THE NEW GUIDING PRINCIPLES ON RESETTLEMENT: A FRAMEWORK FOR A HUMAN RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH

Hybrid side event during the 61st session of the Human Rights Council

Wednesday, 4 March 2026, 14:00-15:00 CET

Venue: Room Concordia 1, Building A, Palais des Nations, Geneva

Event link: https://unog-un-org.zoom.us/j/98359893099?pwd=gPjtWFtuU1isaM5eazhPce02AL4Wb9.1
Meeting ID: 983 5989 3099
Passcode: 470853

The Special Rapporteur on the right to adequate housing has developed over the last years Guiding Principles on Resettlement, which are now presented in his final report to the Human Rights Council (A/HRC/61/43).

The objective of the Guiding Principles is to prevent all involuntary resettlement. They affirm that resettlement should be pursued only as a last resort and that, when unavoidable, its processes and outcomes must respect, protect and fulfil the rights and dignity of affected individuals and communities.

The event brings together experts to discuss the often inadequate responses to the resettlement needs of people affected by the global crisis of eviction and displacement. The event will explore how affected persons can effectively exercise their right to remain in their homes, avoid displacement, return to their communities, or, where necessary, be resettled in a manner that respects their dignity and upholds their human rights.

Moderation

Ms. Friederike Tschampa, EU Delegation to the UN in Geneva, Head of the Human Rights section

Speakers

- **Mr. Balakrishnan Rajagopal**, UN Special Rapporteur on the right to adequate housing
- **Mr. Francis Deng**, Roving Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the UN for South Sudan, and former Representative of the UN Secretary General (RSG) on Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)
- **Ms. Alexandra Xanthaki**, UN Special Rapporteur on cultural rights
- **Mr. Vincent Chetail**, Professor of International Law, Geneva Graduate Institute
- **Ms. Roberta Cohen**, Specialist in human rights, humanitarian, and refugee issues, former senior adviser to the RSG on IDPs
- **Mr. James Gathii**, Professor of Law at Loyola University Chicago School of Law

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Mr. Rajagopal is the Special Rapporteur on the right to adequate housing. He is Professor of Law and Development at the Department of Urban Studies and Planning at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). His last report to the Human Rights Council contains his Guiding Principles on Resettlement, whose development was supported by HRC resolution 55/11 of 5 April 2024.



Mr. Deng is a diplomat, scholar, author, and South Sudan's first ambassador to the UN. From 1992 to 2004, he served as the first Representative of the UN Secretary General on Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), during which time he developed the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement. He later served as the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide.



Ms. Xanthaki is the UN Special Rapporteur on cultural rights. A leading expert on cultural rights, she has published on cultural rights of minorities and Indigenous Peoples, cultural diversity, cultural heritage, balancing cultural rights with other rights and interests, and multicultural aspects of international human rights law.



Mr. Chetail is Professor of International Law and Director of the Global Migration Centre at the Geneva Graduate Institute. An internationally recognized authority on migration, displacement and refugee protection, he regularly serves as a consultant and advisor to governments, NGOs and international organizations.



Ms. Cohen is a specialist in human rights, humanitarian, and refugee issues, and was a leading voice in advancing awareness of IDPs and the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement. Her career spans the UN, the US State Department, NGOs, and the Brookings Institution. She co-founded and co-directed the Brookings Project on Internal Displacement with Mr. Deng, and served as Senior Adviser to him and his successor, Walter Kälin.



Mr. Gathii is a professor of law and the Wing-Tat Lee Chair in International Law at Loyola University Chicago School of Law. He sits on the board of editors of the American Journal of International Law, the Journal of African Law and the Journal of International Trade Law and Policy.