



PEOPLE'S PACT FOR THE FUTURE

COALITION
UN
for the
WE NEED

The People's Pact for the Future represents the culmination of nearly two years of work to articulate a set of recommendations, based on numerous civil society-led online, regional, and global consultations, to determine what participants agree is necessary for the United Nations to meet the needs of humanity and the planet today. It was widely agreed that governments need civil society to fully leverage the Summit of the Future to realize the future we want and the UN we need for present and future generations.

This Pact builds on the [Interim People's Pact](#) which was developed in March of 2023. The content from that process was augmented by additional reports as well as online and in-person consultations, including the 9-10 May 2024 United Nations Civil Society Conference. The dozens of co-authors representing communities and constituencies from around the world ensured the People's Pact reflects the highest aspirations from Civil Society for the intergovernmental outcome document.

Recognizing that civil society organizations are independent, we sought to objectively prioritize the common good first, rather than considerations of political expediency, vested interests, or short-term demands. The result is a forward-leaning set of bold proposals that will require political courage to take forward but, if implemented, will benefit all. It is our hope that this People's Pact will open opportunities for the kind of visionary leadership required in these challenging times.

We resolve always to strive to build a better, more fair and just future for all people, including the millions who have been denied the chance to lead decent, dignified, and rewarding lives and to achieve their full human potential. Without nature, there is no future. Without peace, there is no life. Without democracy, there is no freedom. Without human rights, there is no justice. We will continue our efforts to end poverty and save the planet, most urgently through the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals and the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement.

We will do this because we know that building a better world is possible, and that its foundation must be laid at the Summit of the Future.

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Chapeau

“We the peoples of the United Nations, determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war... and to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, and to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained, and to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom.”

— United Nations Charter, Preamble

In 1945, the nations of the world recognized the need for international collective action. Humanity was reeling from a catastrophic war, and the time was ripe to take a meaningful step towards a new system to better ensure global peace and security. Today, the polycrisis we face demands that we not merely respond, but proactively refine the international order to secure humanity’s well-being and avert more catastrophic events on the horizon.

Humanity finds itself at a crossroads of intersecting risks, none of which are or were inevitable. The scourge of war, while never gone, has deepened in recent years, with the potential to escalate further. Planetary boundaries are being breached with devastating consequences, including the destabilization of the life-supporting Earth system. Hundreds of millions have died from avoidable poverty-related causes. Prejudices of gender, race, disability, class and countless others have oppressed multitudes and fractured societies. Questions of cyber warfare, disinformation, and the unforeseen impacts of emerging technologies and artificial intelligence extend existential threats to the digital sphere. Suffering has been tolerated and aspirational words have, time and again, been left unmatched by commensurate deeds leading to the need to save the legitimacy of multilateralism itself. All these challenges are mutually reinforcing, each holding the potential of exacerbating others. So long as meaningful action is not taken, such crises will only deepen.

The time to act is now. Numerous potential solutions, commonly recognized as practical and beneficial, are at hand. In recent years, a multitude of global processes, with Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals at the forefront, have endeavored to address these pressing realities. They have sought to establish societies where every individual lives with dignity, has their rights met, and assumes responsibility as stewards of the

environment. However, the pervasive lack of trust between nations, the short term nature of governance, and a shortage of courage to implement innovative ideas for achieving a fair and equitable future, impede significant progress. This moment in history therefore demands concerted effort to advance institutional shifts and reforms at various levels of depth and scale of change—along with building the confidence and trust necessary to undertake coordinated action in our interdependent world.

This People's Pact for the Future serves as a call to world leaders and decision makers to take the necessary steps both to protect current and succeeding generations from the interconnected threats now and in the future, and to create an enabling environment for diverse, flourishing societies. This document presents concrete recommendations on the five thematic chapters of the *Pact for the Future*, as a contribution toward meaningful institutional reform and the construction of a more effective UN system. We do so knowing that delivering on promises made and securing the wellbeing of people and planet is the surest way to earn the trust of the world's people and bolster the legitimacy of international institutions. Given the gravity of the current international situation, transforming and strengthening our global institutions is no longer a mere hope, it is a pragmatic necessity for the survival of our societies.

At the Summit of the Future, Member States must first *recommit to the universal aspirations* enshrined in the UN Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and other international instruments and agreements, including the outcomes of relevant major UN conferences and summits. Effective and accountable multilateralism cannot be attained without centering principles such as solidarity, integrity, justice, inclusivity, equity, cooperation, trustworthiness, and regard for the human spirit and the natural world. At the most basic level, this is a mere reaffirmation of what birthed this institution in the first place.

Second, the international community must *strengthen and reform existing institutions*. Politically feasible and globally beneficial reforms do exist, and enacting them would be a means of both building trust and improving the effectiveness and relevance of the system we have. This is a matter of courageous leadership and we look forward to learning who will take the bold steps necessary.

Third, the root causes and underlying drivers of persistent challenges must be addressed head-on. The assumptions upon which the international order is based are showing their flaws. New approaches requiring a more

radical unlearning and rethinking of current conceptions can no longer be delayed for when ‘the time is right’. The crisis is too deep to wait. Conceptions of success and progress, for example, will need to be redefined. Accountability, transparency, inclusivity, and representation will need to be prioritized above expediency and advantage.

To facilitate movement along these lines, we call for the tangible shifts needed in the global order. Among these, the international community must shift models of governance:

- from defending state-centrism, to rebalancing decision-making to the local, national, regional, and global levels, under the principle of subsidiarity. In a world of climate change, pandemics, global supply chains, and digital technology, all nations rely upon one another. What is needed now is a model of true solidarity in action for the entire human family.
- from pursuing material and economic acquisition, to establishing sufficiency for all. Policy and behavior cannot continue to value profit maximization to the detriment of planetary boundaries and human rights.
- from confining care and concern to limited constituencies alone, to fostering loyalty to the well-being of all humanity, in full appreciation of the richness of diverse backgrounds and identities. At the heart of countless challenges of collective action and organization in the world today are questions of identity and belonging. The simple assertion that “we” must be fully taken care of before “they” are given consideration ensures a world incapable of realizing the universal good of the whole.
- from reinforcing structures that continue to perpetuate gender-based inequalities, discrimination, and violence, to understanding that we are yet to witness a truly gender-equal society. Unbalanced gender dynamics have a deleterious effect on all dimensions of human existence for all people.
- from treating youth and rising generations as challenges to be solved to recognizing their tremendous potential and ensuring their meaningful participation in the processes of decision making.
- from seeking security solely through deterrence and the avoidance of war, to promoting an affirmative conception of peace. Establishing lasting security is not simply a matter of signing treaties and protocols; it is a complex task requiring a new level of commitment to resolving

a range of social and economic issues that are often the root causes of the conflicts we see.

- from rewarding the short-term extraction of resources, to incentivizing long-term stewardship and responsibility. If time horizons are extended far enough, the interest of the individual, the state, and the planet are aligned. History is replete with examples of redefining national interest on the basis of the need for greater collective action and shared responsibility, including in the very establishment of the UN. These examples must be repeated.
- from organizing global systems around assumptions of self-interest, hostility, and zero-sum competition, to carrying out the shared responsibility for jointly managing a planet. Our goal is to create enabling conditions for peaceful and prosperous societies, based on the equal dignity and rights of all human beings, in harmony with nature.

Our increasingly interdependent and interconnected world demands that human experience, aspirations, and values be the basis for decision-making. This, in turn, requires the full and meaningful input of all segments of society, representing different knowledge bases, experience, and cultural values. The vast potential and contributions of women and girls, to take just one example among many, has long been not only ignored but all too often actively repressed. A key role of governance in rectifying such ills is its power to convene and learn, drawing on diverse stakeholders with diverse vision and experience.

The drafting of the United Nations Charter, eighty years ago, was a bold act of imagination that has propelled humanity since. Yet the apex of global arrangements is still to come. Now is the time for a new act of courage – as foreseen in the Charter itself – which can galvanize all of humanity. What future do the nations of the world aspire to in 50 or 100 years? The Summit of the Future represents a critical opportunity to begin this exploration and leave a legacy for future generations to honor and build on. To this end, a successful Summit would:

- boost political will and courage around global agendas and established priorities, as a means to facilitate coherence and action at all levels;
- build greater trust in the evolving multilateral system, grounded in shared values through an inclusive and rights-based process;

- set in motion a rigorous and systematic process of learning and the generation of knowledge about construction of a vibrant, prospering, sustainable, and peaceful global civilization;
- recognize that all segments of society, together with Member States, have the capacity to play a significant role in the advancement of humanity and our planet;
- *contribute to the evolution of the UN system and its relationship to the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization, building on 80 years of lessons learned, to more effectively serve the whole of humanity, for present and future generations; and*
- *establish a clear roadmap for a time-bound comprehensive reform process of the United Nations, as envisioned in Article 109 of the Charter itself.*

Brief Summary of the Recommendations in the People's Pact Chapters

Chapter 1: Sustainable Development and Financing for Development

- I. Establish a biennial UN G20+ Summit on the Global Economy.
- II. Adopt higher-quality, action-oriented development processes through the integration of Sustainable Development principles, evidence-based decision-making, and rethinking of development measurement.
- III. Improve global liquidity management and introduce innovative forms of global taxation and financial re-allocation to finance the SDGs.
- IV. Establish an International Court for the Environment.

Chapter 2: International Peace and Security

- I. Advance efforts to comprehensively reform the UN Security Council and boost the role of the UN General Assembly as a mechanism for the peaceful resolution of conflicts.
- II. Strengthen existing judicial institutions, such as the International Court of Justice (ICJ), through the expansion of its jurisdiction and Member-State accession.
- III. Enhance efforts to reduce nuclear risk and promote disarmament by employing international instruments, such as the UN charter, to augment non-proliferation and allocate funds for peaceful means.
- IV. Lay the groundwork to equip the UN with a dedicated deployment capacity to help prevent and quell armed conflict.

Chapter 3: Science, Technology and Innovation and Digital Cooperation

- I. Produce transparent and holistic scientific mechanisms to mitigate environmental disasters by tracing breaches of Planetary Boundaries and international environmental commitments.
- II. Ensure the provision of transparent global data, including the dissemination of indigenous knowledge and local action.
- III. Employ technology to empower individuals through the development of gender-transformative, disability-responsive, and accessibility-assuring policies in technology governance.
- IV. Establish policies governing technology to protect individuals and ensure universal access by creating proactive and fair digitization regulations and realizing human rights in the digital sphere.

Chapter 4: Children, Young People and Future Generations

- I. Strengthen the meaningful engagement of young people in intergovernmental processes by expanding the UN Youth Delegates program, developing an intergenerational Town Hall, and further resourcing the UN Youth Office.
- II. Increase financing and resourcing for children and youth inclusion by transforming education and social protection systems and engaging youth in peace and security.
- III. Educate children and decision-makers on the rights of the child to inform the development of a UN system-wide standard on children's meaningful engagement.
- IV. Codify the rights of future generations and create UN Mechanisms on Future Generations: a Special Envoy, a Council for Future Generations, and a Future Generations Fund.
- V. Encourage strategic foresight, future-back approaches and a long-term vision in all multilateral efforts.

Chapter 5: Transforming Global Governance

- I. Reform and enhance the core UN bodies, including the UNSC and UNGA and their relationship.
- II. Enhance global governance legitimacy and expand participation by establishing a UNPA that gives elected representatives, who reflect a broad political and societal spectrum, a voice and role at the UN.
- III. Reform and strengthen the global judicial, financial, and environmental architectures by establishing new institutions such as an International Anti-Corruption Court.

Chapter 1

Sustainable Development and Financing for Development

Poverty, hunger, climate change, global health threats, gender inequality, unequal access to education, environment degradation, violence, and war: the world's most critical challenges are connected to sustainable development. Accelerated planetary changes are impacting how we must govern matters essential for all life: planetary health, political stability, peace and security, and human well-being, in order to overcome the multiple overlapping crises we currently face.

Boosting common strategies to break this circle and achieve higher shared levels of sustainable development for all is at the core of a UN-led, action-oriented multilateralism. To make it happen, we need stronger institutions—globally, regionally, nationally, and at the community level—bearing the right tools to make effective and efficient decisions, adequately funded to deliver. Ensuring gender equality and women and young people's leadership is essential to achieving all SDGs, including those related to financing for poverty eradication and climate justice. States must commit to making the global financial architecture more inclusive, transparent, and equitable to unlock and mobilize the financing necessary to achieve Sustainable Development. A strong commitment to human rights and the education of rising generations is paramount—no longer can we spend more on debt relief than education—as we lay the foundations for a better future for those to come. We underline four essential actions for the Summit of the Future to galvanize efforts on these issues at the global level.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Establish a biennial UN G20+ Summit on the Global Economy. To better foster socioeconomic recovery, including from the pandemic, mitigate and manage cross-border shocks, and address rising global inequality, we call for creating a Biennial UN-G20+ Summit for the Global Economy. While we concur that the Secretary-General's proposed Summit for the Global Economy could serve as an important platform for a regular exchange on major economic priorities, rather than anchoring this proposal around

the 54-Member UN Economic & Social Council (ECOSOC), we believe it would be more inclusive and representative to convene such a biennial gathering during the High-Level Week of the General Assembly with all Member States, the leaders of the G20, the Secretary-General, heads of the international financial institutions (IFIs), World Trade Organization (WTO), and International Labour Organization (ILO) to ensure universal policy alignment and implementation. This Summit must center the most pressing needs: poverty eradication, climate justice, peace, and human rights, as part of its overall objective of raising further resources to support the fulfillment of the SDGs and beyond.

Moreover, we advocate establishing a small, networked secretariat led by the Deputy Secretary-General and engaging senior technical staff from the IFIs, WTO, ILO, and rotating G20 presidency, both to ensure accountability of decisions reached and to serve as a knowledge center to collect, validate, and push out collective analysis across the international system between the Summits. The convening of the proposed Biennial UN-G20+ Summit could go a long way toward delivering the resources necessary to achieve shared goals, including a \$500 billion/year SDG stimulus, in parallel to unlocking much-needed new sources of climate finance. It should also actively engage all stakeholders in preparing for, and monitoring the progress of, the Biennial UN-G20+ Summit.

2. Adopt higher-quality, action-oriented development processes. In pursuing meaningful progress, mere rhetoric will not suffice to instigate the necessary transformations. Urgency demands that rhetorical commitments lead to an accelerated course of action directed towards the realization of sustainable development, with the implementation of the 2030 Agenda at its core. This is central to building the trust so needed at this moment. It is imperative to address contemporary challenges, such as crossing critical ecosystem tipping points, and the impact of digital technologies on development.

Resolute political will is indispensable to elevate the quality of implementation, monitoring, and follow-up of commitments. It is essential to establish rejuvenated approaches that translate promises into tangible results by incorporating elements proven to enhance effectiveness and efficiency. Therefore, we propose:

- Integration of sustainable development principles: Incorporate the sustainable development principles outlined in the 2030 Agenda as actionable guiding principles. These encompass the commitment

to Leaving No One Behind, embracing universality, adopting human rights-based and gender-transformative approaches, centering the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, promoting a just transition, and reaffirming the interconnectedness of the economic, environmental, and social pillars of sustainable development. The integration of sustainable development principles in decision-making requires establishing a transparent and accountable system for the participation of civil society, young people, academia, trade unions, the private sector, and all interested stakeholders in multilateral institutions' decision-making processes. Further, gender and intergenerational considerations must be taken into account when selecting high-level officials for every institution in order to promote diversity and inclusivity, create a more balanced representation in leadership roles, and democratize the decision-making landscape.

- Evidentiary decision-making and collaborative delivery: Ensure that decisions are informed by the best available data and information, strengthening the linkage between science, policy, and action. This approach would be complemented by enhancing collaboration and coherence between multilateral institutions and national efforts at all levels such as through establishing Science Policy Action Networks (SPANs) to better coordinate between institutions. This will facilitate informed, evidence-based decision-making and prevent the duplication of efforts while delivering. Greater efforts must be made to systematize and harmonize information sharing and learning across all communities: rural and urban, local and international.
- Rethinking development measurement: A world which defines success and progress as material advancement, as evidenced by the current GDP-centric approach, definitionally leads to greater inequality, the invisibility of the care economy, and environmental and social disintegration. The IFIs' prevailing approach to development impacts countries' ability to receive concessional financial flows: it rewards unsustainable over-consumption, and deepens inequalities, environmental degradation, human rights abuses, and perpetuates a misleading development narrative. Current development indicators need to be rethought, and new educational models will be instrumental as we explore alternatives, such as creating a comprehensive dashboard of indicators or highlighting a different composite indicator aimed at prioritizing sustainable and inclusive well-being for all and fostering accurate, action-oriented, and equitable access to international cooperation resources. Some current alternative metrics to GDP

include the Human Development Index, Social Progress Index, Index of Gross National Happiness, and the Genuine Progress Index.

3. Expand multilateral financing for the SDGs. We lend our support to expanding multilateral financing of the Sustainable Development Goals, especially through efforts to repurpose the Multilateral Development Bank system to ensure the highest respect for human rights. This entails, though is not limited to, expanding the annual lending capacity of international financial institutions by more than USD \$150 billion and the increased use of guarantees, reforming voting rights and decision-making rules, finalizing a UN tax convention to prevent a “race to the bottom” in tax rates, updating the International Monetary Fund (IMF) quota formulas, instituting measures to de-risk investments to unleash private capital further while ensuring that private investments do not undermine the availability, accessibility, acceptability and quality of public and essential services, and issuing the IMF’s Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) more regularly and at greater scale as a means to finance critical global public goods.

We aspire to improve global liquidity management, especially in times of crisis. The IMF should be allowed to mobilize additional resources by: i) tapping capital markets and issuing bonds denominated in SDRs; ii) making better targeted emergency SDR allocations under more streamlined procedures; and iii) allocating SDRs regularly to supplement the demand for “own reserves.” Moreover, as an important step toward strengthening the global debt architecture in a manner that aligns with human rights imperatives, debt-for-nature-swaps and other forms of debt relief tied to the protection of the environment and addressing climate change and biodiversity loss are especially welcome innovations as they help to address the closely interlinked debt, climate, and biodiversity crisis. In some cases, justice will require the cancellation of debts, taking into account the ongoing impacts of historical injustice and extractive practices.

Further, new and innovative forms of global taxation and financial re-allocation should be introduced to raise additional capital to support the UN more broadly in addition to the SDGs (see Chapter 5). Fossil fuel subsidies must be ended, and a global windfall tax imposed on the profits of fossil fuel companies and states with large fossil-fuel-based incomes to boost the financing available to address the triple planetary crisis. More generally, countries working in concert should also consider the Tobin tax on financial transactions in the form of short-term currency trading, which should be

used to strengthen the independence of the UN and achieve climate and sustainability goals.

4. Establish an International Court for the Environment. The international community should establish a specialized International Court for the Environment (ICE), closely linked to a new global environment agency with an express mandate for the ICE to serve as the central forum for the resolution of international climate and environmental law disputes and authoritative advisory opinions. The new Court could operate under an international convention on the right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment, with broad coverage, direct access by NGOs and private parties as well as states, supported by a scientific body to assess technical issues, a mechanism to avoid forum shopping, and specialist panels related to mining, aviation, and other such fields. We envision a court with the power to adjudicate environmental disputes of an appreciable magnitude, order emergency and injunctive relief, mediate, arbitrate, and launch investigations. An ICE would provide the benefits of centralization, consistent global standards of care, strengthened enforcement of existing treaties, and increased availability of preventive measures.

Chapter 2

International Peace and Security

The United Nations system was born of the determination “to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war.” And yet, by some indicators, the world has never been more bellicose with ever more sophisticated means to destroy humankind and the planet. Despite a complex framework of institutions and instruments aimed at promoting sustainable peace, conflict rages in many regions of the globe and human rights violations are too often ignored. The UN and its agencies have played vital roles in war prevention and conflict resolution, but as currently constituted they are insufficient to meet the realities of ongoing armed conflict. Collectively, governments around the world allocate more than \$2 trillion USD annually to their militaries, diverting precious resources to destructive ends while programs for peace, climate protection, sustainable development, education, and the UN itself, remain severely underfunded.

The twentieth century saw the advancement of the corpus of international law, notably including international humanitarian law and international criminal law, intended to hold individuals to account for the most heinous crimes that shock the conscience of humanity. The project of international law derived from principles, treaty, custom, and scholarship, is constant and evolving. Despite a tapestry of judicial institutions including regional courts, treaty-based tribunals, and arbitral instruments, peace remains out of reach.

The traditional notion of ensuring national security primarily through military means is fundamentally flawed. This militarized framework is not only unable to fulfill this wide spectrum of peace and security needs, but is often counterproductive to those ends. Common security is the approach of achieving security without compromising the security of others. This framework recognizes the interconnectedness of local, national, regional, and international security interests. Central to this endeavor is understanding of the root cause of conflicts, fostering resilience, and investing in a culture of peace. This approach relies fundamentally on pacific means of conflict resolution, including bolstering diplomacy, enhancing negotiation and mediation capacities, embracing the rule of law by effectively utilizing courts and tribunals, and rejecting the threat or use of force.

Building truly durable peace and achieving common security requires a meaningful transition from reactive to proactive approaches that rebuild trust in our collective security system and address both conventional and emerging threats, such as nuclear weapons, autonomous weapons systems, the weaponization of outer space, threats to international commerce, and the preservation of the environment. Embedded in this effort must be the concern for basic human needs, especially the needs of marginalized or vulnerable populations, as well as the needs of the planetary ecosystem. Guiding these efforts should be principles of justice, equity, and the protection of human and civil rights, and the spirit of cooperation embodied in the Sustainable Development Goals. Per Security Council Resolution 1325, this should include a gender perspective, eliminating the use of sexual violence as a weapon of war, and appreciation of the critical role that women and girls have in building sustainable peace and preventing conflict escalation. These efforts must also acknowledge the differentiated impact of conflict and post-conflict dynamics on children and youth.

Peace and security must be viewed through an intersectional lens. War not only causes immense human suffering, but also impacts civil infrastructure, the environment, food and water supplies, and the climate while hindering sustainable development, human rights, and democratic systems. “Universal and lasting peace can be established only if it is based upon social justice,” and “freedom of expression and of association are essential to sustained progress,” as declared in the Constitution of the International Labor Organization.

In his call for a New Agenda for Peace, the Secretary-General said that “Member States must provide a response to the deep sense of unease which has grown among nations and people that Governments and international organizations are failing to deliver for them.” Correcting our course demands decisive action to renovate the world’s collective security architecture and introduce new operational tools to fulfill the UN Charter’s vision for sustainable peace.

RECOMMENDATIONS¹

1. Reform the UN Security Council (UNSC) and boost the role and effectiveness of the UN General Assembly (UNGA) as a mechanism for the peaceful resolution of conflicts under Article 33 of the UN Charter.

In the past few years, some of the most innovative changes in the UNSC's working methods have emerged in response to momentous events. At the same time, these events demonstrate the shortcomings of the UNSC as currently constituted. Recalling the UNGA Uniting for Peace Resolution, we welcome the passage of UNGA Resolution 76/262 stipulating a convocation of the UNGA in the event of the use of a veto by a Permanent Member as an effort to realize Article 27(3) and the "Code of Conduct regarding UNSC action against genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes," which calls upon all members of the UNSC not to vote against any credible draft resolution intended to prevent or halt mass atrocities. These are necessary but ultimately insufficient measures, and more comprehensive reforms must be made.

The architecture and modalities of the UNSC are incompatible with inclusive and lasting peace. The Summit of the Future must build upon the Intergovernmental Negotiations on Security Council Reform and yield meaningful reform of the UNSC's composition and working methods, including:

- initiating reforms to address the veto's misuse, with the ultimate objective of abolishing the veto;
- critically reexamining the UNSC's composition for more equitable representation;
- considering the role of auxiliary councils with such specific mandates as peacebuilding, climate, and health; and
- integrating inclusive processes of decision-making by consulting those most impacted by decisions taken with a special emphasis on the perspectives of women and youth.

Further steps should be taken to enhance the UNGA's peace and security role, including implementing principles of non-intervention and the absolute inadmissibility of Aggression. Concrete steps must be taken to uphold the mandate of the General Assembly to prevent or respond to acts of aggression when the Security Council fails to do so. This could include

¹ For more, see: <https://www.unfoldzero.org/proposals-for-the-peace-and-security-theme/>.

greater use of UNGA requests to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) to render Advisory Opinions on legal issues relating to such conflicts.

2. Compel States to fully avail themselves of existing and potential new judicial institutions and processes to peacefully resolve disputes and achieve accountability for violations of international law.

The ICJ is a foundational body of the UN system, providing the primary means for the peaceful resolution of disputes among States. All UN Member States are urged to accede, as soon as possible, to the compulsory jurisdiction of the ICJ to ensure the peaceful settlement of disputes, with the objective of achieving universal jurisdiction by no later than 2045. All UN Member States must also comply with their obligations to abide by determination of provisional measures in ongoing cases.

The International Criminal Court (ICC) was established as “the hope for all humanity” to achieve accountability for the most heinous crimes: genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity, and the Crime of Aggression. 124 States Parties have acceded to the ICC’s jurisdiction while far fewer have ratified amendments related to biological and chemical weapons and on the Crime of Aggression. Until there is universal membership and these lacunae are filled, the hope of a true end to impunity will remain illusory. All States should join the ICC by ratification of/accession to the Rome Statute. Further, States should fully cooperate with the Court at all stages of proceedings, including ensuring adequate resourcing and the nomination of judges and officials based on qualifications and not States’ vested interests. Finally, States should expand the Court’s ability to adjudicate regarding new forms of weaponry and new methods of warfare, as well as expanding its jurisdiction over environmental crimes, including recognizing ecocide as a standalone crime. The People’s Pact proposes the establishment of new, complementary, judicial institutions (Chapters 1 and 5) including an International Anti-Corruption Court (IACC) which could reduce war profiteering and arms flows and an International Court for the Environmental (Chapter 1) that could consider the environmental ramifications of conflict.

Other recommendations related to this section include:

- Under international humanitarian law, unrestricted humanitarian access in conflict must be upheld and expanded to include a wider array of relief groups.

- The UN Peacebuilding Commission should be upgraded to a UN Peacebuilding Council.
- Elevate the Human Right to Peace and affirm its connection to the UN Charter prohibition on the threat or use of force in international relations.

3. Enhance efforts to reduce nuclear risk and promote disarmament including eliminating nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons. Ensure the full application of international humanitarian law across all weapons systems and environments, including the foundational pillars of proportionality, distinction, necessity, and humanity.

Preventing nuclear war and achieving the global elimination of nuclear weapons are fundamental goals established by the very first resolution of the UN, and affirmed by the ICJ as universal legal obligations. Yet, the risk of nuclear war is as great as at any time in history. The threat or use of nuclear weapons must be clearly affirmed as inadmissible. Member States should:

- call on the nuclear armed and allied states to ratify/accede to relevant international instruments, adopting policies and practices never to initiate a nuclear war (no-first-use);
- replace the exclusionary and potentially catastrophic policies of nuclear deterrence with an inclusive approach to achieving common security, and commence negotiations for the phased elimination of nuclear weapons with a commitment to achieve complete abolition no later than the UN's centenary; and
- provide victim assistance and environmental remediation to communities affected by the use or testing of nuclear weapons, per UNGA Res. 78/240.

International law – including the UN Charter, international humanitarian law, human rights law, environmental law, and law protecting future generations – must be applied across all weapons systems and in all environments, including outer space and cyberspace. Member States must achieve universal ratification of conventions prohibiting weapons of mass destruction and inhumane weapons, including the Chemical Weapons Convention, Biological Weapons Convention, Anti-Personnel Landmines Convention, and Cluster Munitions Convention, *inter alia*. Given the increasingly autonomous nature of modern weapons systems, States should adopt an international treaty that guarantees the maintenance of

meaningful human control over the use of force and regulation of artificial intelligence. This treaty should ban the battlefield use (if not production) of fully autonomous weapons and ensure that all decisions to use deadly force are made by humans, not algorithms.

A commitment must be made to channel domestic and other funds currently utilized for weapons—including nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction—to peaceful use such as environmental protection, sustainable development, peacemaking, rehabilitation, restorative justice, reparations, and building a culture of peace.

4. Lay the groundwork to establish a standing UN body to address imminent or ongoing threats to peace and security. Such a body should include conflict prevention, monitoring, and resolution capabilities, with a holistic view to the expertise and services required prior to, during, and after conflict.

The UN's collective security system too often fails to prevent and effectively respond to emerging, escalating, or resurgent disruptions to peace and security. Efforts to galvanize and equip local peacekeepers and proposals for a standing UN body for peacebuilding, peacemaking, and peacekeeping—with a focus on gender equality—have percolated since the foundation of the UN. Such a body could be deployed immediately in a crisis to help prevent armed conflict and atrocities, protect civilians at extreme risk, and ensure prompt start-up of operations to address vital human needs in complex emergencies. Various models have been developed, including unarmed peacekeeping units, regional standing bodies, an International Standing Civilian Protection Service, a UN Rapid Deployment Force, and a UN Emergency Peace Service. Effectively operating as a first-responder for the world, this service would equip the UN with a dedicated capacity to help prevent armed conflict, protect people, and provide prompt assistance and security. It would complement existing UN arrangements with a cohort of principled professionals with a multidimensional set of specializations (e.g. civilian, police, military) and multifunctional mandate (e.g. humanitarian, security, health, environmental crises). This service would be available for immediate deployment in crisis situations when so authorized.

Further, while there exist several gaps in the UN's current model of peacekeeping (including concerns related to both recruitment and command), the continued systematic failure in both the prevention and prosecution of sexual exploitation of women and children and other forms of malfeasance by UN peacekeepers must be ameliorated. It is

imperative that a standing entity not only address current failures but incorporate a forward-looking perspective that is gender sensitive, victim-centric, and culturally attuned. The UN, working closely with civil society and other stakeholders, should establish a gender-equitable, diverse, and multifunctional service to preemptively detect and respond to security and humanitarian emergencies, and related or consequential health, governmental, and environmental crises.

Chapter 3

Science, Technology, and Innovation and Digital Cooperation

We are living in an interconnected, global ecological system. Accelerated planetary changes are impacting processes essential for all life, human health, political stability, peace and security. Human suffering and poverty as well as economic crises are interconnected with climate change, conflicts, extreme heat, flooding, disease, famine, and forced migration. Labor rights and privacy are violated as economies transition to new technologies and the digital economy, creating even greater threats to human security and rights. Moreover, historically marginalized communities and nations, such as indigenous peoples and low-income countries, have been insufficiently able to contribute their wisdom to the global body of understanding, nor given sufficient access to emerging science and technology to adapt to global, compounding crises.

Despite a half century of ambitious commitments and governance mechanisms to address sustainability crises such as climate change, conditions have only worsened due to a lack of political will and enforceable international law, with national and extractive economic growth interests put ahead of the global good and the long-term national good. More than ever, science must provide an objective basis for policy and decision-making, and technology and innovation should make it universally accessible. Attachment to outdated dogmas must be overcome, replaced by strong links between science, policy, and action. Because the Earth System is a single, complex, dynamic entity, coordinating global data collection, timely integrated assessment, and usable delivery of results are in the national and global interest.

Science and technology, including generative AI, are increasingly integrated into our lives, evolving into essential tools to understand our interconnected challenges. Scientific knowledge should be freely accessible to all regardless of circumstances to help build livelihoods, prevent global crises, and reduce risks, while countering disinformation and guaranteeing impartiality. Science and technology policies should seek universal benefits, democratize access, regulate usage, protect human and environmental rights, and abide by ethical codes. At the same time, all parties—including

the private sector—must ensure the conservation and legal protection of indigenous knowledge, and its inclusion with the consent and participation of indigenous leaders. This way we can harness science and technology's potential while safeguarding human rights and promoting the SDGs.

Technology enables a new direct relationship between citizens, cities, and the state; between consumers and providers of goods and services. This requires access to mobile technology, the internet, and digital tools to be democratized, ensuring individual access and participation, but these potentials require good governance institutions and laws. Human rights must be extended to the digital sphere including free expression and the provision of necessary protections and privacy. Addressing root causes of gender and socio-political inequalities is essential to ensure that policies and regulations for technology deployment and digital access do no harm. Establishing guidelines for technology, data and algorithm use is vital to ensure privacy and fair employment practices. Education is the key to unlocking a world of opportunities, and in our increasingly digital society, access to quality education is more crucial than ever.

Women and girls are often disproportionately affected by environmental harms, resource scarcity, and conflict, and along with other vulnerable groups are exposed to new forms of danger, including cybercrimes, disinformation, surveillance, harassment, and sexual and gender-based violence. But they also possess vital knowledge, skills, and capabilities for the progress of societies. Gender transformative policies are needed to eliminate the gender digital divide, ensuring their meaningful participation and leadership in science, innovation, and technological development, testing, monitoring, evaluation, and deployment.

We urge all stakeholders to prioritize social responsibility in the pursuit of scientific and technological advancement, thereby fostering a future where innovation harmoniously coexists with fundamental human values. Aligned with the new “Digital Compact” and guided by UNESCO’s “Recommendations on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence” and related principles, as well as UNGA Resolution 78/265 and various regional regulatory efforts, this chapter prioritizes ethical considerations in global innovation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Create a mechanism for integrated scientific advice on the Earth System.

This should include the natural, medical and behavioral sciences, and consolidate information into updated, actionable assessment of risks. This holistic body should focus on prevention and mitigation of disasters by providing strategic foresight; trace environmental, health and agricultural impacts; use behavioral science to generate global shifts in our policies and practices; and track a range of environmentally harmful activities, including pollution, destruction of natural habitats, the crossing of Planetary Boundaries, and violations of international environmental commitments. It would coherently link scientific advisory mechanisms with UN agencies and civilian expertise, and incorporate local and indigenous knowledge at multiple levels. This could be a Science -Policy Action Network (SPAN, see Chapter 1). Digital technologies could facilitate this integration. Environmental, health and other data collection from the public and private sectors, including quantitative and qualitative data, should be shared and supported at the global level to ensure effective and transparent coverage of all countries and planetary systems. The Digital Compact under a SPAN would integrate digital technologies into scientific advisory processes, allowing for real-time updates and actionable insights from local leaders and civil society, in a synergy that fosters a more inclusive and comprehensive approach to addressing global challenges.

2. Integrate global systems management and local systems for justice.

Innovations are needed to integrate global systems management with local data and institutions to ensure justice, founded on principles of equity, inclusion, subsidiarity, and the needs of future generations. This includes ensuring scientific knowledge is available to all regardless of circumstances. Innovations should apply multilevel/multilateral governance in the public interest linking the global framework with local action, including cities, empowering local implementation. A hub for the conservation, preservation and dissemination of indigenous knowledge should also connect the local to the global, making it readily accessible to everyone on an equal basis.

3. Develop participatory technologies to empower individuals.

Democratization of mobile technology, the internet and digital technology should empower participatory processes and implement the SDGs while using sustainable, renewable energy. It is imperative to put data and tools in the hands of citizens for early warning of disasters, conflict, and health emergencies. This requires gender-transformative and disability-

responsive policies in technology governance, establishing policies, laws and regulations, and addressing all biases in technology, data governance, and algorithm deployment. These policies and laws should further safeguard human rights online, privacy, ownership of data, and control over digital identities. Implementation of science and technology and digital policies must go hand in hand with ending unequal access to energy sources and ensuring use of sustainable and renewable energy such as solar and wind power.

4. Establish policies and regulations governing technology to protect individuals and ensure universal access. Policies and regulations governing technology, data and deployment of algorithms must be people friendly and guarantee privacy and individuals' control over and ownership of their own data. They should ensure universal access to quality internet, proactive and fair digitization policies, and the realization of human rights in the digital sphere with special concern for the protection of children. The digital compact should ensure consistent and predictable internet governance with ample protection from undue private or state interference. Technology, IP and knowledge transfer must be ensured through provisions in loans and grants enabling all countries to undertake just digital transitions. Investments are likewise needed in gender-responsive strategies for skills development and life-long learning. Appropriate regulation must also be developed for protection from hate speech, violence, and disinformation, especially for populations in special circumstances.

Chapter 4

Children, Youth and Future Generations

In many spaces of decision-making, children and youth are included in conversations about present and future challenges. Yet the robust and meaningful engagement of youth continues to face barriers: conceptual, structural, institutional, and financial. Until these are overcome, humanity cannot claim it is finding the best solutions to the world's problems, nor inspiring all generations to take the necessary action. This chapter focuses on the importance of meaningfully engaging children and young people, across decision and policy-making processes, and the importance of embedding future generations' thinking, including strategic foresight and anticipatory governance, at all levels of governance.

The UN predicts that the global population could grow to more than 10 billion by 2100, with 9 out of 10 people living in Africa and Asia. Young countries, home to almost 40% of the world's future population, are significantly impacted by today's inequalities. Their young people are already at the forefront of change, reshaping our values, markets and politics. Moreover, they will live with the impacts of decisions we take today – on climate and the environment, on financial architecture, on peace and security, on inclusion and human rights.

Children and young people are recognized as critical agents of change in the 2030 Agenda, and must be supported as such with the necessary resources, capacity, and safeguarding. In the UN75 Declaration, Member States further committed to “listen to and work with” youth. Children, and youth are diverse and must prepare for diverse but interconnected futures. While recognizing steps taken across the UN, including through the UN Youth 2030 Strategy, the establishment of the UN Youth Office, and development in international law, there are still many gaps in achieving inter- and intragenerational equity, as well as the full realization of their human and environmental rights.

While there is no internationally agreed upon standard on “meaningful engagement”, at its core is the notion that all children and young people must have an equal opportunity to be centered in decision-making for policies, strategies, and programs. The Secretary General’s Our Common Agenda Policy Brief is a useful foundation to engage stakeholders in constructive conversations on such matters. This engagement must be safe, transparent, and avoid tokenistic approaches, with substantive feedback. Children and young people are not only beneficiaries of change, but active experts, providers, and partners. Beyond making appropriate space for younger voices, older generations must also be prepared to modify their views and re-distribute their power in light of the wisdom and rights of younger cohorts.

Any policy being considered should seek to build trust and enhance tangible mechanisms and strategies to ensure that it supports, resources, and meaningfully engages young people. It is crucial to create mechanisms for anticipatory governance that equip all with the tools to dismantle patriarchal and colonial structures that continue to perpetuate inequalities, discrimination, and violence. This means intentionally redistributing power to enable young people to co-create and co-lead, with the support of genuine solidarity across localities and generations. Moving to models of partnership, based on experience and expertise, allows for their meaningful engagement and constructive contributions, which benefits all of society.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Ensure that governmental institutions are geared towards inclusion.

This requires the elimination of barriers to participation, especially for children, youth, and young people facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination. This includes investing in gender-responsive, disability-inclusive, and rights-based approaches that can facilitate meaningful engagement online and offline. In order to promote formal youth engagement in governance, states are encouraged to regularly reassess the appropriate voting age and minimum age required to hold political office with the aim of fostering greater inclusion and representation of young voices in political processes. Moreover, the UN should:

- expand the UN Youth Delegates program, especially across developing countries, ensuring the safe participation of youth, gender balance, and with due regard to regional representation.

- initiate a regular Intergenerational Town Hall and dedicated Children and Youth Advisory Boards and Councils at all levels of governance, including National Youth Consultative Bodies, to ensure their voices and participation are taken into account in national policy-making processes by institutionalizing participation in governance.
- support and strengthen the mandate and resourcing of the UN Youth Office, including through establishing regional and national offices, to ensure comprehensive coverage and tailored support for young people.

2. Increase financing and resourcing for children, youth, and young people.

Establish a dedicated Global Children and Youth Investment Platform, ensuring that children and young people are provided the necessary resources to reach their fullest potential and overcome adverse societal norms and inequalities. Ensure that children and youth are centered in the planning, development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the platform. Aligning with the Pact's emphasis on increased resources for children and youth empowerment, the platform could serve as a mechanism for directing investment toward child and youth-led solutions to achieve the SDGs and beyond. This should also be linked to capacity building sessions for young people on multilateralism, their rights, and meaningful engagement. This must be complemented with capacity building for decision-makers and intergenerational partners on how to convene safe spaces that value the meaningful engagement of young people.

3. Transform education and social protection systems and engage youth in peace and security.

The realization of universal access to quality and lifelong education is a prerequisite for unlocking and unleashing the full potential of our societies. A comprehensive, coherent, and coordinated approach to gender-responsive, disability-inclusive, equitable, free, quality, and transformative education, decent work, and social protection policies should be promoted, based on social dialogue. This includes ensuring the enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms at work, promoting transitions from informal to formal employment in all sectors, and valuing equal pay for work of equal value. Doing so will allow children, young people, and people of all ages to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to participate fully in society, respecting human rights, the integrity of the earth, and contributing to a sustainable future. Reassess procedures and policy for the maintenance of international peace and security to address the gap for the implementation and strengthening of the Youth,

Peace and Security Agenda. This includes calling on the UN Security Council to review its methods of work to strengthen the meaningful engagement of young people. Furthermore, it is imperative to ensure that young human rights and environmental defenders are protected.

4. Center and fulfill the rights of the child. The engagement of children has to respond to their specific needs and value them as rights-holders, as enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. By virtue of their age alone, children face imbalances in power, heightened vulnerabilities, and significant barriers to their co-ownership and co-leadership in decision-making processes. Educating children and decision-makers on the rights that children hold, as well as how to exercise them across decision-making processes is fundamental, especially for the girl child. This requires a shift from entrenched barriers to co-creating safe, child-friendly, and inclusive spaces through political leadership and resourcing. A UN system-wide standard on children's meaningful engagement based on General Comment No. 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Nine Basic Requirements for Meaningful and Ethical Child Participation should be articulated.

5. Codify the rights of future generations. The rights of future generations must be codified to ensure they are justiciable at all levels of governance. The Declaration on Future Generations has the potential to be a great tool for action in this regard. There are no temporal limitations placed on realizing these rights,² but there are corresponding responsibilities to realizing them and to achieving intergenerational justice and intra- and intergenerational equity, as espoused in the Earth Charter³ and the Hague Principles on Human Responsibilities and Earth trusteeship.⁴ In this regard, we call for the inclusion of specific language on climate justice and biodiversity with future generations extending beyond purely human beings to include generations to come of other life on earth. Significant lessons can be learned from the wisdom of Indigenous traditions, such as the Seventh Generation Principle, interfaith wisdom, knowledge and best available science. The rights of future generations should draw on indigenous experience, knowledge from legal systems from all civilizations, and their unique relationship with the environment, biodiversity, and concepts of past, present, and future generations, with respect for the global community and ecosystem.

2 See, Maastricht Principles on the Human Rights of Future Generations, 2023, <https://www.rightsoffuturegenerations.org/>

3 <https://earthcharter.org/read-the-earth-charter/>

4 <https://www.earthtrusteeship.world/the-hague-principles-for-a-universal-declaration-on-human-responsibilities-and-earth-trusteeship/>

6. Create UN Mechanisms on Future Generations: a Special Envoy, a Council for Future Generations, and a Future Generations Fund.

A Special Envoy on Future Generations endowed with resources and authority at the highest level of the UN is crucial to ensure the system-wide integration of strategic foresight. Member States should appoint their own Envoys or Independent Future Generations Commissioners at all levels of governance. The UN should create an annual Forum or Council in support of monitoring, reporting, and evaluating progress made on the implementation of the Declaration on Future Generations across decision-making processes. This platform would serve as an intergenerational and multistakeholder space for Member States to draw on the rich and diverse experience and expertise indigenous communities, civil society, and young people. A special emphasis on young countries should be considered. Such fora could also be considered by Member States at all levels of governance. A dedicated fund can be created to ensure efforts on future generations' thinking are sustainable.

7. Encourage strategic foresight, future-back approaches, and a long-term vision in all multilateral efforts.

This must begin with integrating “futures” thinking in school curricula alongside ESD and other related approaches. By educating children and youth on how to apply foresight and build futures' literacy, they can create the best possible future for themselves, their societies, and the planet. At the global level, resolutions should be considered in light of their impact on future generations to the same degree they are considered for their budgetary implications.

Chapter 5

Transforming Global Governance

The gap between the planetary needs of humanity and the capacity of intergovernmental collaboration to fulfill them grows ever wider. The Summit of the Future needs to deliver bold and tangible decisions that help bridge this gap. Notwithstanding the advances that the UN has achieved, the needs of the world today have changed. Transforming global governance is required to promote peace, achieve sustainable development, increase trust in the multilateral system, and strengthen global institutions' role in providing essential global public goods, fostering stewardship of the Earth System, and strengthening the protection of environmental and human rights.

A transformation of global governance needs to bring about major institutional, legal, and structural changes, in particular enhancing executive, legislative, and judicial capacities at the global scale. This includes overcoming fragmentation and building a more effective, coherent, integrated, equitable, inclusive, multilayered and transparent global order. Shifting away from consensus requirements and veto capabilities of single states, and towards majority or qualified majority decision-making, supported by implementation mechanisms, must be a key component of making the UN, the global system, and international collaboration more effective.

Augmenting representation, participation and inclusivity to embrace all people across generations and engaging all relevant stakeholders is imperative. A stronger UN is the result of a more legitimate UN. The premise that the will of the people shall be the basis of public authority, expressed in Article 21 of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, extends to the UN and the institutions of global governance. As the UNGA has stated, a democratic and equitable international order requires the realization of the right to equitable participation of all, without discrimination, in domestic and global decision-making. It is necessary to establish the mechanisms and bodies that can make this right a practical reality.

Democracy is a universal value and a human right that must be implemented in global governance.⁵ Global governance structures and bodies need

5 Promotion of a Democratic and Equitable International Order.” UN Doc. A/RES/77/215. <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/3896433>

to be adjusted so they better reflect and promote democratic principles such as trust, cooperation, decolonialism, transparency, accountability, rule of law, gender equality, justice, non-discrimination, and equitable power distribution.

The following recommendations, addressed to the UN and its Member States, are crucial starting points and catalysts for an ongoing transformation of the global order.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Reform and enhance the core UN bodies. Membership in the UN Security Council (UNSC) needs to increase and become representative of all of the world's regions and nations. The veto power of single countries needs to be eliminated. The role of the UNGA needs to be strengthened, including by electing the President of the General Assembly (PGA) for two-year terms and granting the office enhanced resources. Steps towards making the selection and appointment of the UN Secretary-General (SG) more open, transparent, and gender inclusive need to be accelerated and expanded. The UNSC should be required to recommend at least two candidates for the UNGA's consideration. The SG should serve only a single but longer term of six or seven years, which will allow for more independence from the first day in office. All top positions at the UN and other global governance institutions, in particular those of SG and PGA, need to be rotated between genders in addition to regions. Member State funding of the UN system should be based primarily on assessed contributions, which are to be expanded, instead of voluntary and earmarked contributions. Assessed contributions should be calculated according to a fixed share of Member States' Gross National Income as determined by the UNGA.

A UN Charter Review Conference according to Article 109 of the UN Charter should be convened as a follow up to the Summit of the Future and commence as soon as possible. The goals of this process should include, in particular, reform of the UNSC (See Chapter 2); revitalizing and empowering the UNGA; establishing the environment as a fourth UN pillar (in addition to development, human rights, and peace and security) and creating a Council to support it; establishing a UN Parliamentary Assembly (UNPA) as a principal UN organ, as well as consideration of establishing a Council responsible for addressing non-military threats.

2. Enhance global governance legitimacy and expand participation.

Responding to current circumstances, the UN must become more open and democratic. The “We The Peoples” campaign for inclusive global governance and the UNMute initiative offer great detail on how to achieve this. A UNPA needs to be established that gives elected representatives, reflecting a broad political and societal spectrum, a formal voice and role at the UN that includes advisory and oversight functions. As an initial step, this can be done below the threshold of amending the UN Charter, for instance by a majority vote of the UNGA using its power under Article 22 of the UN Charter. Further, using the same procedure, the participatory mechanism of a UN World Citizens’ Initiative (UNWCI) should be created to allow groups of individuals from different regions to register proposals and present them for further consideration to the UNGA or UNSC if they meet a defined threshold of individual support.

Complementing a UNPA and UNWCI, the UNGA should convene global citizens’ assemblies, composed of individuals selected by civic lottery and demographically representative of the global population, to deliberate and make recommendations on matters of global concern. The ability of civil society as well as major groups, stakeholders and constituencies including, but not limited to, indigenous peoples, local and regional authorities, women’s groups, youth groups, trade unions or social movements, to participate in the deliberation of UN bodies and conferences needs to be increased and improved. The consultative mechanisms and modalities in place need to be reviewed and premised on an open-door approach. A high-level UN envoy should be appointed by the SG to assist in the coordination of focal points and proactively help develop good practices across the UN system. To reduce conflicts of interest, the UN and other global governance institutions need to set and observe clear legal rules and limits on private sector engagement moving beyond existing voluntary standards. Experience has taught the risks of the corporate sector playing an outsized role in the creation of global rules.

3. Reform and strengthen the global judicial, financial, and environmental architectures.

The international judicial architecture, with regional and international courts as its core elements, needs to be strengthened and expanded in order to make environmental and human rights enforceable in all States. This includes the strengthening and expansion of the African Court of Human and People’s Rights and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights; striving for universal jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and the International Criminal Court (ICC); the inclusion of

the crime of ecocide in the ICC's jurisdiction; the adoption of a binding treaty on cross-border environmental liability; the establishment of an International Anti-Corruption Court and an International Court for the Environment (Chapter 1); as well as establishing a liaison office within the Office of UN High Commissioner for Human Rights to interact with and strengthen coordination between the ICJ, ICC, regional, and other courts. Impunity for international crimes and serious violations of international law must end and needs to be countered with sufficiently empowered international legal structures capable of promptly prosecuting the most heinous crimes and grievous offenses. The rule of law needs to be guaranteed and upheld at all levels of public authority including global governance. A reform of the international financial architecture needs to enable an effective global system of tax cooperation that eliminates international tax avoidance and evasion as well as illicit financial flows globally (see Chapter 1). A UN-led process leading to a permanent Sovereign Debt Restructuring Mechanism is needed. The decision-making processes of the International Monetary Fund and the institutions of the World Bank Group need to be reformed in order to make them more responsive to developing countries' needs. Enhancing the global environmental architecture needs to aim at strengthening the UN Environment Programme with a view of establishing a Global Environment Agency that streamlines global efforts and is vested with regulatory powers. A normative global framework needs to ensure coherence, subsidiarity, and complementarity in the implementation of environmental rules, including especially the human right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment.

Conclusion

The United Nations as it stands today represents the greatest attempt yet at organizing humanity's affairs at the global level. However, to remain relevant and impactful, reform is necessary. In some cases, this means delivering on promises made, in others it requires upgrades and additions to existing systems, and, at the deepest level, it requires re-assessing the very assumptions upon which the institution is based. Humanity is more interdependent and more interconnected than ever across both geography and generations. This finds expression in disease, economics, environmental degradation, and the digital sphere among others. Geographic and political borders are no longer the sole lens through which to view humanity, nor can it any longer be the sole lens through which to view governance. The changes articulated above – based on thorough research, robust deliberation, and meaningful contributions from a wide diversity of people – would go a long way towards delivering on the promises made in the UN Charter. Ultimately, however, they would represent a significant step in the building of trust between international institutions and the citizens of the world. While not all of the suggestions will be adopted, nor are all of them perfect, this document and the proposals contained herein should serve as a starting point for deliberations about the expectations “We the peoples” have for the United Nations. We have a once in a generation opportunity to articulate the legacy we wish to leave behind. Let us be ambitious. Let us make this legacy one which we, our ancestors and, most importantly, our descendants will be proud of.