

**Side-Event on Leaving No One Behind: Social Development Challenges in Conflict-Affected and Occupied Territories to be Held on the Margins of 64<sup>th</sup> Commission on Social Development**

**Organized by Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the United Nations**

**Concept Note**

**(5 February 2026)**

**(Conference Room 11, UN Headquarters)**

**(Time: 16:45-18:00 hrs)**

The theme of the 64th Session of the Commission for Social Development, “Advancing Social Development and Social Justice through Coordinated, Equitable, and Inclusive Policies” emphasizes that the realization of social development is inseparable from the pursuit of social justice. Inclusive policies that empower the most vulnerable, especially those facing systemic exclusion, are essential to achieving equitable progress and fulfilling the promise of leaving no one behind.

2. Across the world, millions of people continue to face the daily consequences of conflict, instability, and foreign occupation. These conditions disrupt access to education, healthcare, livelihoods, social protection, water and sanitation, essential services, and undermine long-term development prospects. Households and communities exposed to violence and deprivation suffer deep psychosocial stress, intergenerational poverty, and significant development setbacks. Women, children, youth, persons with disabilities and older persons are disproportionately affected.

3. The Political Declaration at the Second World Summit on Social Development adopted in Doha in November 2025, reaffirmed the centrality of inclusion, solidarity and social justice to development. It underscored that development cannot be achieved where people live under conditions of insecurity, displacement, and conflict. The Declaration called for a stronger focus on those furthest behind, and urged Member States to expand social protection systems, strengthen international cooperation, and ensure that humanitarian and development assistance reaches those living in the most challenging environments.

4. In this context, it is urgent to examine how conflict and occupation intersect with social development. The social, economic and human costs of these situations reverberate across generations, widening inequalities, restricting opportunity, and limiting participation in economic and civic life.

Addressing the needs of affected populations is essential to advancing human rights, the SDGs, and the Doha Declaration, and ensuring that global commitments to dignity, equality and justice are upheld. Against this backdrop, this side event aims to connect the annual theme of the Commission with practical strategies for ensuring that those most at risk are not forgotten within the international development agenda.

### **Objectives**

- i. Highlight social development challenges faced by people living in conflict-affected and occupied territories, including poverty, service disruption, displacement and trauma.
- ii. Examine disproportionate impacts on vulnerable groups, especially women, youth, children, persons with disabilities and the older persons.
- iii. Link the discussion to commitments in the Doha Political Declaration, particularly on inclusion, social justice, and support for conflict affected populations.
- iv. Identify policy and programmatic measures that strengthen humanitarian assistance, education, livelihoods, health, social protection and resilience for affected communities.
- v. Support international cooperation and solidarity, including humanitarian access and development financing, in line with the principle of leaving no one behind.

### **Guiding Questions**

- (a) What are the most urgent social development needs of communities living under conflict and occupation, and how can they be better addressed?
- (b) How can social protection systems, education, and essential services be adapted to reach affected populations, especially women and children?
- (c) What measures are required to operationalize commitments from the Doha Political Declaration in conflict and occupation contexts?
- (d) How can international cooperation and humanitarian assistance be strengthened to support inclusive social development in crisis situations?
- (e) What examples of good practice or community resilience can be shared to inform policy and programming?

### **Participation**

5. The event will bring together Member States, experts, youth advocates and civil society organizations. Delegations to the Commission for Social Development and interested stakeholders are invited to actively participate in the discussion.