



UN2020 Information, Organization, and Strategy Meeting: Responding to Multilateralism in Crisis

Executive Summary

Monday, October 15, 2018, 9:30am – 5:00pm EST
Church Center, 2nd Floor, 777 United Nations Plaza, 44th Street and 1st Avenue

Hosted by:

World Federalist Movement-Institute for Global Policy, the Stimson Center, CIVICUS, The Workable World Trust, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung New York, United Nations Association-UK

Meeting objectives

The year 2020 will mark the 75th anniversary of the United Nations. As this milestone approaches, there is a widely shared sense that the sustainability of a rules-based international order cannot be taken for granted, that multilateralism is under increasing threat. During the last two years, the civil society-led initiative UN2020 has facilitated discussions with many member states, secretariat officials and civil society on the need for a successful, well prepared 75th anniversary commemoration for the UN in 2020, one that includes a meaningful process of stocktaking, review and strengthening of the organization. UN2020 aims to provide a platform to promote cooperation and dialogue among civil society groups, governments and the UN in support of a people-centered multilateralism.

At a meeting on October 15, 2018, some 50 civil society representatives representing diverse constituencies, about half of them from outside the US, gathered in New York to develop strategies and proposals for global outreach, coalition-building, and advocacy in support of UN2020 objectives. Participants consulted about past and current UN reform initiatives, shared global campaigns and regional perspectives, identified synergies with the 2030 Agenda and Paris Agreement, and discussed prospects for a 75th UN Anniversary Leaders Summit with H.E. Vladimir Drobnyak (Croatia). The meeting resulted in the key recommendations outlined below to harness civil society participation in an intergovernmental process leading to an accelerated renewal, innovation and reform of the UN in 2020 and beyond.



Summary of proposals and actionable recommendations:

In brief, two approaches were repeatedly expressed during the meeting addressing the crisis of multilateralism:

- Some participants took the view that the solution to the crisis of multilateralism requires a conversation beyond the UN, to address fundamental questions about the current global political constellation, such as the concentration of power, the unequal distribution of wealth, and extraterritorial accountability.
- Other participants focused more on the UN intergovernmental process, suggesting concrete steps to develop formal modalities that will ensure a successful 2020 UN Summit that will initiate effective measures to strengthen the organization.

Concrete recommendations:

- The 75th UN anniversary should be an opportunity to develop synergies and linkages between the different ongoing UN processes ranging from UN reform to climate justice, peace, human rights and sustainable development.
- Preparations for the proposed 2020 UN Summit should be mandated by the General Assembly. The President of the General Assembly should appoint co-facilitators to prepare a modalities resolution that includes the adoption of a political declaration marking the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the UN.
- The preparatory process should include multi-stakeholder modalities.
- The participation of communities of practice around core issue areas of concern in 2020 is essential.
- A panel of eminent persons and other stakeholders should be appointed by the Secretary-General or initiated by civil society in an effort to stimulate governments and ministers to engage in the process.
- Map out the different UN reform processes and identify key CSO networks to help develop ambitious reform proposals for consideration at the 2020 UN Summit.
- To raise awareness about the crisis of multilateralism and the opportunity that the 75th anniversary is offering, it is important to facilitate dialogues worldwide by organizing webinars and events at national and regional levels in cooperation with the Regional Commissions.
- At the core of the UN reform, there should be a focus on strengthening the human rights framework.
- Women play a crucial role in decision-making processes, and there should be greater effort to get women into decision-making positions.
- A civil society focal point should be established within the UN secretariat to strengthen modalities for civil society participation at the UN.
- Conduct a cross-cutting global survey to hear the voices of the people.

In conclusion: the meeting fostered a diverse dialogue and contributed to raising awareness to a series of urgent issues and processes, but most importantly, emphasized the important opportunity that the 75th anniversary of the founding of the UN offers for sustained engagement.

Reflections & lessons learned from past UN reform initiatives
Key Highlights

- Urge the President of the General Assembly to initiate a resolution to define the modalities of a 2020 Summit that includes a call for the adoption of a political declaration.
- The 75th anniversary modalities resolution should include the NGO participation rights defined in the HLPF resolution A/RES/67/290, which are among the most advanced set of rights in the UN system. The review of the HLPF during 2019-2020 will also offer an opportunity to reform the UN system into a true accountability mechanism.
- The 75th anniversary summit should accelerate and complement the SG's three reform tracks on peace and security, UN development system and UN management.
- The 75th anniversary summit should aim to generate synergies among the plus-five processes, including the SDGs and Paris Agreement, as well as other major UN review processes in 2020.¹
- Develop a smart coalition of small and middle powers in partnership with diverse coalition stakeholders to promote ambitious UN reforms that do not require great power support.
- Support multi-stakeholder panels appointed by the Secretary-General or initiated by civil society to test the waters with political leaders and provide an avenue for civil society engagement with member states.
- Following the example of action taken after the 50th anniversary, after the UN2020 Summit, all the main committees of the General Assembly should pass stocktaking resolutions that offer prospective recommendations for action.
- In addition to the PGA, key actors to engage include the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the GA (AHWG), the Friends Group on the Future of the United Nations, and the UN 75 Group (if one is established).

¹UN anniversaries and reviews in 2020 include renewed INDCs mandated by Paris Agreement, second 4-year cycle of HLPF/SDGs, Beijing+25, 20th anniversary of UNSCR 1325, Copenhagen+25, 2020 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference, Peacebuilding Commission 15 year review, UN Human Rights Treaty Body review, Post-2020 Biodiversity Framework Conference, among others.

Transforming the UN in the 21st Century Key Highlights

Regional Perspective

- In order to influence the processes towards 2020, it is critical that women are included in the decision-making processes at UN offices in the MENA region. There are specific humanitarian, political, and economic needs of women in the Arab region, especially for internally displaced women and women in post-conflict zones, that highlight the importance of Security Council Resolution 1325.
- Moving towards 2020, it is of key importance that the African Union become a champion for changing the global governance system. For Africa, UN legitimacy comes from the UN strengthening and promoting African unity. The African Agenda 2063 promotes a common agenda for Africa developed by governments and civil society members. At the global level, including Africa in the Security Council is a key priority and the UNDS should create a people-centered multilateralism by supporting regional and national participation of civil society.
- In February 2019, the PyeongChang Global Peace Forum (PGPF) will take place on the first anniversary of the Winter Olympics to celebrate one year of the peace process in Korea. Peace and the SDGs must be connected through global governance, disarmament, conflict transformation, human rights, gender and environment.

Global Campaigns

The Global Challenges Foundation seeks to address and facilitate solutions for the crisis of multilateralism and global catastrophic risks that humanity is facing. The Working Group 'Getting from Here to There' held a strategy session on 14 October to prepare for the launch of a global governance reform campaign taking place at the Paris Peace Forum, 11-13 November. The campaign, subsequently branded 'Together First', seeks to mobilize civil society by creating (1) shared space for stakeholders in the form of an online portal, (2) twin-track approach that looks at the short-term and the long-term, supported by multi-stakeholder panels which will help to identify key 'next steps' and longer-term objectives in key areas of risk, (3) support strategic approaches, (4) provide opportunities for better collaboration, and (5) build trust through shared values.

- Women's empowerment and the SDGs will be related to the reform of the UN and the momentum towards 2020. Challenges experienced by the feminist movement include the fragmentation of issues and diverse processes, including the UN process, the global governance process, and UN language which often times redefines the women's agenda. There is a need to develop a strategy to address all different dimensions of power and spaces to build collaboration and synergy towards 2020.
- The MGos HLPF Coordination Mechanism is an alliance of different stakeholders, that also brings on board those who have lost faith in the UN. This is a value in itself. The HLPF has so far failed to uphold the SDGs agenda because it does not hold governments accountable.
- The 2030 Agenda, with all its components (Habitat, Paris, DRR) linking the 3 dimensions of sustainable development, should be interpreted as a human rights issue. Reform aspirations must be undertaken through a human rights lens, by strengthening the human rights framework.
- Prior to the consideration of any UN reform processes, the focus should be on the political economy. The concentration of wealth, corporate capture of governments, North-South tensions, tax havens, colonial practices in trade policy, and major structural inequalities should be at the core of UN reform.

Prospects for a 75th UN Anniversary Leaders Summit
Key Highlights

- To maintain multilateralism, UN reform is crucial. Reforms can be initiated by the Secretary-General, such as by his three reform packages; by the General Assembly, such as the revitalization of the GA by adopting a resolution; and the reform of the Security Council, which requires a change of the UN Charter. A major obstacle to reform is the practice of adopting resolutions by consensus.
- There were three shortcomings to the last resolution adopted by the UNGA from the Ad Hoc Working Group on GA Revitalization, A/RES/72/313. First, any reference to the 75th anniversary of the UN was dropped from this resolution, due to the lack of consensus. Second, the resolution was unsuccessful in aligning the 2030 Agenda with the GA Agenda. Lastly, a code of conduct for election campaigns for the President of the General Assembly could not be agreed upon and will be discussed again next year.
- Regarding the upcoming 75th anniversary, the GA should give ample time for member states to negotiate the political declaration by adopting the modalities resolution during this session of the GA. The Ad Hoc Working Group on the revitalization of the GA process will continue; however, in consideration of the short time until 2020, negotiations for a separate modalities resolution for the 75th anniversary should begin now.
- Ambassador Dobnjak recommended the following agenda items for the 75th anniversary session. First, the GA Agenda must be streamlined and modernized to match emerging issues. Second, in light of Article 109, consideration of a general conference to amend the UN Charter should be discussed to address the size of the Security Council, the status of the Trusteeship Council, and the enemy state clause. Lastly, new global threats and realities should be addressed, such as climate change, technological revolution, and disarmament.

Strategies & Tactics: Making 2020 Count
Key Highlights

- There are many synergies between the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement. Climate change is considered a long-term problem, yet this is an immediate existential threat. Its scope is cross-cutting. In this sense, the SDGs require joint thinking. No SDG can be achieved at the expense of another due to the interconnectedness of the goals. Further, the SDGs are universal and must be realized in all the countries.
- If the UN is not properly funded there won't be any reform. Three countries fund 45% of the UN development system, with many funds earmarked for country-specific projects. While the UN has mandatory funding for peacekeeping operations and humanitarian agendas, there are not sufficient non-earmarked funds allocated for development. Strict earmarking should be abolished.
- Ambition by member states rarely comes about without a push from civil society. The impact of NGOs in mobilizing public support has been demonstrated by previous initiatives such as the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, the Coalition for the ICC, and 1 for 7 Billion Campaign. To achieve UN reform, it is important that global aspirations are translated into global messages.
- The UN2020 initiative needs to move beyond the New York bubble by reaching out to multiple coalitions working on UN reform, adopting a collegiate approach that supports everyone working on their own part of the 'puzzle', and conducting awareness campaigns that make the links between daily life and the UN agenda.
- The global political landscape has changed dramatically. Leadership in global governance is shifting away from the US and Western hegemony while China, India and Brazil are rising. International organizations have been paralyzed by this new political landscape of new powers, new actors, and new venues, such as G20. The ability of institutions to adapt to changes in global governance depends on the ability of governments to incorporate non-state actors.
- The collective vision which civil society hopes to achieve towards 2020 requires the cooperation of all countries. There should be an effort to show the value of the UN to people and the impact of international cooperation on everyday life.

Annex: Meeting Agenda

Time	Agenda item
9.30 - 9.45	Welcome: Volker Lehmann, FES New York
9.45 - 10.45	Reflections and lessons learned from past UN reform initiatives Moderator: Jeffery Huffines, CIVICUS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50th UN Anniversary (1995) - William Pace, WFM-IGP • 2003-2005 (HLP, In Larger Freedom) - Richard Ponzio, Stimson Center • 2012-2015 (Post 2015 & OWG SDGs) - Orsolya Bartha, Senior Advisor, International Disability Alliance • SG's 3 reform tracks - Sarah Dayringer, Global Policy Forum • Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the UN - Fergus Watt, UN 2020
11.15 - 11.30	Short break
11.30 - 12.45	Roundtable Discussion: Transforming the UN in the 21st Century - Global Campaigns & Regional Perspectives Moderator: Sara Burke, FES New York <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HLPF Major Groups & Other Stakeholders - Emilia Reyes, Equidad de Género • Feminist Movement Engagement - Yiping Cai, DAWN • African Agenda 2063 - Stephen Chacha, African Philanthropic Foundation • SDGs & Women Empowerment, MENA region - Shaima Aly, Kenana Association for Sustainable Development and Women Empowerment, Cairo • PyeongChang Appeal for Peace Initiative - Anselmo Lee, ADA • Global Challenges Foundation Getting from Here to There Working Group - Natalie Samarasinghe, UNA-UK and Fredrik Karlsson, Global Challenges Foundation
13.00 - 14.00	Lunch Discussion with H.E. Vladimir Drobnyak (Croatia): Prospects for a 75th UN Anniversary Leaders Summit Moderator: William Pace, WFM-IGP <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Taking stock: the state of the UN System 2. Strengthening Multilateralism: Renewal, Innovation, Reform 3. Planned UN Agenda in 2020 (SDGs, Paris Agreement & Beijing+25) 4. Progress Update on the SG's UN Reform Packages

14.00 - 15.30	<p>Strategies & Tactics: Making 2020 Count Moderator: Stephen Chacha, African Philanthropic Foundation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The UN & Global Governance - Keith Porter, Stanley Foundation • Synergies & Opportunities with 2030 Agenda & Paris Agreement - Barbara Adams, Global Policy Forum • Campaigning and Mobilization to engage UN and Member States - Ben Donaldson, UNA-UK
15.30 - 15.45	Short break
15.45 - 17.00	<p>On the road to UN 2020 Summit and Beyond: Strategies/Tactics Moderator: Emilia Reyes, Equidad de Género</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short, Medium, Long-Term Strategy for Reform (2018-2030), including vehicles for initiating an official intergovernmental process • Stocktaking, Review & Innovation (intergovernmental mandate) • Mobilize Diverse Constituencies • Identify 2020 Summit Themes, Modalities and Outcomes
17.00 - 17:30	<p>Wrap Up Moderator: Fergus Watt, UN2020 Coordinator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions, risks, concerns • Next steps • Recap and way forward - Orsolya Bartha, Senior Advisor, International Disability Alliance

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