



Commission on the Status of Women  
Fifty-ninth session

**RESULTS OF REGIONAL BEIJING +20 EVENTS OF THE  
UNITED NATIONS REGIONAL COMMISSIONS**

Thursday, 12 of March 2015  
3.00 pm to 6.00 pm

**SPEAKER BIOS**

**Panelists**

**Mr. Christian Friis Bach** is the current Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Europe. Mr. Friis Bach previously served as Denmark's Minister for Development Cooperation from 2011 to 2013 and as Special Adviser to the European Union Commission for the United Nations Global Sustainability Panel from 2010 to 2011. He was Honorary Professor of International Economics and Development at the University of Copenhagen from 2009 to 2014 and Associate Professor in International Economics and Development Economics at the Royal Veterinary and Agricultural University from 1999 to 2005. Mr. Friis Bach has a long history working with civil society, notably as the International Director for the DanChurchAid from 2005 to 2010 and as Chairman of the Danish Association for International Cooperation from 1997 to 2001.

**Ms. Rima Khalaf** is the current Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia. Ms. Khalaf held several ministerial positions in Jordan, including Minister of Industry and Trade from 1993 to 1995, Minister of Planning from 1995 to 1998 and Deputy Prime Minister of Planning from 1999 to 2000. Ms. Khalaf promoted economic reform in Jordan while working on promoting social development through building human capital, alleviating poverty and strengthening social safety nets. Ms. Khalaf held, among others, the position of Assistant Secretary-General and Director of the Regional Bureau for Arab States (RBAS) at the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) from 2000 to 2006. She led important regional initiatives on education, knowledge acquisition and economic growth in the Arab States. She was the founder of the pioneering Arab Human Development Report. The first Report in the series, entitled "Creating Opportunities for Future Generations," received the 2003 Prince Claus Award. The third Report, entitled "Towards Freedom in the Arab World," received the King Hussein Leadership Prize in 2005.

**Mr. Carlos Lopez** is currently the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa, since September 2012. Before this position, Mr. Lopez served as Executive Director of the United Nations

Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) in Geneva and Director of the UN System Staff College in Turin at the level of Assistant Secretary-General from 2007 to 2012. Among other positions, Mr. Lopez served as UN Assistant-Secretary-General and Director for Political Affairs in the Executive Office of the Secretary-General from 2005 to 2007.

**Ms. Shamshad Akhtar** is currently the Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, since 2013. Among other positions, she served as the United Nations Sherpa for the G20 and was formerly the Secretary-General's Senior Advisor on Economics and Finance, and Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development at the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. She led the UN-wide coordination of the post-2015 development agenda and related policy and normative work, including supporting work on the Sustainable Financing Strategy. Ms. Akhtar previously served as Governor of the Central Bank of Pakistan, and also as Vice President of the Middle East and North Africa Region of the World Bank.

**Ms. Alicia Bárcena** assumed office as the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) in July 2008. She had previously served as the Under-Secretary-General for Management at United Nations Headquarters in New York, Chef de Cabinet and Deputy Chef de Cabinet to the former Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan. Among other positions, Ms. Bárcena held the post of Deputy Executive Secretary and Director of ECLAC's Environment and Human Settlements Division. Prior to her time at ECLAC, Ms. Bárcena served as Co-ordinator of the Latin American and Caribbean Sustainable Development Programme of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and was responsible for the Environmental Citizenship Project at the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).