

September, 2023

Open letter:

To Heads of State and Government, United Nations Member States:

### **Strengthening the United Nations: A Once in a Generation Opportunity**

Excellencies,

As former Presidents, Prime Ministers, senior UN officials and ministers of government we believe that the institutional framework of global governance with the United Nations at its core needs to be revitalised, and therefore call for strong political leadership to achieve a successful 2024 Summit of the Future.

In September 2020, many of us signed a similar call for a renewed multilateral system. Later that year, the UN75 Political Declaration mandated the Secretary-General to provide recommendations “to advance our common agenda and to respond to current and future challenges.” The ensuing Secretary-General’s *Our Common Agenda* report and subsequent General Assembly decisions recognize that the Summit of the Future (SOTF) in 2024 is a unique opportunity to accelerate the implementation of the outcomes agreed at the SDG Summit. The proposed 2025 World Social Summit will serve as further encouragement to strengthen multilateralism.

With only one year to go, governments must accelerate preparations for next year's Summit, which aims to agree on a package of ambitious and necessary reforms – the proposed “Pact for the Future” and related instruments, including a Declaration on Future Generations, a Global Digital Compact, the New Agenda for Peace and a revitalized and stronger UN gender architecture to better respond to the serious setbacks for the rights of women and girls the world over.

People everywhere recognize the challenges and shortcomings of today's international decision-making for collective action. Political leadership is required in the months ahead to centre the needs of humanity and our shared planet over internecine rivalries among Member States, recognizing that the Summit of the Future represents a vitally important, generational opportunity to deliver a balanced, yet far-reaching package of global governance transformations.

We therefore recommend that:

- The needs humanity faces today and in the future and the corresponding global governance structures required to meet those needs serve as the central point of deliberations, looking beyond short-term political objectives.

- The Scope of the Summit of the Future should allow for a strengthening (not backsliding or weakening) of existing international legal commitments and consultative processes.
- To ensure that the full potential of the Summit is widely socialized and better understood, civil society, the media and other stakeholders need to become more integrally involved in its preparations.
- The need for greater progress and institutional capacities to fulfil Agenda 2030 goals represent the foundation of SOTF preparations.

With only one year to prepare for a meaningful Summit, governments must remain strongly engaged, and scale up their commitments and collaboration, taking a long-term perspective to bring about a world that is more equitable, inclusive, secure and sustainable.

Sincerely,