



Press Release

Global Futures Forum Calls for UN Reforms to Address Emerging 21st Century Challenges

New York, March 28, 2023: Civil Society Organizations worldwide have called for a strengthened United Nations to address emerging 21st century challenges and opportunities. At the Global Futures Forum from March 20-21—which reached over 2,000 registered participants from across the globe both online and in person in New York—CSOs deliberated on some three dozen reform proposals and engaged key diplomats, UN officials, and others to better understand how the suggestions could be implemented. A key to success will be the meaningful engagement of Civil Society in the preparation of the upcoming Sustainable Development Goals Summit and the 2024 Summit of the Future.

“In spite of the diversity of backgrounds and interests among participants there is a common denominator that unites us,” opened Maria Fernanda Espinosa, Co-Chair of the Coalition for the UN We Need and Executive Director, Global Women Leaders: Voices for Change and Inclusion. “We want the UN, the multilateral architecture to deliver more and better and to respond to the global governance challenges of today’s world.”

The SDG Summit, scheduled for September 2023, is this year's top UN priority, said the UN’s Under Secretary-General for Policy, Guy Ryder, and Summit Co-Facilitators, Ambassador Fergal Mythen of Ireland and Ambassador Alya Al Thani of Qatar. Citing the vital contributions of Civil Society in the adoption of the SDGs in 2015, Ryder emphasized the need for the preparatory processes of the Summit of the Future (SOTF) to include strong multi stakeholder engagement.

The Global Futures Forum featured reports from recent CSO regional forums, a deep dive into the gender dimension of the proposals, and seven thematic consultation tracks where participants discussed numerous proposals for the reform and reimagining of the institutions and practice of global governance. These seven thematic tracks addressed issues such as the global economic and financial architecture, environmental governance, building inclusive, just and peaceful societies, adopting a Global Digital Compact, peace and security, human rights, and promoting meaningful engagement in governance, especially for youth, women and vulnerable populations in the Global South.

These thematic discussions represent contributions to an interim "People's Pact for the Future," which will be an evolving vehicle for feeding diverse civil society ideas and insights into official discussions on the SOTF outcome document.

At the concluding session, German Ambassador Antja Leendertse provided delegates with additional details on SOTF preparations, including the upcoming discussions on the scope of the SOTF and the imminent report of the High-level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism appointed by the Secretary-General last year.

On behalf of the organizers, Ms Espinosa thanked delegates for their commitment. “This movement for a better UN is real, is serious and is much needed. The time is now. We have our homework ahead of us.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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