

# Towards Guiding Principles on Resettlement

*Side Event - 79<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN General Assembly*

Thursday October 31, 2024

10:00-11:00 (New York time) | 15:00-16:00 (Geneva time)

Virtual via Teams

Register [here](#)

Resettlement is widely known to have adverse impacts on communities, often accompanied by and resulting in a range of human rights abuses. Whenever resettlement is being considered, it is imperative to recognize that first and foremost people have the right to remain. Guided by the thematic report to the UN General Assembly of the Special Rapporteur on the right to adequate housing, “Towards Guiding Principles on Resettlement: A Review and Assessment of Current Laws, Policies, and, Practices” ([A/79/317](#)), the panel members will discuss the challenges and opportunities in implementing human rights-based resettlement policies and will reflect on the key recommendations of the report, including on elements they would like to see reflected in the Global Guiding Principles on Resettlement, currently under preparation by the Special Rapporteur.

Moderation:

**Therese Arnesen**, Human Rights Officer, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Speakers:

- **Mr. Balakrishnan Rajagopal**, UN Special Rapporteur on the right to adequate housing
- **Ms. Ramanie Kunanayagam**, Former Chair of the Inspection Panel at the World Bank
- **Mr. Ryan Schlieff**, Executive Director of the International Accountability Project
- **Mr. Jim Robinson**, Co-coordinator of the Housing, Land and Property Area of Responsibility with the Global Protection Cluster at the Norwegian Refugee Council
- **Ms. Indrani Sigamany**, Researcher and Senior International Development Consultant



Link to the report:

[A/79/317](#)

## **ABOUT THE SPEAKERS**



Mr. **Balakrishnan Rajagopal** is the UN Special Rapporteur on the right to adequate housing. He is a professor of law and development at the Department of Urban Studies and Planning at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). Last year, Mr. Rajagopal presented a report on housing affordability to the General Assembly (A/78/192). And a couple of weeks ago, he presented his report on resettlements to the General Assembly (A/79/317). Mr. Rajagopal was also member of the academic advisory committee to inform the UN Secretary-General's report on inclusive policies and programmes to address homelessness (A/78/236).



Ms. **Ramanie Kunanayagam** is a recognized global leader in sustainability, with senior management experience in both the multilateral financial system and the private sector, with expertise in accountability, environmental and social risk management, business and human rights including security and human rights. She has done extensive work on resettlement in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Centra Asia in both the public and private sectors involving large infrastructure projects in rural and urban areas. Most recently, Ramanie was the Chairperson of the World Bank Inspection Panel for five years during which she led the Panel on several investigations linked to significant resettlement issues. She also sits on the boards of several non-profits.



Mr. **Jim Robinson** is an accredited Mediator and Housing, Land and Property specialist with 14 years' experience in conflict, land, housing, peacebuilding, and education. His experience successfully combines academic rigour and analysis with clear, accessible communication and the ability to work collaboratively within complex international institutions. Jim currently serves as the Co-coordinator of the Housing, Land and Property Area of Responsibility with the Global Protection Cluster at the Norwegian Refugee Council.



Mr. **Ryan Schlieff** is a life-long activist, who has led local and global human rights campaigns specializing in economic and social rights for 25 years. He started as a local community organizer and then worked for Amnesty International's headquarters and managed global campaigns on forced evictions at the video and tech organization, WITNESS. Ryan specializes in collective campaigning methods and using technology for change. As its Executive Director, the International Accountability Project works to ensure all people lead the decisions that affect their homes, environment, and communities.



Dr. **Indrani Sigamany** is a researcher and capacity building specialist in International Development and Human Rights. Her research focuses on displacement of mobile Indigenous peoples, gender, and human rights. She earned her PhD at the Centre for Applied Human Rights, University of York Law School, England, and master's degrees from Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai, and the Institute for Social Studies, The Hague.