional capacity constrain further advancement. He stressed that climate change disproportionately impacts Nepal's socio-economic development, calling for global solidarity, climate finance, technology transfer, and a just trade system. He urged the international community to translate the Doha Declaration commitments into tangible actions through bold coordination and redirected resources to ensure inclusive prosperity and human dignity for all.

BENIN outlined its Vision 2030 strategic planning approach, with women at the heart of its policies, focusing on synergies between public policy and the goals of solidarity, peace, and equity to build a future of prosperity and good governance.

MALI said societies remain undermined by poverty and inequality, including through the digital gap and the consequences of climate change. She emphasized the Summit is an opportunity to make new promises and pledges to meet the needs of the people.

BHUTAN noted that, in the face of enduring challenges, this moment calls for renewed resolve and action, and progress can be made through collaboration and not with unilateral agendas.

SWITZERLAND said the eradication of poverty must remain the most urgent imperative and underscored that the causes of multidimensional poverty need to be identified to effectively address it. She noted decent and productive work are a source of dignity, a lever of emancipation, and a pillar of social cohesion. She added that promoting social cohesion is key and is what binds our societies together.

CÔTE D'IVOIRE reported substantial progress in poverty reduction, cutting the rate from 55% in 2011 to 37.5% in 2021 and expanding electricity access to 96% by 2025 through major investments in infrastructure, education, and healthcare. He highlighted a productive social safety net for vulnerable households, social protection for informal workers, and initiatives supporting youth and women, including over three million beneficiaries of employment programmes and an updated labor code to enhance equality and protection.

GUATEMALA reported that through its Mano a Mano (Hand in Hand) coordination mechanism, the country targets poverty and malnutrition in the poorest regions across nine sectors. She urged stronger financial and technical cooperation to turn crises into concrete progress, framing development as rooted in dignity, wellbeing, and equality rather than economic growth alone.

ALBANIA called for a new era of social justice and solidarity, aligning with the Doha Political Declaration and emphasizing

that economic progress must advance alongside equity and cohesion. He outlined progress in governance, education, and digitalization, achieving one of the highest global rates of women's representation in government. He reported that the country's National Social Protection Strategy (2024–2030) aims to break the cycle of poverty and redefine social protection as a force for shared prosperity, with data, accountability, and partnerships guiding measurable progress.

SYRIA reaffirmed that social development lies at the heart of sustainability, rooted in dignity, participation, and opportunity for all. He described efforts to rebuild institutions and services after years of conflict and insecurity, aligning with the Doha and Copenhagen Declarations. He called for solidarity and partnership to support its recovery, noting that hardship has also generated innovation and resilience within its society.

MONTENEGRO reported it has: raised the minimum wage and increased pensions; strengthened labor rights; expanded social protection, including universal child allowances and access to free textbooks; and adopted a law on unified disability assessment to improve equality and access.

ALGERIA underscored constitutional guarantees of equality and protection for the most vulnerable, highlighting initiatives to boost purchasing power, youth employment, and solidarity allowances. He outlined that the country has expanded universal healthcare to students, the unemployed, and those with chronic diseases, and invested in rural development and women's empowerment through wage equality, maternity support, and leadership opportunities.

HONDURAS stressed social development is a collective effort founded on dignity, equality, and solidarity. She reaffirmed the country's commitment to the 2030 Agenda and denounced recent attempts to undermine democratic stability, pledging to defend constitutional order. Marking the UN's 80th anniversary, Honduras called for a multilateralism that serves people rather than capital, focused on eradicating poverty, hunger, discrimination, and exploitation.

INDONESIA highlighted progress in reducing poverty while emphasizing three priorities: ensuring inclusion for all, including women, persons with disabilities, and children; making technology a bridge rather than widening the divide; and reforming the multilateral system to be fairer and more inclusive.

On *Social Protection Systems*, MOROCCO outlined its domestic policies, including universal health insurance, expansion of family allowances and pension funds, and unemployment benefits, while emphasizing the role of family and gender equality in strengthening social cohesion.

SENEGAL described its robust social protection system, which benefits over 1 million households, and noted it is the first francophone African country to adopt a gender equity act. Stressing that social development is a precondition for peace and sustainable growth, she concluded, "Solidarity is not an ideal, but rather a requirement."

IRELAND called for a whole-of-government, integrated, and holistic approach to tackling poverty and ensuring inclusion, and recognized social protection is a precondition for social development. He emphasized the importance of expanding social protection in low- and middle-income countries to protect the most vulnerable, while supporting a renewed, strong UN model to ensure collective action and deliver on commitments made in Doha.

TAJIKISTAN emphasized social welfare as essential for sustainable development, noting the country has created 4 million jobs over two decades and has implemented three education

strategies. He highlighted the country's vulnerability to climate disasters and its position as the sixth largest green energy producer globally, calling for adequate financial resources for developing and landlocked developing nations.

PORTUGAL emphasized national policies across five strategic areas, including employment, family, poverty, inclusion, social economy, and social security, while noting efforts to reconcile economic growth with social protection. She highlighted efforts to increase wages, strengthen economic growth, change labor legislation to introduce flexibility without downgrading workers' rights, expand support for elderly persons, persons with disabilities, children, and homeless people, and extend cooperation to Portuguese-speaking African countries.

SRI LANKA noted four pillars of development in his country: social assistance to move households from dependency to self-sufficiency; social care to support, among others, the elderly, children, and those with disabilities; social insurance, which is being transformed to a unified insurance-based model to reduce unemployment and gender-based insurance to address structural issues; and labor reform to ensure decent work and encourage entrepreneurship.

BARBADOS highlighted achievements under its social dialogue model, including a national minimum wage, extended social protections, and new child and disability rights legislation. He warned global instability, conflict, and the worsening climate crisis threaten these gains and urged protection of the multilateral system to ensure peace and resilience for Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

SAINT KITTS AND NEVIS highlighted the country's people-centered leadership approach, highlighting universal access to education, the highest minimum wage in the Eastern Caribbean, robust social protection systems, and climate-smart infrastructure development.

EGYPT outlined national efforts to strengthen social protection systems, expand economic opportunities through small and medium enterprises financing, support to persons with disabilities, and advancing women's empowerment, while stressing the need for tangible solutions.

NIGER emphasized the country's commitment to social development through measures including free education until age 16, reduced school fees, free healthcare, and support for entrepreneurship. He called for international partnership based on justice and shared interests rather than charity, urging developed countries to honor their commitments and treat the Global South "not as a burden but as an equal trade partner."

TIMOR-LESTE emphasized addressing poverty, hunger, and malnutrition to achieve social development. Noting the fragility of LDCs and SIDS, he called for partnerships rather than compassion, underlining the need for adequate financing and shared responsibility. He highlighted national initiatives, including establishing a food security council, creating a rural development and community housing ministry, and linking nutrition services to efforts to empower women.

AUSTRALIA emphasized that social development is fundamental to peace, prosperity, and stability, particularly in conflict areas, stressing commitment to gender and disability equality, poverty reduction through education and healthcare, and increased funding for social development. She highlighted partnerships across the Indo-Pacific region, including increased funding to support sustainable development, and working with Pacific Island States on challenges facing SIDS, including official development assistance graduation criteria and the multidimensional vulnerability index.

JORDAN underscored the country's commitment to economic development and noted the development of a national strategy for social development to help the most vulnerable transform from receiving charity to rather being self-sufficient.

TUNISIA called for the Political Declaration to be a programme of action for politicians to achieve inclusive development. He said domestic efforts towards rebuilding development are based in social democracy, human-centered, and human anchored.

CABO VERDE outlined steps to increase social development domestically, including a comprehensive social protection system, universal free primary education, and investment in the blue, green, and digital economies. She reaffirmed that commitment to sustainable social development is always placing people at the heart of government policy and action.

PAKISTAN highlighted its flagship Benazir Income Support Programme, stressing this has empowered over nine million families through income, healthcare, and education support, and is recognized globally as one of the leading social protection models. He also outlined the Green Pakistan Programme, aimed at investing in resilience and adaptation to ensure green, inclusive, and sustainable growth. Expressing deep concern over global conflicts, he lamented the situations in Palestine and Kashmir, describing them as parallel struggles for justice that require the international community's attention and adherence to international law.

*On Employment and Decent Work*, HUNGARY stressed social development requires peace, strong families, and intergenerational solidarity, and emphasized that true development should be measured by opportunities for meaningful and decent lives rather than economic indicators alone, built on three pillars: peace, rule of law, and cooperation.

LESOTHO urged leaving Doha with a renewed sense of purpose to build societies where every person can live with dignity and where social development is no longer just a goal. He concluded that when work is decent, social development is sustainable and societies are uplifted.

SWEDEN underscored that work provides income and dignity, empowerment, and a sense of belonging, noting commitment to restoring an employment-first approach to ensure more people are included in the labor market and can contribute to society.

POLAND shared the country's experience of economic transformation since Copenhagen, ranking fourth in the EUROPEAN UNION (EU) for the lowest poverty rate, and highlighted efforts to amend legislation to ensure people working on digital platforms have proper labor status and can exercise their labor rights.

The REPUBLIC OF KOREA outlined policies for creating decent jobs through vocational training in artificial intelligence, building inclusive markets with work-life balancing measures, and ensuring fundamental rights for all workers, with full implementation of International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions. She announced the country's role as a champion donor and the only Asian member of the UN Secretary-General's Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions.

BOTSWANA said the country's government has decided to review all social protection policies to better target them to those in need. He lamented that employment remains a challenge, noting jobs are key to improving social development in the country.

CHAD reviewed national efforts to improve social development, saying they are working to adopt a national employment policy to bolster employability of young people,

women, and vulnerable groups of society. He noted efforts to build and maintain peace, saying this gives trust and dignity back to each citizen.

BRUNEI said many national mechanisms have been established to achieve a whole-of-nation approach to achieving social development. He noted the release of a social blueprint aimed at fostering an inclusive society and empowering and strengthening vulnerable groups. He stated that a manpower blueprint aims at building a dynamic workforce.

COLOMBIA highlighted policies on decent work, a fair transition from fossil fuels to green energy, youth empowerment, and the ratification of the Inter-American Convention on protecting the human rights of older persons, calling for a new global pact for solidarity based on human dignity.

CYPRUS called for strengthening the interconnection between jobs, labor rights, and inclusive growth, reaffirming the country's commitment to decent work and reducing inequalities. SERBIA stated that since 2012, national gross domestic product (GDP) has tripled, the unemployment rate has fallen, the average wage has increased, and a minimum wage was introduced.

GERMANY stressed that no country can solve social problems alone, emphasizing social partnership and dialogue as essential to building trust and achieving social justice and social development.

On *Gender Equality and Inclusion*, BELGIUM emphasized that social progress requires both individual advancement and collective development through international solidarity. He underscored the need for inclusive social systems with equal opportunities, adequate work conditions, and women's full participation to achieve sustainable development.

PALAU called for digital inclusion, financial inclusion, and climate inclusion so that no nation is left behind because they are too remote or too small. He called for "bold investment" in people and recommitment to a future whose success is measured by the wellbeing of the people.

FRANCE announced plans to integrate social development priorities into its upcoming G7 presidency, focusing on combating the informal economy through tailored financing for social protection and promoting a social economy grounded in solidarity. She called for collaborative action to implement the Doha commitments, greater coherence in the multilateral system, and the ratification of ILO conventions, with transparent follow-up mechanisms for the Doha Political Declaration involving all stakeholders.

SOUTH AFRICA, speaking on behalf of a group of countries, called for renewed political will and stronger multilateral solidarity to dismantle structural barriers that perpetuate poverty and inequality. She affirmed that universal social protection systems are essential enablers of social justice and sustainable development, with gender equality and sexual and reproductive health and rights guaranteed for all.

Australia, on behalf of CANZ (CANADA, AUSTRALIA, and NEW ZEALAND), reaffirmed its commitment to eradicating poverty and promoting universal human rights, emphasizing gender equality, LGBTQ+ rights, ending gender-based violence, and recognizing the self-determination of Indigenous Peoples, while supporting bold UN reforms to ensure social development reaches countries most in need.

NORWAY said no country can achieve its potential without the full participation of women in the labor markets, noting his country has enacted strong laws for both women and men to participate in the workforce and still take care of their families.

BRAZIL outlined several national programmes, including the *Bolsa Familia* programme, which he said has strengthened social

inclusion and enhanced human dignity. He also noted that the government has approved equal work for equal pay between men and women.

CANADA underscored that social inclusion means building a society where every person can thrive and no one is left behind. She said progress has been made but lamented that global shocks and shifting political landscapes have disrupted supply chains, strained local resources, and affected social inclusion.

EGYPT disassociated from language on sexual and reproductive rights and gender-based violence and suggested more emphasis should have been placed on the family as a core unit and the basis of society. The UNITED KINGDOM (UK) suggested there should have been more recognition of families in all their diverse forms.

The INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION said well-governed migration can be a catalyst of social development, stressing the challenges can be shared and translated into opportunities when addressed cooperatively by the relevant governments. Priorities for action, he said, include harnessing migration as a force for poverty eradication and unlocking the potential of migrants in the workforce.

DJIBOUTI outlined its 2035 Vision, including modernized institutional frameworks and solidarity funds, expressed concern about reduced support from partners, including the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and urged the international community to share responsibility for hosting 36,000 refugees and 200,000 transit migrants, over a quarter of the country's population.

MONACO emphasized sport as a catalyst for social development, providing examples of its contribution to social cohesion. She called for including sports in policy and urged encouraging sports programmes.

Regarding *Peace, Governance and Human Dignity*, ARMENIA said that since regaining their independence, their vision of progress has been founded on dignity, human rights, and social justice. He outlined national efforts, including affordable education and school feeding programmes. Peace and security, he noted, are an essential precondition for social development, with their democratic transformation continuing to guide policies. Social development, he stated, is a moral obligation.

SOUTH SUDAN called for: the UN system to strengthen technical and financial support for social protection in fragile contexts; increased climate adaptation and capacity building investments and partnerships to deliver social services; and private sector investment to see South Sudan as an opportunity, stressing "Together we can turn vulnerability into resilience and aspiration into achievements."

RWANDA underscored the challenges being faced are not new, but governance systems have not evolved sufficiently to address them. He urged redefining approaches to partnerships to deliver results, not promises, and called for global financial institutions to be fit for purpose and nimble.

LIBERIA noted its transition from civil conflict to stable democracy, warned that economic growth without justice is unsustainable, and advocated for vulnerable nations' voices to be heard in security deliberations within the multilateral system, while underscoring that peace is essential to achieving social development.

The DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO noted development should be a driver of social justice and peace, and it cannot do this in the current climate, underscoring the current geopolitical context. Dignity, he said, cannot be negotiated and human rights should be sacrosanct. He highlighted that mitigation

and adaptation resources are necessary, and access to green resources must be more predictable, rapid and fairer.

LATVIA committed to increasing high-quality jobs and equal opportunities aligned with EU targets, implementing minimum income reforms and addressing demographic challenges of aging populations, while linking peace and security as essential for social development.

SLOVENIA reported on the introduction of youth measures and pension reforms and called for multilateral cooperation and peace as essential foundations for sustainable development, citing conflicts in Palestine and Ukraine.

PERU welcomed the Doha Declaration's broadened scope on inequality and highlighted the country's proposals on multidimensional poverty measurement and complementary indicators to GDP, and called for respect for international law to bring peace, security and stability.

PALESTINE described the destruction in Gaza as the unravelling of its social fabric, with homes, schools, and livelihoods lost and the most vulnerable left without social protections. She called for an urgent, coordinated international response that goes beyond temporary relief towards justice-based recovery, and creates a shock-responsive social system.

SAUDI ARABIA outlined challenges, saying they also create new opportunities to create a more just and sustainable world. Human dignity and human rights, he said, are pillars that underpin the Saudi Arabian national development vision.

SUDAN called for: strengthened cooperation to overcome barriers, especially for developing countries; long-term debt relief; North-South and South-South cooperation; and technical support for developing countries to promote capacity building for local communities and civil society organizations.

The RUSSIAN FEDERATION outlined national development goals such as improving the health and well-being of families, noting a role for indicators to monitor progress, and strongly rejected the accusation that it was the aggressor in the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

LITHUANIA called the "Russian aggression" an unprovoked and unjustified attack and well-recognized as such by the UNGA and others.

The INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION (IPU) emphasized that parliaments and parliamentarians serve as a bridge between global ambitions and local implementation, but can only fulfill this role if they are recognized as equal partners in global governance. She encouraged enhanced cooperation between the IPU and UN in order to include the parliamentary perspective in the UN.

The COUNCIL OF EUROPE noted the Doha Political Declaration reaffirms that education, health, and social protection are fundamental rights. He emphasized that empowering young people through access to education, employment, and health services is essential for achieving social and sustainable development.

The INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR DEMOCRACY AND ELECTORAL ASSISTANCE said good governance builds prosperity, and democracy ensures it is distributed fairly. Conversely, she said, when democracy declines, prosperity declines, and trust among the population falters.

On *International Cooperation, Multilateralism and Financing*, CUBA emphasized the Copenhagen commitments remain essential for inclusive social development and criticized military spending, stating these funds should be used to eliminate poverty. He noted the US sanctions against Cuba are obstacles to sustainable development and called for debt relief and a new international order ensuring just representation of the Global South.

COMOROS reaffirmed the enduring relevance of the Copenhagen Declaration as a moral and political foundation for collective action, emphasizing that the newly adopted Doha Political Declaration must serve as a social compass for global progress. He called for solidarity-based financing mechanisms, noting that at least USD 4 billion annually is needed to meet the SDGs. Highlighting persistent global inequalities, he stressed that social development is inseparable from peace and security, urging resolution of conflicts in Ukraine, Palestine, and the Sahel. He outlined the national vision centered on investing in human capital, strengthening social cohesion, and building an inclusive economy through initiatives such as the 2030 Gender Policy and mobile money programmes that support vulnerable rural households.

KUWAIT emphasized the Summit represents a critical juncture for humanity amid major global shifts including political conflicts, climate crises, and a digital divide. He highlighted his country's commitment to international cooperation and solidarity, noting the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development has provided funding for development projects across various countries, and called for tangible outcomes that restore people's rights and global balance through more inclusive cooperation.

The EU, with Canada, on behalf of CANZ, and the UK lamented that paragraph 14 on reaffirming the principles of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development does not reflect the newer formulations of common but differentiated responsibilities as contained in the Paris Agreement. The EU lamented the language on technology transfer in the Declaration, stating technology transfer must be welcomed and addressed by all parties concerned. He also noted a lack of language on adequate and balanced approaches to comprehensive migration management.

HUNGARY applauded the recognition of full and productive employment as a core theme of the Declaration but disagreed with language on the benefits of migration, stating migration has no positive impact on development including social development.

VENEZUELA lamented that international financial institutions can affect social development through the application of rescue or bailout packages that increase national debt burdens. He also underscored the importance of South-South cooperation for social development.

The NETHERLANDS said a strong, future proof multilateral system will ensure we grow together to achieve social development. She noted the importance of thematic partnerships and exchanges of technical support. She emphasized the value of human rights and fundamental freedoms, which provide well-being, inclusion, and equitable opportunities for all.

LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC highlighted progress across the Copenhagen Summit's three pillars, including improved education and healthcare for vulnerable populations and reduced national poverty, while noting persistent inequality and structural challenges such as limited market access and climate vulnerability. He noted commitment to the Doha Political Declaration and called for reform of the international financial architecture.

BAHRAIN emphasized the Summit as a launchpad for a new era focused on sustainable social development and as an opportunity for dialogue, expressing keenness to align national strategies with the inclusive SDGs and to strengthen regional and international partnerships for practical programmes with tangible outcomes.

VIET NAM stated more focus is needed on international cooperation through inclusion, and strategic cooperation must be

reinforced. Multilateral platforms, she said, must be leveraged to align national goals with development goals, digital inclusion must be increased and strengthened, and sustainable finance from all sources to achieve the Doha Declaration's objectives must be sourced.

The REPUBLIC OF CONGO said the country continues to implement the SDGs and mainstream them into their sustainable development plan, but a lack of financing has compromised their ability to achieve such goals.

TANZANIA said the Doha Political Declaration is an important step in renewing commitment to Copenhagen and called on all partners to collaborate to harness multilateralism to achieve the Declaration's objectives.

The IBERO-AMERICAN CONFERENCE said development cooperation is an essential pillar of social development, and economic growth does not guarantee human wellbeing or sustainable development and must be coupled with social policies for positive outcomes to occur.

The MALDIVES warned that mounting debt burdens, particularly for SIDS, constrain investment in essential sectors, with many spending more on debt servicing than on health or education. Stressing that "this is not development – it is constraint," he called for financial space and policy consistency to ensure social rights. He outlined a holistic national approach addressing root causes, including universal old-age pensions, universal health coverage, and affordable mental health services. He highlighted the country's digital economy strategy aims at contributing 15% of GDP by 2030 to empower youth and diversify the economy. He concluded that social development requires a global strategy grounded in international cooperation and sustainability, ensuring progress for even the smallest nations.

On *Digital Inclusion and Innovation*, NIGERIA reported prioritizing digital inclusion for efficient service delivery and transparency, investing in youth and innovation, and envisioning a future where equality is a real experience guided by solidarity, while highlighting the need to share responsibility and to engage in multilateral collaboration to implement the Doha Political Declaration.

The UNITED ARAB EMIRATES (UAE) noted national social strategies aim to provide an enabling environment for digital and social inclusion.

The DIGITAL COOPERATION ORGANIZATION told a story of cautious optimism where digital maturity has advanced in all income groups. He noted, however, that inequalities between and within income groups remain pervasive.

The PHILIPPINES lamented fiscal constraint and climate change challenges to social development. He called for ensuring the green transition and digital inclusion are pathways to prosperity, not sources of more inequality. IRAQ highlighted the "Green Iraq" initiative addressing environmental challenges and promoting renewable energy, while implementing digital transformation for transparency and specialized funds to combat poverty and corruption.

On *Climate Change and Resilience*, TONGA linked social progress to climate change challenges, calling on development partners to honor their technical and financial commitments to social protection and education, and stressing that sustained support will lay the foundations for resilience and sustainable growth in SIDS.

GRENADA called on global partners to support climate resilience in SIDS. He noted the need to expand access to infrastructure and increase access to fair trade so that no one is left behind. SIERRA LEONE outlined the clean cooking initiatives

to decrease reliance on dirty fuels that could have health and environmental impact.

HAITI drew attention to the devastating impact of Hurricane Melissa, lamenting that it struck amid an already fragile context and exposed deep structural vulnerabilities. He underscored the worsening humanitarian situation, particularly for women and children, and appealed for urgent international support to operationalize the Gang Suppression Force that was approved by the UN Security Council in September. He said the country seeks to transform vulnerability into opportunity by turning poverty into a lever for innovation through vocational training and trade schools to reintegrate youth and children formerly recruited by armed groups. He concluded that a fairer world is not a utopia but a shared responsibility.

TUVALU emphasized that social development is a whole-of-society responsibility, not the sole domain of governments. Framing climate change as an existential challenge, he underlined that climate resilience is social resilience, and investing in it safeguards dignity, stability, and a prosperous future. He highlighted the Ocean's centrality to Tuvaluan identity and called on the international community to rally behind the Doha Political Declaration, recommitting to the UN social development agenda and ensuring the Summit becomes a catalyst for renewed global action toward achieving the SDGs.

On *Education, Children and Youth*, MALAWI stated that free primary and secondary education is available in his country, but stressed this needs to be concomitant with employment. He said the country is focused on developing skills for youth so there is a skilled labor market, and the youth can in turn become job creators, not job seekers.

ECUADOR shared progress on child malnutrition through various national programmes, citing the "1000-day programme" that provides prenatal and child health assistance. GUYANA emphasized placing people at the center of policies through investments in education, health, and decent work, announcing free education initiatives and calling for renewed commitment to genuine multilateral cooperation and partnerships with the private sector.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA outlined its development priorities, including: the 'Connect PNG' programme to open up connectivity and markets and increase access to schools; investing heavily in education; advancing gender equality and women's empowerment guided by the strategy to address Gender-based Violence; and continuing to uphold democracy, transparency, and accountability as a foundation of sustainable development.

On *Social Justice and Equity*, LIBYA expressed his country's renewed commitment to justice and development. The vision, he said, is to encourage social development through welfare programmes to target the most vulnerable. He underscored that social development and social protection can only be achieved hand-in-hand with society and the private sector.

ESWATINI highlighted the country's transformation from aid dependency to economic empowerment through concrete programmes that ensure "every citizen is not just a beneficiary but a creator," including rural development funds, women empowerment, youth entrepreneurship ecosystems, renewable energy investments, and social assistance for vulnerable groups. She called for enhanced global cooperation, technology transfer, market access, and sustainable finance to support landlocked and small developing countries.

The CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC emphasized that social justice is an imperative for peace. She said they chose to ground peace in the daily lives of their citizens, including through funding

of micro community projects that largely benefit youth and women and can help achieve a sense of belonging.

CHILE, on behalf of several countries, encouraged member states and the UN development system to prioritize the definition of practical modalities and milestones for enacting the Doha Political Declaration. EGYPT highlighted the need for joint responsibility in addressing global crises especially affecting developing countries, emphasizing that the right to development is a human right.

### **High-level Round Table Sessions**

**Strengthening the Three Pillars of Social Development: Poverty Eradication, Full and Productive Employment and Decent Work for All, and Social Inclusion:** This session was co-chaired by Jakov Milatovic, President, Montenegro, and Edil Baisalov, Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers, Kyrgyzstan. Gilbert Hounbo, Director-General, ILO, moderated the panel discussion.

Keynote speaker Amb. Juan Somavia, former ILO Director-General and Chair of the 1995 WSSD Preparatory and Main Committees, said the Doha Political Declaration is a sign of hope set against the geopolitical context of today. He lamented that results are still a far-off prospect, calling for course corrections at all levels.

Mariëlle Paul, Minister of Social Affairs and Employment, the Netherlands, said decent work is the best way out of poverty and to increase social inclusion. Abdeljabbar Er-Rachidi, Secretary of State to the Minister of Solidarity, Social Inclusion and Family, Ministry of Solidarity, Social Inclusion and Family, Morocco, outlined national experiences and initiatives to achieve poverty eradication, decent work, and social inclusion.

Diana Pokie, Minister of Social Affairs and Housing, Suriname, stressed the importance of ensuring strong political commitment to the three pillars of social development, stating no policy can succeed without adequate government investment and allocation of financial resources.

Luc Triangle, General Secretary, International Trade Union Confederation, said the Doha Political Declaration is a decisive win for workers and strong commitment can make it a strategic advocacy tool for social improvement in the coming years. Amitabh Behar, Executive Director, Oxfam International, highlighted ways to reduce inequality including by taxing the super rich and large corporations, and stopping privatization of public services.

Esther Nagetey, Youth Fellow, International Disability Alliance, noted persistent gaps in social development goals achievement for those with disabilities.

Following these remarks, lead discussant Åsmund Grover Aukrust, Minister of International Development, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway, stated that progressive taxation, transparent institutions, and digital inclusion promote social development. Sima Bahous, Executive Director, UN Women, said it is expected that poverty will become increasing feminized and investment in care, education, green economies, labor markets, and social inclusion could slash poverty.

Many outlined national achievements in social development since the first World Summit for Sustainable Development in 1995. TUVALU noted investments in youth to unlock innovation and purpose. MALAWI noted universal social transfer programmes. EGYPT said social development programmes have been designed to promote graduation, not dependency.

RWANDA stated social inclusion is the foundation of their development model. The RUSSIAN FEDERATION noted constant efforts to increase the minimum wage as well as attention to ensuring vulnerable population groups achieve social inclusion.

TONGA stated it is continuously strengthening social protection systems, and investing in education.

QATAR noted a whole-of-society framework so that all stakeholders share responsibility for achieving development goals. BENIN highlighted efforts to address gender-based violence and promote productive employment. The GAMBIA called for a review of the international financial architecture. NEPAL noted good governance and transparent institutions are key for social development.

The INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION ON AGEING commended the inclusion of older persons and aging in the Doha Political Declaration, saying this, however, must be matched by action. UNICEF said integrated social spending for children is an investment in the future. LITHUANIA called for smart policies that connect economic growth with social inclusion. The ORGANISATION FOR ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT emphasized its work to ensure these issues are treated as interrelated and mutually reinforcing.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA called for global cooperation to combat illicit financial flows in order to increase domestic resource mobilization. COLOMBIA said decent, dignified work is the best poverty reduction strategy. YEMEN said a comprehensive system of interconnected policies is needed, not fragmentation. The LEAGUE OF ARAB STATES said there is a need to consolidate peace and security in the Arab region and ensure geopolitical conditions do not impact and hinder sustainable social development.

MICRONESIA called for enhanced cooperation to ensure SIDS have access to financing, technology, and capacity building tailored to their reality. The UN INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION said the industrial sector is a crucial driver of poverty eradication as jobs are formalized, more productive, and more enduring.

The UN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME said rapid and sustained growth is a driver for exiting poverty and fiscal policy can reduce poverty without compromising employment. The INTERNATIONAL COOPERATIVE ALLIANCE underscored that decent work is the key to repairing the broken social fabric in the current global economy. ANGOLA reported their development pathway has shown sustainable social development begins with the protection of families, but this is solidified when they are integrated into local economies and have decent work.

The roundtable concluded with panelists highlighting the need for a systemic approach, social dialogue, and whole-of-society and whole-of-government approaches to achieve social development.

**Assessing Progress and Addressing Gaps and Challenges in the Implementation of the Commitments of the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and its Programme of Action and Giving Momentum towards the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development:** Co-chair Roxana Minzatu, Executive Vice-President for Social Rights and Skills, Quality Jobs and Preparedness, European Commission, opened the session, noting 30 years after Copenhagen, “the vision remains valid but unfinished.” She emphasized the need to rebuild momentum and find new solutions, noting the importance of investing in people, making social expenditure more effective and accountable, leveraging innovative finance, and bringing together all stakeholders.

Moderator Armida Alisjahbana, Under Secretary-General and Executive Secretary, UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, highlighted critical issues in the Asia-Pacific region, including decent work and access to social protection, and called for regional solutions to regional challenges, bringing

together governments, civil society, and investment partners. She reaffirmed that the region is ready to support States in implementing the Doha Political Declaration.

Guylain Nyembo Mbwezya, Minister of State, Minister of Planning and Coordination of Development Aid, Democratic Republic of the Congo, noted budget constraints and inequalities affect the implementation of social development commitments, especially in developing countries, and said financing and involvement of the private sector are key. He called for realistic approaches, recognizing that without peace, development cannot occur.

Sanni Grahn-Laasonen, Minister for Social Security, Finland, emphasized that social protection enables people to adapt without fear, underscoring the importance of inclusion and transparency. She stressed that taxation and protection are linked, and said people support taxes when they see concrete changes in their lives. She called for moving beyond GDP to measure equality and human progress.

Buthaina Bint Ali Al Jabr Al Nuaimi, Minister of Social Development and Family, Qatar, emphasized that social investment should be viewed as a driver of stability rather than a cost, noting fiscal policy can be a tool to promote inclusion and strengthen resilience. She called for: strengthening institutional coordination so that social protection and education work together; enhancing digital governance; and encouraging partnerships with the private sector and civil society.

Matthias Thorns, Vice-President and Employers' Group spokesperson at the ILO, International Organisation of Employers, called for strengthening accountability frameworks and national review mechanisms for the Doha commitments, emphasizing the need to move beyond "tick-the-box exercises" and properly recognize civil society and employer contributions. He called for improving the monitoring framework, saying "what we do not measure we cannot improve," and stressed the private sector's role. He also highlighted the UN's key role in supporting good governance and trust-building for sustainable business growth.

Sabina Alkire, Director, Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative and Professor of Poverty and Human Development, recommended: measuring progress through headline poverty numbers that enable cross-country and temporal comparisons; and using desegregated data to shape integrated policies with whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches that create synergy.

Inger Ashing, Chief Executive Officer, Save the Children International, highlighted gaps in political will, finance, and accountability, noting 1.77 billion children lack access to social protection, with progress on child-related targets falling behind 2030 deadlines. She said civil society organizations face increasing restrictions on funding, registration, and speech, undermining accountability mechanisms that are essential for achieving the SDGs, and urged delegates to put children's lives at the center of policies while strengthening accountability.

Lead discussant Kaushik Basu, Professor, Cornell University, and co-chair of the UN's High-Level Expert Group on Beyond GDP, highlighted the disproportionate influence of the super-rich using AI to target individuals and control political discourse, "robbing ordinary people of their voice" and threatening democracy in unprecedented ways. He called for new ways of thinking on "damage control," combined with stronger multi-country agreements and international cooperation to prevent single nations or corporations from destroying supply chains, alongside such as profit-sharing arrangements to address labor concerns.

Lead discussant Diene Keita, Executive Director, UN Population Fund (UNFPA), emphasized that peace is a "sine qua non condition" for social development, calling for demographic resilience through strengthened adaptive capacity and bold action. She stressed that progress cannot be measured by economic growth alone, urging robust population data systems with reliable disaggregated census data, transparency, and accountability, and placing people at the center of policies with social justice and sustainability at the heart of development.

Keynote speaker Amina J. Mohammed, UN Deputy Secretary-General, emphasized that "silozed policies will not solve today's deeply interconnected challenges," calling for fundamental changes in how the international community works rather than simply reaffirming old commitments. She urged leaders to make choices now that accelerate the SDGs through equity, security, and solidarity, while warning that progress requires moving beyond GDP measures to capture what truly matters for people's wellbeing. Calling for a multistakeholder approach and shared responsibility, she reaffirmed the UN's role in working alongside governments.

In the ensuing discussion, NAMIBIA called for implementing the Copenhagen and Doha commitments in parallel. CUBA stated that, despite the US commercial blockade, it continues to make SDG progress through universal free healthcare and education, and a new labor code that prioritizes non-discrimination, concluding, "let's work together so that the next generation inherits dignity rather than inequality."

GUYANA called for urgent action to incorporate vulnerability into frameworks for resource eligibility and highlighted that SIDS – especially Caribbean and Pacific countries – are most vulnerable to climate change and natural disasters, citing the recent Melissa Hurricane. YOUTH FOR TAX JUSTICE NETWORK called for meaningful youth representation in the UN80 reform initiative, engagement in social development resolution negotiations, a holistic economy prioritizing people over profit, and tax cooperation to eliminate illicit tax flows.

GHANA reported challenges related to constrained fiscal space and rising debt, while calling for predictable and equitable finance for developing countries and a renewed multilateral system. BURUNDI called for cooperation, reforming the financial architecture to enable low and middle-income countries to finance social development policies and transformation, and increasing investment in innovation, digital technology, and training.

BARBADOS, noting informality remains high in the Caribbean region, reported on using a multidimensional poverty index and called for solidarity and cooperation among countries. OHCHR called for coherent approaches that align fiscal policies with human rights through progressive taxation, investment in decent work, social protection, and education; the removal of fiscal and institutional barriers; and inclusive and effective participation by marginalized groups.

SWEDEN emphasized that ending violence against children must be at the heart of social development, with particular attention to growing risks children face in digital contexts and urgent needs in migration and poverty contexts, calling for stronger international cooperation.

ZAMBIA reported prioritizing job creation and decent work, strengthening the digitalization of social protection systems, advancing inclusion, and escalating child protection, saying these national efforts must align with global solidarity and a renewed commitment to share prosperity.

ARUBA reported developing plans to enhance support for low-income families, expand opportunities for entrepreneurial youth

and women, invest in educational reform, and expand safety nets for children.

SOUTH ASIAN ASSOCIATION FOR REGIONAL COOPERATION reported on progress and challenges in South Asian regional cooperation, including the establishment of health and nutrition centers and holding regional conferences with UN Agencies, stating, “social development is not an act of charity, it is an act of justice.”

CHAD reported it had fully integrated the Copenhagen principles into its national policy through its Voluntary National Review (VNR) process, which involved all national stakeholders, and said social development cannot be achieved without an integrated approach funded in solidarity.

ALGERIA noted it has implemented institutional and economic social reforms to strengthen purchasing power through minimum wage increases, unemployment benefits, reduced income tax, and stressed the importance of governance and transparency and a commitment to development based on solidarity and justice.

NORWAY emphasized that social dialogue among workers, employers, and government is essential to fair markets. He called for investments in labor markets to reduce unemployment and promote inclusion, especially for migrants and people with disabilities, social justice, and respect for international labor standards.

IRELAND called for the creation of fiscal space through domestic resource mobilization and taxation strategies to promote decent work and social protection

WORLD FAMILY ORGANIZATION called for: placing the family at the center of policies, proposing making family impact assessments part of every policy to promote inclusion and protection; investing in family resilience funds; establishing a global family data observatory to allow governance based on evidence; and ensuring genuine participation while strengthening local leadership.

ARMENIA recognized that social development requires peace, democracy, and the rule of law, stressing it cannot be achieved without international solidarity, cooperation, and capacity building. DENMARK highlighted ensuring free and fair work conditions for all and addressing discrimination, including high levels of violence and harassment against LGBTQ+ persons.

UNHCR noted more than 123 million people are currently forcibly displaced due to conflict and persecution, and called for including refugees in national plans and budgets, opening legal pathways to allow refugees to contribute to local economies rather than working informally, and adopting inclusive policies to reduce inequality and tension.

The INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT LAW ORGANIZATION stated that the rule of law is in decline, with corruption and justice remaining out of reach, and called for three priorities to rebuild the rule of law: legal reforms; stronger, accountable institutions to rebuild trust; and justice that starts with people’s needs.

TIMOR-LESTE shared lessons learned, noting: social protection is an investment in human capital, not a cost; South-South and triangular cooperation transform learning and innovation; and fragile island states need direct access to finance.

SUDAN identified fiscal adjustment policies and sovereign debt as the most pressing gaps, calling for cooperation and coordination to mitigate financial difficulties, facilitate technology transfer, and pursue debt relief or rescheduling.

MALTA shared the country’s VNR example, offering lessons learned on climate adaptation, digital government, and education

that could serve as a model for SIDS, and encouraged countries to use VNRs as a catalyst to renew action towards the 2030 Agenda.

UKRAINE stated social protection during crisis requires domestic reforms and international solidarity, and that “protecting people is not only a moral duty; it is a pathway to national resilience.”

The INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE called for better leveraging science and technology through three key messages: science can provide solutions through collaboration across disciplines and stakeholders; continued international science collaboration is important to achieve the SDGs; and science-policy interfaces at subnational, national, and international levels should be created to support science-based decision-making.

The PHILIPPINES reported a decline in poverty through cash transfer programmes, helping over two million families, with priorities including adapting social responses, accelerating digital transformation, building stronger regional multi-sector coalitions, and deepening accountability through multidimensional measures beyond GDP.

SPAIN underscored the Sevilla Commitment adopted at the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development as essential for closing the financial gap, called attention to the Brazil-Spain taxation initiative on high wealth individuals, and highlighted the need for promoting cooperation policy, particularly for the most excluded.

The UK reported prioritizing inclusive economic development, allocating GBP 2.3 billion to job creation, social protection, gender and wider equality, and innovation and technology, saying, “Progress is only possible across these areas if we work together.”

The UN OFFICE FOR PROJECT SERVICES emphasized most challenges are related to implementation, calling for national-level approaches that provide practical solutions, put people at the heart, and empower governments with ownership and the necessary support to build local capacity.

KENYA reported on national frameworks anchored in the SDGs and the Copenhagen spirit, with youth at the heart, and identified digital transformation as key. ERITREA emphasized people-centered approaches grounded in social justice, equity, and inclusion while working with development partners.

The ASIAN POPULATION ASSOCIATION called for prioritizing people-centered health coverage, including access to comprehensive sexual reproductive services, safe abortion, and sexual education, expressed deep concern over closing civil space, and urged policy coherence with the Beijing Platform for Action and the International Conference on Population and Development.

SOUTH SUDAN highlighted significant progress in building institutions, fiscal reforms, and capacity building, while developing partnerships with international financial institutions. He called for renewed global solidarity, fairer partnerships, stronger multilateral and regional cooperation, and improved data systems to measure progress on social indicators.

Responding to comments, Nyembo Mbwezya recalled the Copenhagen goals as moral obligations, stating that budget balance must align with social balance through a human-focused vision based on solidarity. Grahn-Laasonen emphasized gender equality and sexual and reproductive rights, calling for policy coherence in which actions interconnect and urging that these priorities be core to the UN80 reform initiative.

Buthaina Bint Ali Al Jabr Al Nuaimi highlighted development must be people-centered and grounded in solidarity, calling for a renewed political will and global cooperation. Thorns underscored informality challenges requiring private sector involvement

to create decent jobs and the need for a holistic framework to monitor progress and a collaborative approach to implement the Doha Political Declaration. Alkire noted data can make the challenges discussed visible, urging social development to leverage data effectiveness while recognizing achievements since Copenhagen.

Ashing stressed progress requires genuine inclusion to rebuild trust, urging civil society to have the freedom and resources to act, with a renewed social contract centering children and the most marginalized through participatory fairness and shared responsibility.

Co-Chair Mînzatu highlighted the need to fight child poverty, emphasized the importance of data to measure achievements, and called for balancing economic growth with social development. She expressed hope for transforming discussions into concrete actions that affect people's lives.

Co-Chair Hanley thanked participants for their commitments to advancing the Copenhagen goals, noting that the dialogue revealed both progress and persistent gaps. He stressed the need for inclusive policies, social protection systems, and urgent action to address inequality in all forms, emphasizing that realizing the 2030 Agenda depends on renewed energy, deep collaboration, and bold action, with inclusive dialogue as the foundation for meaningful change. He concluded by noting "Together we can and must build a future based in dignity, equity, and opportunity for all."

### **Closing Plenary**

During the closing plenary on the afternoon of 6 November 2025, UNGA President Annalena Baerbock said the closure of the conference marks not an end, but the beginning of a new opportunity – to turn the Doha Political Declaration into concrete action and ensure no one is left behind. She emphasized that the many initiatives and partnerships showcased over the three days of the Summit must now be implemented at scale to lift the remaining population living in extreme poverty. She stressed that investment in social development is the smartest possible investment states and businesses can make. Baerbock called for more political will from Member States, highlighting this moment as an opportunity to start delivering on the last mile to achieve the SDGs, without which, she said, there will be no lasting peace and security.

She gavelled the Summit to a close at 5:17 pm.

### **Outcome Document: The Doha Political Declaration**

The first 27 paragraphs of the Doha Political Declaration set out the objectives and context in which the Declaration was developed. Through this agreement, the Heads of State and Government and high representatives gathered in Doha aim to build a more just, inclusive, equitable and sustainable world by addressing gaps, assessing progress, and recommit to the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development and their implementation. They also aim to give momentum towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The Declaration acknowledges the urgent need to address profound social challenges, especially poverty, unemployment, and social exclusion, and recognizes three interrelated and mutually reinforcing core themes of social development: poverty eradication; the promotion of full and productive employment and decent work for all; and social integration. The Declaration also recognizes that social development and social justice are indispensable for the achievement and maintenance of peace and security within and among nations.

The Declaration reaffirms the global drive for social progress and development and renews intergovernmental commitments, including: the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action; the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; the Pact for the Future; the Addis Ababa Action Agenda; and the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development.

Heads of State and Government and high representatives reaffirm that the pursuit and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, encompassing civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights must be respected, protected and promoted, without distinction or discrimination of any kind, and that the eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions remains the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development.

On environment and climate change, Ministers stress the need to take urgent and ambitious action in the implementation of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement, and reaffirm the principles of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development.

Ministers also commit to a political, economic, ethical, and spiritual vision for social development based on human dignity, human rights, equality, respect, peace, democracy, mutual responsibility, and cooperation, and full respect for the various religious and ethical values and cultural backgrounds of people.

The Declaration welcomes the progress made towards the implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action, but notes progress remains slow and uneven, and major gaps and inequalities persist, including in reducing poverty, access to social protection, informality and decent work, gender inequality, inclusion for persons with disabilities, and digital divides.

On specific challenges faced by countries, the Declaration recognizes the special challenges facing developing countries, noting in particular African countries, least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States, middle-income countries and countries in conflict and post-conflict situations. The Declaration commits to support and implement the relevant development agendas, strategies, and programmes of action for countries in special situations, including the Doha Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries, the Awaza Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2024–2034, and the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for Small Island Developing States.

On cooperation and partnership, the Declaration recognizes the need to strengthen the multilateral system and its institutions, with the UN and its Charter at the center, and commits to:

- advance innovative solutions and inclusive international cooperation;
- explore bold and effective social policies that are woven into whole-of-government, whole-of-society, people-centered, and integrated approaches; and
- collaborate meaningfully with all relevant stakeholders, including civil society, social partners, and the private sector, and encourage multi-stakeholder collaboration and partnerships.

**A Call to Action:** Fifteen paragraphs identify actions that Heads of State and Government and high representatives commit to. Actions related to adopting a holistic approach towards the eradication of poverty include:

- take effective measures, including policies and programmes, to address the root causes of poverty;
- reinforce international development cooperation for developing countries' capacities to achieve poverty eradication;

- explore opportunities to mobilize additional finance, both public and private;
- strengthen social protection systems;
- urgently develop a framework of measures of progress on sustainable development that complement or go beyond gross domestic product; and
- fully and effectively implement the mandate of General Assembly resolution 78/322 on the Multidimensional Vulnerability Index.

On inclusive and sustainable economic growth, Heads of State and Government and high representatives commit to, *inter alia*:

- adopt macroeconomic policies that promote job creation and decent work and living wages, including policies for the transition from the informal economy to the formal economy;
- strengthen international cooperation and promoting equitable access of developing countries to global markets, investments and technologies;
- support entrepreneurship by creating an enabling environment, for women, persons with disabilities, older persons and youth; and
- enforce labor laws effectively and strengthen labor market institutions and social dialogue.

Regarding the promotion of social integration, Heads of State and Government and high-level representatives commit to, among other actions:

- promote intergenerational solidarity, inclusive dialogue and social cohesion;
- create inclusive societies that enable full, equal and meaningful participation, as well as leadership opportunities, for all;
- reduce inequalities within and among countries;
- invest in integrated early childhood development;
- ensure the full and effective inclusion and participation of persons with disabilities; and
- recognize and support Indigenous Peoples in their pursuit of economic and social development.

On ending hunger, malnutrition and poverty, Heads of State and Government and high representatives commit to, among other things:

- accelerate actions to end hunger, poverty, food insecurity and all forms of malnutrition, through coordinated global action;
- reinforce measures to build sustainable, inclusive and resilient agriculture and food systems; and
- support smallholders, family farmers and small-scale producers, including women farmers and producers.

Concerning physical and mental health, Heads of State and Government and high representatives commit to, *inter alia*:

- achieve universal health coverage and realizing universal, equitable and affordable access to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health and well-being for all;
- leverage digital health technologies that are safe, accessible, inclusive, equitable and affordable; and
- strengthen international cooperation in the transfer of technology on mutually agreed terms.

Regarding digital transformation, Heads of State and Government and high representatives commit to, among others:

- strengthen equitable, safe, reliable and affordable access to digital technologies, digital public goods and digital public infrastructure for developing countries;
- leverage digital and emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence;
- bridge digital divides between and within countries; and
- address the spread of misinformation, disinformation, hate speech and content inciting harm in a way that protects democratic values.

On the right to education, Heads of State and Government and high representatives commit to, *inter alia*:

- promote universal, safe, inclusive, equitable, affordable and resilient quality education systems and lifelong learning opportunities for all;
- expand inclusive access to technical and vocational education and training; and
- strengthen investment and cooperation in research and development, innovation and training in emerging technologies.

Concerning climate change and disasters impact, Heads of State and Government and high representatives commit to, *inter alia*:

- address the adverse impacts of climate change, biodiversity loss, desertification and drought and environmental degradation;
- strengthen adaptive social protection systems;
- promote a risk-informed approach to social development that integrates accessible disaster risk reduction measures into policies, programmes and investments at all levels; and
- ensure that education and health systems and new and existing critical infrastructure are resilient and adaptable to disasters.

On gender equality, Heads of State and Government and high representatives commit to, among others:

- take comprehensive measures to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls;
- implement policies that ensure women's economic empowerment and equal opportunities in the labor market;
- promote access to sexual and reproductive health and eliminating all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls; and
- enhance women's full, equal and meaningful participation and leadership in decision-making processes at all levels and in all sectors.

Heads of State and Government and high representatives also commit to:

- combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance to achieve social development for all;
- promote an adequate standard of living;
- strengthen international, regional and bilateral cooperation to ensure safe, orderly and regular migration, and promoting and protecting the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all migrants;
- take concrete actions to enhance fiscal space, address debt challenges of developing countries and lower the cost of capital;
- engage constructively in the negotiations on the UN framework convention on international tax cooperation; and
- continue reforming the international financial architecture, enhancing its resilience, coherence, and effectiveness, and making global economic governance more inclusive, representative, equitable, and effective.

**Follow-up:** In two paragraphs on the follow-up process, Heads of State and Government and high representatives reiterate their commitment to the full implementation of the social development agenda, including through improving and strengthening its framework for international and regional cooperation, and through following up on the Doha Political Declaration, and decide to, among other things:

- adopt a five-year follow-up process on the Doha Political Declaration and the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action, starting in 2031, and convene a high level plenary meeting under the auspices of the General Assembly;
- request the Secretary-General, in consultation with Member States, to prepare a report in preparation of the follow-up

process and no later than the 85th session of the UNGA, which assesses progress and identifies gaps in social development;

- reaffirm that the Commission for Social Development has the primary responsibility for the follow-up and the review of the WSSD;
- invite the UN regional commissions to convene preparatory meetings at the regional level in advance of the follow-up;
- invite ECOSOC, the funds and programmes of the UN development system, and the relevant organizations and specialized agencies to further integrate into their work programmes relevant intergovernmental social development commitments and to be actively involved in the follow-up process;
- strengthen effective multilateralism and international cooperation;
- encourage stronger coordination between the UN and the international financial institutions;
- strengthen multi-stakeholder engagement and partnerships; and
- support developing countries, particularly African countries, least developed countries, SIDS, and landlocked developing countries, to *inter alia*, strengthen the capacity of national statistical offices and data systems to ensure access to high-quality, timely, reliable and disaggregated social development data.

Heads of State and Government and high representatives commit to advance concrete, integrated and targeted policies and actions to implement the Doha Political Declaration and achieve social development for all in line with the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action.

### A Brief Analysis of the World Social Summit

Convening in Doha against the backdrop of an uncertain and tumultuous world, the Second World Summit for Social Development (World Social Summit) provided an opportunity for the global community to take stock and chart a path forward on social development. Called for in the UN Secretary-General's report, *Our Common Agenda*, published in 2021, the World Social Summit built on the outcomes from the Summit of the Future (SoF), held in 2024, and the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD4), held in June 2025. Through the adoption by consensus of the Doha Political Declaration, it aimed to course-correct and redirect efforts to spur the achievement of the pillars of social development as well as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

This brief analysis reviews the proceedings and outcomes of the World Social Summit. It reports on progress since Copenhagen, how the social development agenda has evolved since 1995, and how it has remained the same. It also looks at ways in which the Declaration can boost action on the social development agenda.

### Taking Stock of the Social Development Agenda

The First World Summit for Social Development, held 30 years ago in 1995, was considered a landmark event. Its outcome – the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development – called for putting people at the center of development and marked the first time world leaders had publicly committed to eradicating poverty, reducing inequality, and promoting social integration. Importantly, it highlighted the interconnected nature of development challenges and that poverty is a multi-faceted issue. The outcome was considered a landmark for its time, and many elements in it continue to underpin the fabric of sustainable development. Delegates in Doha asked whether there has been progress on social development issues since Copenhagen? And given evolving priorities and realities since 1995, how did an agreement that

pre-dated the Millennium Development Goals and the Sustainable Development Goals need to be updated?

Many delegates at the World Social Summit pointed out that remarkable progress has been made over the past 30 years. Millions have been lifted out of poverty and there is greater acknowledgement of the need for universal basic education and for recognizing women and children's rights. Speaker after speaker took the floor to outline progress their country has achieved since 1995. Côte d'Ivoire reported it has reduced its poverty rate from 55% in 2011 to 37.5% in 2021, while electricity access has expanded to 96%. Niger highlighted measures including free education until age 16, reduced school fees, and free healthcare. Brazil discussed its efforts to ensure equal work for equal pay between men and women.

However, speakers recognized that new challenges threaten to undo much of the progress. Climate change, conflict, and rising inequalities have stalled progress and, in some regions, even caused it to regress. Digital transformation and changes in demographics also introduce the need for updates to the global social development action agenda. Concepts like "misinformation, disinformation, and hate speech" were not prevalent in 1995; the Doha Political Declaration calls for addressing them in a "way that protects democratic values" and upholds the right to freedom of expression and the right to privacy. The Declaration also notes that demographic shifts now include both declining birth rates in some countries and rapid population growth in others, as well as population ageing. One way in which the Doha Political Declaration aims to address the latter is through a call for increased investment in the care sector to create quality jobs and meet growing demand for services.

As some speakers noted, these new challenges do not mean the priorities for social development have changed. The lens through which countries addressed the priorities at the second WSSD may have shifted from the lens used during the first WSSD, based on the current geopolitical context, but the speakers in Doha made it clear that the pillars of social development are as relevant today as they were 30 years ago. Through the Doha Political Declaration, the global community renewed and strengthened its commitment to the interconnected pillars of poverty eradication, decent work, and social inclusion.

### A Booster Shot for Social Development Action

Delegates renewed and reaffirmed their commitment to both the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and its Programme of Action as well as to the newly adopted Doha Political Declaration. They repeatedly called for the Summit to be a turning point. Many emphasized that Doha could provide a course correction and renewed impetus for achieving the SDGs before the 2030 deadline. And some pledged to use their national planning process for the SDGs – the development of Voluntary National Reviews – to advance their social development policies.

While acknowledging the significant progress made since Copenhagen, speakers recognized that much remains to be done, including with regard to resources. In her closing statement, Annalena Baerbock, President of the 80th session of the UN General Assembly, noted that without concomitant financial resources, little progress will be made. The Copenhagen Declaration and its Programme of Action had addressed this challenge by putting forward the 20:20 goal. This goal proposed that 20% of national budgets and 20% of international development aid should be allocated to basic social programmes. Although this goal was not achieved, it encouraged countries to aim high.

The Doha Political Declaration, by contrast, does not include many "stretch goals" or new framing for social development that

characterized the agreement reached 30 years ago. While the 2025 version is aspirational, many of the activities identified in the call to action are compiled from other agreements. While the whole-of-government and whole-of-society action many said the Declaration calls for could inspire the integrated approaches that UN Deputy Secretary-General Mohammed emphasized are necessary, the Doha Political Declaration did not raise to the level that many were hoping for.

Some also noted that a number of debates over text in the Declaration reflected age-old challenges for multilateralism. Speakers lamented that the text did not reflect the most current interpretation of “Common but Differentiated Responsibilities,” noting that the most recent interpretation is in the Paris Agreement, which recognizes each country has different capabilities and should thus contribute in a manner that is fitting to their capabilities and resources. Others disassociated themselves from language that created similar conflicts 30 years ago: references to sexual and reproductive health rights.

Nonetheless, a number of the activities that the Declaration reaffirms could have significant impacts for social development. For example, the reaffirmed call from the Pact for the Future to “develop a framework of measures of progress on sustainable development that complement or go beyond gross domestic product (GDP)” would provide decision makers with information about a country’s well-being alongside the standard information that GDP provides on the value of goods and services produced. And the negotiations on the UN framework convention on international tax cooperation that the Declaration encourages states to engage in constructively are linked to calls for reforming the international financial architecture. The Declaration’s reaffirmations could prove, in the words of UN Secretary-General António Guterres, to provide the “booster shot” the world desperately needs if it is to reach its goals and targets for the SDGs and social development.

### Looking Ahead

The discussions at the World Social Summit and the Doha Political Declaration provided an updated assessment of current social development challenges and aimed to boost efforts for the coming five years as the global community strives to meet the 2030 deadline for achieving the SDGs. The World Social Summit also provided a launching pad for discussions on how to incorporate social development issues into the post-2030 Agenda. Speakers in Doha emphasized that social development is a precondition for the peace, stability, and sustainable growth that will help countries to continue the progress they have made since 1995.

While addressing many of the same issues that Copenhagen addressed, the world in 2025 is not the same as it was in 1995. The 1995 conference took place on the heels of the collapse of a previous world order, but that collapse triggered expectations for collaboration and cooperation that were much higher than they are in 2025. Speakers in Doha referred to the ongoing UN80 reform initiative, which alludes to a present-day challenge that could impede implementation of the Declaration: UN80 has been largely inspired by the UN’s current financial shortfalls. At the same time, some see this reform process as contributing possibilities for the changes that speakers said were needed, such as adjustments to the financial architecture. Fortunately, the five-year review cycle incorporated into the Doha Political Declaration will provide a more timely opportunity for reviewing how these reforms and implementation efforts are impacting the global social development agenda than the current 30-year wait allowed. The first review, in 2031, will come right after the new post-2030 agenda is expected to be launched. Doha’s updating of and recommitment to global

social development priorities and its establishment of a new review mechanism lay the groundwork for collective progress on challenges to 2030 and beyond.

### Upcoming Meetings

#### 2025 UN Climate Change Conference (UNFCCC COP 30):

This event will include the 30th session of the Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC (COP 30), the 20th meeting of the COP serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP 20), and the seventh meeting of the COP serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA 7). **dates:** 10-21 November 2025 **location:** Belém, Brazil **www:** [unfccc.int/cop30](https://unfccc.int/cop30)

#### 3rd Session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating

**Committee to develop a UN Framework Convention on International Tax Cooperation:** Delegates working to develop a UN Framework Convention on International Tax Cooperation will discuss proposals for a draft structure for the framework convention, a protocol on taxation of income derived from the provision of cross-border services, and a provision on prevention and resolution of tax disputes. **dates:** 10-19 November 2025 **location:** Nairobi, Kenya **www:** [financing.desa.un.org/inc/thirdsession](https://financing.desa.un.org/inc/thirdsession)

#### Seventh Meeting of the UN Environment Assembly

**(UNEA7):** UNEA is the highest decision-making body on environmental matters in the UN system and has a universal membership of all 193 Member States. The Assembly sets the global environmental agenda, provides overarching policy guidance, and defines policy responses to address emerging environmental challenges. UNEA7 will address the theme, “Advancing Sustainable Solutions for a Resilient Planet.” UNEA-7 will be preceded by the seventh meeting of the Open-ended Committee of Permanent Representatives (OECPR-7) which will be held from 1-5 December 2025. **dates:** 8-12 December 2025 **location:** Nairobi, Kenya **www:** [unep.org/environmentassembly/unea7](https://unep.org/environmentassembly/unea7)

**HLPF 2026:** The next session of the HLPF convening under the theme “Transformative, equitable, innovative and coordinated actions for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its SDGs for a sustainable future for all,” will focus on the following SDGs: 6 (clean water and sanitation); 7 (affordable and clean energy); 9 (industry, innovation and infrastructure); 11 (sustainable cities and communities) and 17 (partnerships for the goals). **dates:** 6-15 July 2026 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **www:** [hlpf.un.org](https://hlpf.un.org)

For additional meetings, see [sdg.iisd.org/](https://sdg.iisd.org/)

### Glossary

ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
GDP	Gross domestic product
ILO	International Labour Organization
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
UNGA	UN General Assembly
UNHCR	UN High Commissioner for Refugees
VNR	Voluntary National Review
WSSD	World Summit for Social Development