

# Our Goal

Ensuring **Universal Participation at Every session of the Human Rights Council**

Join the LDCs/SIDS Trust Fund success story!



**Side event to the 56<sup>th</sup> session of the Human Rights Council  
Voluntary Technical Assistance Trust Fund to Support the Participation of Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in the Work of the Human Rights Council.**

***Theme: Our success stories***

**Date and venue:** Friday 21 June, 13:30 – 14:30 in Room XXIV, Palais des Nations, Geneva

**Co-conveners:** The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Maldives to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva, and the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Mauritius to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva, together with the two co-facilitators for SIDS/LDCs, H.E. Ms. Heidi Schroderus-Fox (Finland) and H.E. Ms. Caroline Bwanali Mussa (Malawi), and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

**Background:** In 2012, the Human Rights Council established the Voluntary Technical Assistance Trust Fund to Support the Participation of Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States in its Work ([HRC/RES/19/26](#)), which became operational in 2014.

The Trust Fund aims to ensure that the eligible LDCs and SIDS, in particular those without a permanent representation in Geneva, are able to participate and contribute to the work of the Council. In order to support this mission, to-date 34 countries have provided financial contributions to the Trust Fund and effectively contributed to the success stories to be featured during this side event.

10 years after its operationalization, the Trust Fund has already enabled the participation of 252 government officials (148 women, 104 men) in the Human Rights Council and has supported 71 LDCs and SIDS at least once, thereby promoting the universal and meaningful participation of all Member States in the Council.

**Objectives:** The side event will provide an opportunity to former beneficiaries of the Trust Fund to share their experiences. The beneficiaries, thanks to the contributions of donor countries and the trainings and capacity building provided by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), have been empowered to support the universal periodic review process and treaty body reviews of their country; lead initiatives at the Human Rights Council; and even join and/or contribute to the opening of their Permanent Mission in Geneva, thus fruitfully reinforcing their country representation to the United Nations.

**Outcome:** This event will be the opportunity for existing and potential funding partner countries, as well as receiving countries, to reflect on the achievements of the Trust Fund, but also to share what other successes they want to see in the next 10 years.

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A follow-up event will be organized on the margins of the September session of the Human Rights Council, where existing and potential donors could show their support and commitment to the participation of SIDS/LDCs in the Council by making pledges for the Trust Fund.

**Format:** The one-hour side event will start with the opening statement from OHCHR and the projection of a short [video featuring beneficiaries](#) from the last session of the Human Rights Council sharing the experience of their participation.

This will be followed by the testimonies of our invited panellists – former beneficiaries, currently posted at their Permanent Missions in Geneva.

Speakers from the floor will then have the opportunity to make comments, suggestions and ask questions to the podium, before the closing remarks from the panellists.

The side event will be held in English.

### **Opening statements:**

- Ms. Nada Al-Nashif, Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights;
- H.E. Ms. Usha Chandnee Dwarka-Canabady, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Mauritius; and
- H.E. Ms. Salma Rasheed, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Permanent Mission of the Republic of Maldives.

**Moderator:** Mr. Mahamane Cisse-Gouro, Director of the Human Rights Council and Treaty Mechanisms Division at OHCHR.

### **Panellists (former beneficiaries of the Trust Fund):**

- Ms. Nthabiseng Matlhohanolofatso Lelisa, Minister-Counsellor at the Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Lesotho and former beneficiary of the Trust Fund;
- Mr. Adam Hamid, Counsellor at the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Maldives and former beneficiary of the Trust Fund;
- Ms. Marissa Noelani Toomata, First Secretary at the Permanent Mission of the Independent State of Samoa and former beneficiary of the Trust Fund; and
- Ms. Mary Kibere Namono, First Secretary at the Permanent Mission of Republic of Uganda and former beneficiary of the Trust Fund.