

# Nelson Mandela Leadership Dialogue: Young Leaders Driving Social Change

**Thursday, July 18, 2024 | 14.00 – 15.30 CEST**



Welcome – **Jafar Javan.**

Introductory Remarks – **Felipe Paullier.**

Moderators – **Simona Costanzo Sow, Penny Parenzee.**

Panelists – **Ronelle King, Lina Abou-Habib, Rama Salla Dieng, Faeenza Lok.**



# Jafar Javan

## Director, UNSSC

Jafar Javan was appointed by the former UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon to lead the UN System Staff College in 2012 and reappointed to the position by the Secretary General António Guterres in 2018. He has worked in the UN system for over 35 years in a variety of positions and in various regions.

Prior to joining the Staff College, Jafar was the Director of Policy for United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) regional centre for Europe and the CIS based in Bratislava, Slovakia. He earned his BA and MA from the American University in Washington DC and a PhD in Psychology from the North Carolina State University in the U.S.



# Felipe Paullier

## Assistant Secretary-General for Youth Affairs, UN Youth Office

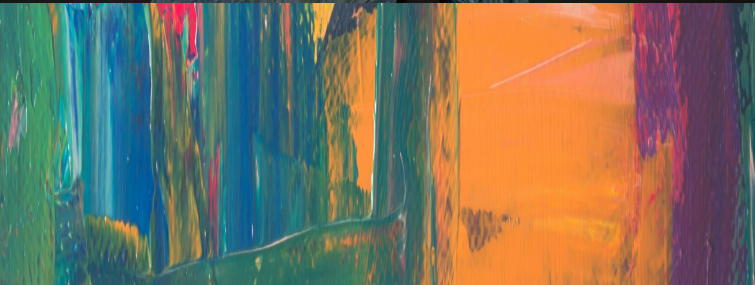
Dr. Felipe Paullier of Uruguay assumed his mandate as the first-ever Assistant Secretary-General for Youth Affairs in December 2023 at the age of 32. He is the youngest senior appointment in the history of the United Nations, and the youngest serving member of the Secretary-General's senior management group.

As head of the United Nations Youth Office, Mr. Paullier leads systemwide collaboration, coordination and accountability on youth affairs, overseeing the UN's efforts to strengthen meaningful youth engagement in the areas of sustainable development, human rights, and peace and security.

Prior to taking up his post, Mr. Paullier was the Director General of the National Youth Institute of Uruguay beginning in 2020, where he led efforts to engage young people in policy-making processes at national level. He previously served in various political management positions at the national level.

Throughout his career, he has been a foremost advocate for young people's rights and the inclusion of young people in decision-making spaces. Mr. Paullier is a Medical Doctor by training, specialized in pediatrics. He holds a Medical Doctor degree from the Universidad de la Republica Oriental de Uruguay and a Master in Business Administration (MBA) from Universidad Católica de Uruguay.





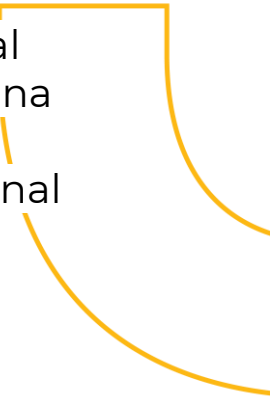
# Simona Costanzo Sow

## Chief, Academic Partnerships, UNSSC

As Chief, Academic Partnerships at UNSSC, Simona oversees relations with academic partners and creates spaces for a science-policy-society dialogue to develop capabilities to address today's complex challenges holistically. Previously, Simona designed and implemented learning and training formats for senior leaders in the UN System and beyond on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, related leadership approaches, systems thinking and policy coherence.

Simona has extensive experience in policy advocacy, partnership building and networking in the inter-governmental sphere, as well as in civil society, academia and the private sector. She has a track record in capacity-building, non-formal education, learning and training, as well as community empowerment and stakeholder engagement.

She previously worked with UNV and UNESCO, and led CCIVS, a global civil society organization at UNESCO HQ in Paris, for eight years. Simona holds a PhD in Geography from the Technical University of Munich, focusing on international migration, as well as a Master's in International Cultural and Business Studies. She speaks five languages fluently and feels at home around the world, with roots in Italy and Germany and branches in Senegal. Simona is the mother of two amazing young women.



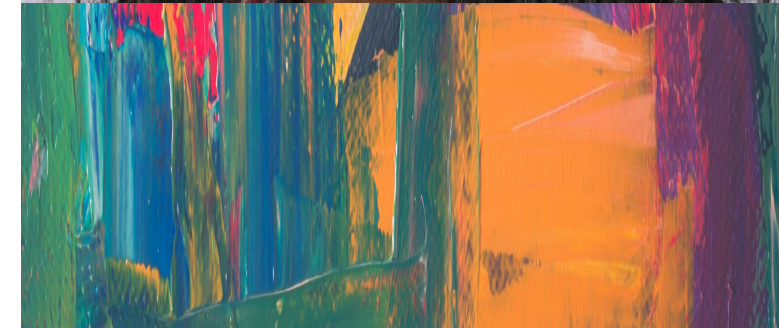
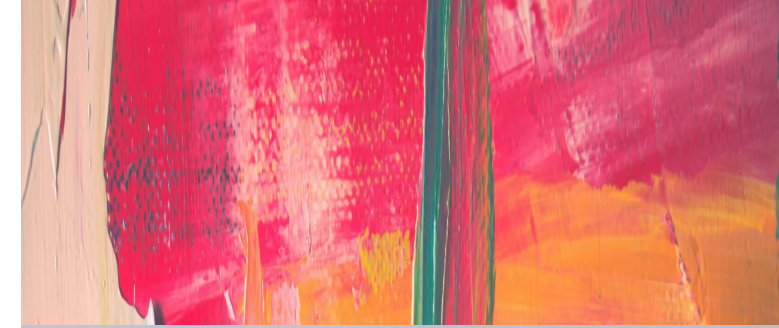
# Penny Parenzee

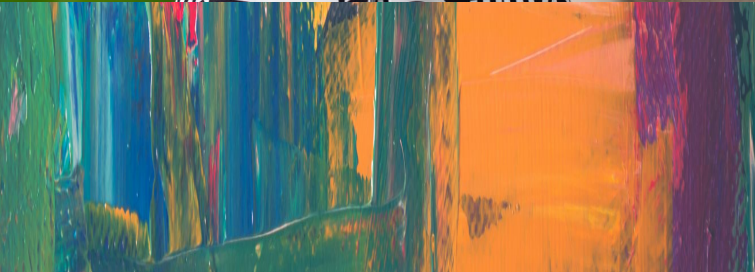
## Executive Education Senior Programme Manager, UCT

Penny Parenzee is the Senior Programme Manager at the Nelson Mandela School of Public Governance at UCT. She has a background in Law and Social Policy and has been involved in monitoring the implementation of various pieces of legislation and examined policy processes related to land, violence against women, and sexual and reproductive health and rights in South Africa, SADC and East Africa.

She has managed EU-funded programs, conducted research, lead M&E initiatives, undertaken budget monitoring and expenditure tracking as well as provided technical support to institutions seeking to strengthen their research and training efforts.

Ms Parenzee is a recipient of the prestigious Fulbright Scholarship. Over a two-year period, she completed two master's programmes at Bryn Mawr College in Philadelphia, USA. She holds a Master's degree in Law and Social Policy and a Master's degree in Clinical Social Work.





# Ronelle King

## Gender Justice Activist

Ronelle King is an Afro-Barbadian Multi-Award-Winning Gender Rights Activist.

In 2016, Ronelle created the hashtag #lifeinleggings and started a viral social media campaign that empowered thousands of Caribbean women who were survivors of abuse to share their experiences, find solidarity, and raise awareness about the prevalence of gender-based violence in the region. The hashtag led to the creation of Life in Leggings: Caribbean Alliance Against Gender-Based Violence, a youth-led organization that aims to eradicate rape culture and regional occurrences of violence against women and girls.

Ronelle has since conceptualized and executed several successful initiatives. Notably, the Reclaim Our Streets: Women's Solidarity March, the region's first simultaneous and largest civil society-led grassroots march against street harassment and other forms of gender-based violence that make public spaces unsafe for women and girls. The event occurred in seven countries, with hundreds of women and girls marching.

She also founded the award-winning Pink Parliament mentorship program, which works with young women and girls to increase women's participation in politics and decision-making spaces, as well as Redefining Masculinities, a gender-transformative initiative that works with men and boys to address patriarchal masculinities and end male-perpetrated violence against women and girls.

Ronelle currently serves as a UN Young Leader for the SDGs within the UN Youth Affairs Office. Most recently, Ronelle graduated from the Obama Foundation Scholar 2023-24 cohort. While at Columbia University, she developed a program on gender and climate to explore the intersection between the environmental crisis and gender-based violence.

# Lina Abou-Habib

Director, Asfari Institute for Civil Society and Citizenship, American University of Beirut

Lina Abou-Habib is the Director of the Asfari Institute for Civil Society and Citizenship at the American University of Beirut. She is also the co-gender director of the AUB MEPI-TLS program and teaches undergraduate and graduate gender courses.

Abou-Habib is a feminist activist and researcher with an extensive career working with local, regional, and international institutions on gender mainstreaming and feminist activism. She has designed, implemented, and led multi-year gender equality initiatives including training, research, and community actions.

She currently serves on the boards of the Urgent Action Fund and the Doria Feminist Fund and is a member of the editorial committee of the Gender and Development Journal. She served as Secretary and Chair of the Board of AWID and board member at Haven for Artists.







# Rama Salla Dieng

Senior Lecturer (Associate Professor) in African Studies and International Development, University of Edinburgh

Dr Rama Salla Dieng is a researcher, academic and writer interested in analysing economic and social transformation in Africa.

She is an Adjunct Senior Lecturer at the Nelson Mandela School of Public Governance at the University of Cape Town, a Lecturer in African Studies and International Development at the University of Edinburgh, and Associate Researcher of IFAN/LARTES, University Cheikh Anta Diop, Senegal. Before the University of Edinburgh, Rama worked for five years in Policy Research at the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP), United Nations Economic Commission for Africa and before that she worked at the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Mauritius.

Rama also taught at the SOAS Department of Development Studies and Centre of African Studies and was a Mo Ibrahim Foundation Governance and Development in Africa PhD Scholar. Rama serves on the boards of the Development Studies Association – UK (DSA-UK) and the African Studies Association – UK (ASA-UK).

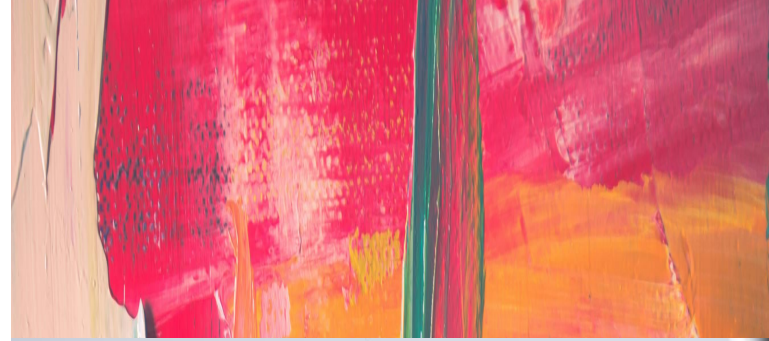
# Faeeza Lok

## Social Entrepreneur and Activist

Faeeza Lok is a social entrepreneur and a fierce advocate for equality. Faeeza, who founded the Voice of the People movement, has spearheaded a powerful grassroots initiative that aims to solve hyper-local problems using design thinking strategies. She is committed to ending period poverty and wrote the Menstrual Equity Policy in her role as a founding member of RISE Mzansi.

Drawing on her extensive experience as a researcher at the Presidency, Faeeza is a leading expert in policy and social innovation and is deeply committed to addressing inequalities in her community. Based in Johannesburg, she works tirelessly to promote positive change and advance the cause of equality for all.

With a passion for empowering individuals and building bridges across diverse communities, she currently serves as the Youth League Chairperson of the Hong Kong Macau Business Association. In this role, Faeeza bridges cultures between South Africa and China, promoting business trade and cultural exchange.



# UNSSC's Organising Team



**Meher Joseph**  
Associate Learning Officer



**Alessandra Rangel Castillo**  
Associate Fellow, Academic  
Partnerships



**Thanks for  
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