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# UNDP Civil Society Advisory Committee

## Eleventh Annual Meeting, New York, 24-25 April 2014

### Speaker and moderator short biographies

#### **Helen Clark, Administrator United Nations Development Programme**



**Helen Clark** became the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme on 17 April 2009, and was re-appointed for a second term on 12 April 2013. She is the first woman to lead the organization. She also chairs the United Nations Development Group, comprising the heads of all UN funds, programmes and departments working on development issues. Prior to her appointment with UNDP, Ms. Clark served for three successive terms as Prime Minister of New Zealand (1999-2008). Throughout her tenure, Ms. Clark engaged widely in policy development and advocacy in international, economic, social and cultural spheres. Under her leadership, New Zealand achieved significant economic growth, low levels of unemployment, high levels of investment in education and health, and the well-being of families and older citizens. She and her Government prioritized reconciliation and settlement of historical grievances with indigenous peoples and the development of an inclusive multi-cultural and multi-faith society. Prior to entering parliament, Ms. Clark taught in the Political Studies Department of the University of Auckland. She graduated with a BA in 1971 and an MA with First Class Honours in 1974.

#### **Michael O'Neill, Assistant Secretary-General and Director UNDP Bureau of External Relations and Advocacy**



**Michael O'Neill** joined UNDP in February 2014, as Assistant Administrator and Director of the Bureau of External Relations and Advocacy. Prior to this appointment, Mr. O'Neill was serving as Senior Foreign Office Representative, Gulf Strategy Group, UK Cabinet Office. Mr. O'Neill served as British Ambassador to Qatar (2012-2013); Head of Mission, Helmand Provincial Reconstruction Team, Afghanistan (2010-2012); UK Special Representative for Sudan, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, London (2007-2010); External Relations Counselor, UK Representation to the European Union, Brussels (2006-2007); Development/ Human Rights Counselor, UK Mission to United Nations, New York (2002-2006); First Secretary Pol-Mil, British Embassy and Institute for National Security Studies, Washington, D.C. (1998-2002); First Secretary, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, London (1994-1998); Second Secretary (Defense), UK Delegation to NATO, Brussels (1991-1994) and Administrative Trainee, Ministry of Defense, London (1988-1991). He holds an MSc in West European Politics from the London School of Economics, United Kingdom and an MA in Classics and Modern History from Brasenose College, Oxford University, United Kingdom.

**Magdy Martínez-Solimán, Deputy Assistant Administrator and Director, a.i.  
UNDP Bureau for Development Policy**



**Magdy Martínez-Solimán** has been with the United Nations for the past 16 years. He is currently Director, a.i., of the Bureau for Development Policy. Prior to coming to New York, he was UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative in Mexico (2008-2012). Mr. Martínez-Solimán was Senior Governance Advisor in UNDP for the 18 West African countries (2000-2003) and Practice Manager of the UNDP Democratic Governance Team (2003-2006). In 2006, he was appointed by the Secretary-General as the first Executive Director of the United Nations Democracy Fund. He has also served in Burundi, Togo, Bangladesh and Senegal. Prior to the United Nations, Mr. Martínez-Solimán was State Secretary for Youth in the Spanish National Government, CEO of two public corporations and member of the Organizing Committee of the 1992 Olympic Games in Barcelona. He was also Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister's Office, in charge of relations with the Parliament of Andalusia, and an elected member of the Municipal Council of his hometown, Malaga. Mr. Martínez-Solimán initiated his law studies at the University Complutense of Madrid, holds a *Juris Doctor* from the Universidad de Malaga and has been a Member of the Spanish Bar Association since 1984.

**Fadzai Gwaradzimba, Deputy Assistant Administrator and Deputy Director  
UNDP Bureau of External Relations and Advocacy**



**Fadzai Gwaradzimba** assumed the position of Deputy Assistant Administrator and Deputy Director in the UNDP Bureau of External Relations and Advocacy in November 2012. Prior to this, she was the Division Chief for South and West Asia in the Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific for five years, following an assignment as United Nations Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative in the Gambia (2006-2007). She joined UNDP in 1989 and has served the organization in a number of increasingly senior positions in different parts of the world. Prior to joining UNDP, she was an academic at the University of Zimbabwe where she taught political science and international relations. A native of Zimbabwe, she holds a PhD in International Relations and Economics from the School of Advanced International Studies in Johns Hopkins University, and a Master's degree from the University of Oregon. She obtained her BA in Political Science and Administration from the University of Zimbabwe.

**Nicholas Rossellini, Deputy Assistant Administrator and Deputy Regional Director  
UNDP Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific**



**Nicholas Rossellini** was appointed Deputy Assistant Administrator and Deputy Regional Director of the Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific in November 2011. Since January 2009, Mr. Rossellini was Deputy Regional Director based in the Asia-Pacific Regional Centre in Bangkok. Prior to that, Mr. Rossellini served as United Nations Resident Coordinator/UNDP Resident Representative in Bhutan (2005-2008); Director, Office of the Assistant and Director, Bureau of Management (2000-2005); Deputy Resident Representative, Viet Nam (1996-2000); Assistant Resident Representative, Pakistan (1992-1996); Programme Advisor, Ethiopia (1989-1992) and Programme Officer, Ghana (1986-1989) in the positions of Programme Advisor and Programme Officer respectively. Mr. Rossellini holds a Master's degree in Economics from the London School of Economics and a Bachelor's degree in Economics from Bristol University in the United Kingdom.

### **Marta Ruedas, Deputy Assistant Administrator and Deputy Director UNDP Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery**



**Marta Ruedas** joined BCPR as Deputy Assistant Administrator and Deputy Director in February 2011. Prior to this, she served as United Nations Deputy Special Coordinator/ Resident Coordinator/ Resident Representative in Lebanon. From 2003 to 2007, Ms. Ruedas was the Deputy Regional Director of the UNDP Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States. She was the United Nations Resident Coordinator/ Resident Representative in Bulgaria (2001-2003) and São Tomé and Príncipe (1999-2001). Ms. Ruedas was a member of the Administrator's Transition Team (July-October 1999) and held Deputy Resident Representative positions in Bolivia (1996-1999) and Kyrgyzstan (1995-1996) as well as the position of Deputy UNDP Representative in the Republic of Georgia (1994-1995). Ms. Ruedas served in New York as Special Assistant to the Administrator (1993-1994) and Special Assistant to the Assistant Administrator and Director of the Bureau for Programme Policy and Evaluation (1992-1993). She also held the posts of Programme Officer in Mongolia (1990-1992) and Junior Professional Officer in Mexico (1988-1990). Ms. Ruedas is a Spanish national and holds a Master's degree in International Relations from Columbia University, New York.

### **Harmandip (Ruby) Sandhu-Rojon, Deputy Assistant Administrator and Deputy Regional Director UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa**



In March 2014, **Harmandip (Ruby) Sandhu-Rojon** assumed the position of Deputy Assistant Administrator and Deputy Regional Director, Regional Bureau for Africa in New York. Before that, she was serving as UN Resident Coordinator/ UNDP Resident Representative in Ghana. Prior to this she served as Country Director, Burkina Faso (2007-2010); Chief of the Africa Section, UNV, Germany (2004-2006); Senior Evaluation Adviser, Evaluation Office, UNDP (2002-2004); Deputy Resident Representative, Madagascar (1999-2002); Special Assistant to the Administrator, Office of the Administrator, UNDP, New York (1997-1999); Programme Officer Africa Section, UNIFEM, New York (1995-1997) and Regional Officer for West, Central and North Africa, UNIFEM, Senegal (1987-1995). Ms. Sandhu-Rojon holds an MSc in Russian Politics from the London School of Economics and a BA in Political Science from Bryn Mawr College in the United States.

### **Mourad Wahba, Deputy Assistant Administrator and Deputy Director UNDP Regional Bureau for Arab States**



**Mourad Wahba** was appointed as Deputy Regional Director for the Arab States in January 2013. Prior to this appointment, Mr. Wahba had served as Director of the Security Office in the Bureau of Management since 2009. Other positions during his United Nations career include: United Nations Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative in Morocco (2006-2009); Director, United Nations Affairs in the Partnerships Bureau (2001-2006); Deputy Resident Representative (Programme and Operations) in Guyana (1999-2001); Policy Advisor, Office of the Administrator (1997-1999); Programme Advisor in the Human Development Report Office (1997-1999). Mr. Wahba began his career with the United Nations in 1993 as a Senior Officer in the Office of the Secretary-General working with Boutros Boutros-Ghali. Before joining the UN, Mr. Wahba was an Assistant and later Associate Professor of Economics at the American University in Cairo and a Visiting Lecturer on international political economy at the Institute for Diplomatic Studies, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Egypt (1987-1993). He holds an MA from the American University in Cairo as well as a DPhil from the University of Oxford.

**Pedro Conceição, Chief Economist and Head, Strategic Advisory Unit  
UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa**



**Pedro Conceição** has been Chief Economist and Head of the Strategic Advisory Unit in the UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa since December 2009. Prior to this, he served in the UNDP Office of Development Studies as Director (2007-2009) and Deputy Director (2001-2007). His work on financing for development and on global public goods was published by Oxford University Press in books he co-edited: *The New Public Finance: Responding to Global Challenges*, 2006; *Providing Global Public Goods: Managing Globalization*, 2003. His writings have appeared in a number of journals, including the *African Development Review*, *Review of Development Economics*, *Environmental Economics and Policy Studies*. Prior to joining UNDP, Mr. Conceição was an assistant professor at the Technical University of Lisbon, Portugal. He has degrees in Physics and Economics from the Technical University of Lisbon and a PhD in Public Policy from the LBJ School of Public Affairs, the University of Texas at Austin, where he studied on a Fulbright scholarship.

**Samuel Doe, Senior Policy Adviser and Team Leader  
UNDP Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery**



**Samuel Doe** is Senior Policy Adviser and Team Leader in the Policy and Planning Division of UNDP's Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery since October 2011. He has been in the UN for nearly a decade, after working with civil society in Africa for 15 years. Mr. Doe established and led the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding in 1998, the largest peacebuilding civil society network in Africa. He was also chair of the Forum on Early Warning and Early Response (2002-2004), a global network of conflict prevention scholars and practitioners, based in London. Mr. Doe is a Liberian national and holds a doctorate in Social and International Affairs from Bradford University, UK. He received an MA in Conflict Transformation and Peacebuilding from the Center for Justice and Peacebuilding, Eastern Mennonite University, USA, where he teaches conflict sensitive policy development.

**Gail Hurley, Policy Specialist, Development Finance and Inclusive Globalization  
UNDP Bureau for Development Policy**



**Gail Hurley** has been a Policy Specialist on Development Finance and Inclusive Globalization at the UNDP Bureau for Development Policy in New York since January 2010. Her areas of expertise include development aid, sovereign debt, innovative sources of finance, illicit financial flows and global finance more generally. She is currently a member of the United Nations Post-2015 Working Group on Financing for Sustainable Development. She is also supporting several governments in the Caribbean and Africa to develop appropriate medium-term development financing strategies. Prior to joining UNDP, Ms. Hurley was a Policy and Advocacy Officer with the European Network on Debt and Development (2008-2010); served as an advisor on the Government of Ecuador's official debt audit commission (2007-2008), and was seconded to Bolivia and Peru to advise the governments on their debt sustainability strategies as well as support civil society organizations (2006). Ms. Hurley was Director of the European Volunteer Centre (2002-2004), and has also worked at the European Commission in the Directorate-General for Development. She holds an MSc in Development Studies from the School of Oriental and African Studies and a Postgraduate Diploma in Economics from the University of London.

**Selim Jahan, Director, Poverty Practice Group  
UNDP Bureau for Development Policy**



**Selim Jahan** is Director of the Poverty Practice in UNDP's Bureau for Development Policy in New York, a position he has held since 2007. Prior to this, he was Deputy Director of the Human Development Report Office and a member of the core team that authored nine global Human Development Reports (1993-2001). Before joining UNDP in 1992, Mr. Jahan held several positions, including Professor of Economics and Director of the Economic Research Unit, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh (1984-1992); Economic Adviser, Planning Commission, Government of Bangladesh, (1989-1090); Visiting Scholar, School Of Public Policy, University of Maryland, USA (1992) and Lecturer, Department of Economics, McGill University, Montreal, Canada (1983-1984). Mr. Jahan also worked as adviser and consultant to various international organizations including ILO, UNDP, UNESCO, and the World Bank during the 1980s and the early 1990s. He holds a PhD in Economics from McGill University, Canada.

**Eva Jespersen, Deputy Director  
UNDP Human Development Report Office**



**Eva Jespersen** is Deputy Director of Human Development Report Office at UNDP. She coordinates the development and presentation of the annual global Human Development Reports, pays particular attention to building partnerships with experts and stakeholders at international and country levels, and leads the office functions on outreach, communication, and support to regional and national Human Development Reports. She comes to HDRO from the UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre in Florence, where she led the centre's two flagship reports: the Innocenti Social Monitor and the Innocenti Report Cards on child wellbeing. She has held two previous positions in UNICEF as East Asia and Pacific regional advisor on children, economic and social policy and as policy advisor in New York on structural adjustment and aid. Ms. Jespersen has also published work on many aspects of development and children, including structural adjustment, the debt burden, migration social programmes, and development assistance for social development. Ms. Jespersen worked for DANIDA and the Ministry of Economic Affairs in Denmark prior to joining the UN in 1985. She has an advanced degree in economics from the University of Copenhagen, specializing in international monetary economics.

**Paul Ladd, Head, Post-2015 One Secretariat  
UNDP Bureau for Development Policy**



**Paul Ladd** joined UNDP in 2006 and currently heads the organization's team on the post-2015 development agenda. Previously, he led UNDP's policy team on inclusive globalization – including trade, development finance, and migration. From 2008 to 2009, he supported the Office of the Secretary-General on the financial and economic crisis and the UN's engagement with the G20. Before his New York assignment, Mr. Ladd was a policy adviser on international development for the UK Treasury, including during the period building up to and through the UK's Chair of the G8 and European Union in 2005. Prior to that, he was Chief Economist and acting Head of Policy with Christian Aid; economic adviser to the UK Department for International Development for Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa and Swaziland, and a financial adviser in the Central Bank of Guyana. Mr. Ladd received his BSc in Economics and MSc in Quantitative Development Economics from the University of Warwick (UK).

**Jennifer Laughlin, Policy Analyst, Environment and Energy Group and UN-REDD Programme  
UNDP Bureau for Development Policy**



**Jennifer Laughlin** joined UNDP in 2006 and is a Policy Analyst in the Environment and Energy Group in UNDP's Bureau for Development Policy and with the United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (UN-REDD Programme), based in New York. She works on community-based natural resource management; stakeholder engagement; indigenous peoples' issues, including free, prior and informed consent; social and environmental safeguards; and project-, national- and corporate-level grievance mechanisms. Prior to this, Ms. Laughlin worked at the United Nations Environment Programme in the Secretariat of the Regional Seas Programme (2004-2006) based in The Hague, the Netherlands, with a focus on supporting countries to develop and implement transboundary strategies for ocean and coastal zone management. She has an MSc in Development Studies from the School of Oriental and African Studies in London, and a BA in Philosophy and Religious Studies from the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia.

**Charles McNeill, Senior Policy Advisor, Environment and Energy Group  
UNDP Bureau for Development Policy**



**Charles McNeill** is Senior Policy Advisor in the Environment and Energy Group in UNDP's Bureau for Development Policy, where he is responsible for policy coherence, partnerships, strategic initiatives and advocacy related to biodiversity and ecosystems, climate change, sustainable energy and land and water management. He co-manages UNDP's work with FAO and UNEP on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD) through the UN-REDD Programme. He leads UNDP's participation in the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services. Mr. McNeill founded and oversaw the work of the Equator Initiative, a multi-partner effort to foster successful community initiatives in the Equatorial belt to reduce poverty through the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. Previously, he managed UNDP's Global Environment Facility (GEF) work throughout Africa and was responsible for UNDP-GEF global policy and programming. Prior to joining UNDP in 1992, Mr. McNeill worked in the non-governmental sector on hunger eradication and sustainable development programmes in South Asia and Africa. After receiving his PhD in genetics, with a focus on conservation biology at the University of California at Davis, Mr. McNeill held several academic posts addressing a range of environmental and development issues.

**Saraswathi Menon, Director Policy Division  
UN Women**



**Saraswathi Menon** is Director of the Policy Division at UN Women, a position she has held since June 2011. Prior to this, she was Director of the UNDP Evaluation Office (2003-2011). Ms. Menon's career includes experience in both policy and management. She served as United Nations Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative in Mongolia (2000-2003), UNDP Deputy Resident Representative in Nepal (1999-2000) and Deputy Chief of the Regional Programme and Policy Division in UNDP's Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific (1997-1999). Prior to joining UNDP's Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific, she was a member of the team that wrote the first six Human Development Reports (1989-1995). Before joining UNDP, she lectured in sociology at Madras University in India. She holds an MA, MPhil and PhD degrees in Sociology.

### **Holly Mergler, Programme Specialist, Environment and Energy Group UNDP Bureau for Development Policy**



**Holly Mergler** is a Programme Specialist in UNDP's Environment and Energy Group, in the Environmental Mainstreaming team. She coordinates UNDP's efforts to strengthen social and environmental policies and procedures related to programme and project management. She is also engaged in other environmental mainstreaming initiatives, including coordination of the Post-2015 Environmental Sustainability Thematic Consultation. Prior to working at UNDP in New York, Ms. Mergler worked on water governance issues in the UNDP Costa Rica Country Office, conducted research in Chile on the social impacts of water pollution, and was an environmental consultant for eight years. She has a background in environmental and social assessment, environmental planning and policy and sustainable development. She holds Master's degree in International Affairs from the American University and in Sustainable Development from the University for Peace. She also holds a degree in Environmental Planning and Policy.

### **Gerardo Noto, Senior Advisor on Governance UNDP Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean**



**Gerardo Noto** joined UNDP in 2009 as Programme Specialist in the Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean, where he is now Democratic Governance Team Leader. Prior to joining UNDP, he was part of the coordination team of the Regional Project on Political Analysis and Prospective Scenarios to Strengthen Democratic Governance (2005-2008), the UNDP Democracy in Latin America Report (2003-2004), United Nations Coordination Officer in Argentina (2003) and member of the UNDP team supporting Diálogo Argentino, a post-crisis multi-stakeholder consensus building forum (2002). Mr. Noto also worked as international advisor in the Ibero-American Cooperation Secretariat (2008) and as project manager of the Permanent Secretariat of the Latin American Economic System in Venezuela (1995-2000). He served in the Government of Argentina in various capacities, including as director in the Ministry of Education and Culture in the Province of Buenos Aires (2000-2001), advisor to the National Senate on international relations and MERCOSUR (1993-1995) and advisor to the Governor of Mendoza on international cooperation (1989-1991). Mr. Noto holds a Master's in Law and Diplomacy from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts-Harvard University (Boston, 1993) and a BA in Political Science and Public Administration from the Universidad Nacional de Cuyo (Mendoza, 1988).

### **Eugenia Piza-Lopez, Crisis Governance Adviser UNDP Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery**



**Eugenia Piza-Lopez** is Crisis Governance Adviser in the Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery, a position she has held since July 2012. She has previously worked as BCPR's Senior Adviser for Post-Conflict Recovery and prior to this at the UNDP Pacific Sub-Regional Centre in Fiji as Team Leader of the Regional Crisis Prevention and Recovery Programme covering over 18 Island States. She also spent five years in Indonesia as UNDP's Senior Conflict Prevention Adviser. Prior to UNDP, Ms. Piza-Lopez was Head of Policy and Advocacy in International Alert (1997-2002). She worked with Oxfam UK for nine years as Head of the Gender and Development Unit and Social Development Adviser for Asia and Latin America. During her time in Latin America, Ms. Piza-Lopez worked in Costa Rica's Ministry of Planning. She also campaigned for the freedom of the press during the Central American wars, and she worked as a journalist and a filmmaker, producing documentaries on social and poverty issues. She has an MPhil in Social Communication Research from the University of Leicester (UK), a Licenciatura in Media and Sociology from the University of Costa Rica and a Diploma in the History of Art from the University of London.

### **Sarah Poole, Division Chief**

#### **UNDP Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States**

**Sarah Poole** is Division Chief in the UNDP Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (RBEC), responsible for 12 UNDP offices in the Western Balkans as well as Turkey, Bulgaria, Cyprus and Romania. Prior to this, Ms. Poole has held the following positions in UNDP: Senior Advisor on Strategic Initiatives and UN Reform, Partnerships Bureau (2007-2010); Deputy Resident Representative for Programme and Operations in Turkey (2004-2007); Team Leader for the Western Balkans, Regional Bureau for Europe and CIS (2001-2004); and Team Leader and Advisor on Socio-Economic Reintegration, Emergency Response Division (1999-2001), supporting post-crisis recovery and community-based programming in Africa, the former Yugoslavia and Arab States. Before joining UNDP, Ms. Poole worked for the US Department of State's Bureau for Population, Refugees and Migration in Bosnia-Herzegovina as the Deputy Regional Affairs Coordinator (1996-1998) and as the Regional Refugee Coordinator covering Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and the former Yugoslavia (1998-1999). She served as an Information Officer for USAID's Office of US Foreign Disaster Assistance in Washington, Rwanda, Burundi and Bosnia-Herzegovina from 1994-1996. Ms. Poole holds a Master's of Science in Government from the London School of Economics and Political Science, and a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and French from the University of Michigan. Between 2000 and 2003, she served as an adjunct professor at Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs, teaching a graduate seminar on the linkages between conflict, development and peacebuilding.

### **Anuradha Seth, Team Leader, Inclusive Green Growth, Poverty Group**

#### **UNDP Bureau for Development Policy**



**Anuradha Seth** is a development economist in the field of development policy and planning, poverty reduction strategies and pro-poor macroeconomic policies for over 25 years. Prior to joining UNDP in 1999, she was Assistant Professor of Economics at Hobart and William Smith Colleges (New York) and worked as a consultant for several policy institutes. Ms. Seth has extensive experience working with governments, parliamentarians, civil society organizations and women's organizations. Her in-country experience spans over 35 countries in Africa, the Arab States and Asia and the Pacific, including countries in conflict and crisis. Ms. Seth served as the team leader for a number of UN inter-agency missions and has established partnerships with regional commissions for several initiatives in the areas of national planning, inclusive growth and poverty reduction. She has authored over 40 articles and reports. Ms. Seth is an Indian national and holds a PhD from The New School (New York).

### **Xiaojun (Grace) Wang, Practice Manager Poverty Practice, Lead Adviser on South-South Cooperation**

#### **UNDP Bureau for Development Policy**



**Xiaojun (Grace) Wang** is the Practice Manager of the Poverty Practice and Lead Adviser on South-South Cooperation in UNDP. Prior to this, Ms. Wang worked for seven years in the UNDP Country Office in China where she was the Team Leader for Democratic Governance and HIV and AIDS, and managed poverty reduction programmes. Before joining UNDP in 2002, Ms. Wang worked with governments, international non-governmental organizations, academic institutions and media outlets. She is a Chinese national and holds a PhD in Education and International Development from the University of London.