

The Time to Care and Support is Now!

United Nations Observance of the International Day of Care and Support: Concept Note and Agenda

31 October 2023, 3.45 p.m. to 6.00 p.m. at the ECOSOC Chamber at the United Nations Headquarters in New York

Organizers: ILO, OHCHR, and UN Women

Sponsorship: Chile and Spain with support from Argentina, Colombia, Germany, Mexico, the Philippines, Tunisia and the United Kingdom

Audience: Member States, the UN entities, civil society, the private sector, academia, the media and the global community, and Generation Equality Leaders and Commitment Makers

Background:

The United Nations General Assembly introduced the International Day of Care and Support on 29 October through the landmark resolution ([A/RES/77/317](#)), whose negotiation was facilitated by the Permanent Missions of Chile and Spain to the United Nations. This resolution encourages participation from Member States, the UN system, civil society, including trade unions, the private sector, academia, the media and the global community to recognize and celebrate this day.

The resolution shed light on the necessity for robust, resilient and gender-responsive, disability-inclusive and age-sensitive care and support systems with full respect for human rights for the achievement of gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls, and for the well-being of society and all its members, including women, children, older persons and persons with disabilities, and full respect for the rights of the workers providing care and support.

It acknowledges the need to recognize, reduce, and redistribute unpaid care and domestic work and support and to reward and guarantee representation of paid care workers, including domestic workers. It also recognizes the importance of support for those who need it, including older persons, persons with disabilities and persons living with mental health conditions, as a basis for their independent living and community inclusion.

By highlighting the essential role of care work in economic and social justice and society's well-being, the resolution values the work of paid and unpaid caregivers and honours care workers as essential workers. It draws attention to the fact that unpaid care and domestic work fall predominantly on women and girls and the invisibility and undervaluation of care and domestic work in policymaking.

Objectives:

This international day seeks to foreground care and support as a cornerstone of sustainable development and accelerator for equality. Celebrating the first International Day of Care and Support is an opportunity for all stakeholders to make, renew or enhance their commitment and take action to promote the rights of caregivers, care workers and those receiving care and support. In this regard, the high-level event and activism on this inaugural day will contribute to:

- Disseminate the resolution's message, urging Member States to enhance awareness, refine policies, and amplify investments to overhaul care and support systems for a sustainable and just society, promote gender equality and deliver on leaving no one behind.

- Undertake resolute actions to establish care and support systems that are human rights-based, gender-disability-, and age-responsive, underpinned by the guarantee for decent work for care workers and quality care and support for recipients.
- Promote the participation of all stakeholders in the discussion, particularly caregivers, care workers and recipients of care and support as rights holders.

Marking the International Day of Care and Support to be celebrated each 29 October, this event on 31 October 2023 will call for boosting investments in care and support systems as essential to catalyze progress towards gender equality, women's economic independence and equal participation in social, economic, political and cultural life, promote human rights of persons providing and receiving care and support, and contribute to efforts to building resilient societies and economies.

Proposed Agenda and Speakers [TBC]:

Master of Ceremony: Richard Lui, American journalist and news anchor for MSNBC and NBC News

3.45 p.m. Opening. Inauguration of the United Nations Observance of the International Day of Care and Support. Opening remarks by:

- **Dennis Francis**, President of the 78th session of the United Nations General Assembly
- **Paula Narvaez**, President of ECOSOC and Permanent Representative of Chile to the United Nations
- **Ana Jiménez de la Hoz**, Deputy Permanent Representative of Spain to United Nations and Chargée d'Affaires.

4:00 p.m. The Time to Care and Support is Now. Linking the Discussion of care and support to the acceleration and attainment of SDGs. Keynote segment introduced by Sarah Hendriks, Acting Deputy Executive Director of UN Women

- Keynote Speech by **Amina Mohammed**, Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations

4.10 p.m. First segment: Building Momentum towards the Sustainable Development Goals: The economic, social, and human rights benefits of strong care and support systems. Inspiring remarks and testimonies

- **The Urgency of Transforming Care and Support Systems for a Sustainable and Just Society**
 - **Sima Bahous**, Executive Director of UN Women
 - Testimonial video: FEMNET
 - Ambassador **María del Carmen Squeff**, Permanent Representative of Argentina to the United Nations
 - Testimonial video: Global Alliance for Care
 - Government of Mexico
- **The Imperative of Decent Work in the Care and Support Sector**
 - **Gilbert F. Hougbo**, Director-General of International Labour Organization introduced by **Cynthia Samuel-Olonjuwon**, Special Representative to the UN and Director of the ILO Office for the United Nations
 - Testimonial videos: International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC)

- Ambassador **Leonor Zalabata**, Permanent Representative of Colombia to the United Nations
- Testimonial videos: International Domestic Workers Federation
- **Spotlight on Human Rights, Gender, Disability, and Age-Responsiveness in Care and support**
 - **Ilze Brands Kehris**, Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights, Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights
 - Testimonial videos: Inclusive international
 - Ambassador **Antje Leendertse**, Permanent Representative of Germany to the United Nations
 - Testimonial videos: Help Age International
 - Ambassador **Dame Barbara Woodward**, Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom to the United Nations
 - Testimonial videos: ADEPE - Action pour le Développement du Peuple, Rwanda
 - Ambassador **Antonio Manuel R. Lagdameo**, Permanent Representative of the Philippines to the United Nations

5.00 p.m. Cultural Interlude: "Voices of Inclusion: AI & Authenticity in the Spectrum of Care and Support"

- Special performance by interdisciplinary artist [Janet Biggs](#)

5.15 p.m. Panel discussion / Interactive dialogue. Boosting Care and Support: A Catalyst for Economic Independence and Resilience moderated by Jemimah Njuki, Chief of Economic Empowerment Section at UN Women

- Ambassador **Martin Kimani**, Permanent Representative of Kenya to the United Nations
- **Ai-jen Poo**, President of the National Domestic Workers Alliance, U.S.
- Voice from the public sector (care worker)
- **Violet Shivutse**, Chair of the Huairou Commission
- **Adnan Delić, Minister**, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina
- **Catalina Devandas Aguilar**, Former United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Rights of persons with disabilities
- Children's rights organization
- Ambassador **Linda Thomas-Greenfield**, Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations

5.55 p.m. Closing: The Time to Care and Support is Now

