

coalition 2030

FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Coalition 2030

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We welcome the opportunity to contribute to the Zero Draft of the Pact for the Future, as social dialogue with all relevant stakeholders is of utmost importance in the development of a common plan for how we collectively move forward in a world plagued by polycrisis.

This Pact must constitute a clarion call for increased ambition to achieve the SDGs by 2030. We must not lose sight of the ‘world’s to-do list’ as there is still time to achieve the SDGs. The Pact must firmly underscore the importance of this over the next six years.

In many corners of the world, democratic backsliding and a growing politics of resentment towards certain groups is underway. We cannot, and should not, attempt to separate this development from the concomitant rise in income and wealth inequality and precarity globally. Therefore we must plainly and clearly acknowledge the failings of the dominant economic hegemony and use this opportunity to chart the course of a new system.

This system should be based on meeting the needs of all and ensuring nobody falls below a social floor, while also ensuring we do not breach planetary boundaries, six of which have already been crossed. It must be an economy of abundance, service provision and welfare, rather than scarcity and lack. This requires redistribution of wealth and resources, both within and between countries, and public ownership over the resources needed to meet the needs of all. Wellbeing for all within planetary boundaries should be the clear goal – not economic growth.

The Pact should clearly signal and encourage this economic systems change, and encourage States to reorient their national priorities towards increasing societal well-being and investing in public infrastructure and services.

Growth for growth’s sake is the ideology of the cancer cell. Increasing rates of production and consumption are the key drivers of GDP growth in high-income countries. Therefore it’s time we firmly moved away from employing GDP as a useful metric in countries where increasing GDP is *not* tied to increased wellbeing.

The Pact must acknowledge the dilemma that GDP is currently at the core of the Bretton Woods institutions (as voting power is dependent on GDP), and the EU’s architecture of fiscal rules (currently in abeyance). Although many countries and politicians will acknowledge the problems with using GDP as an

indicator of progress, when GDP is still embroiled in global financial architecture, there is little individual countries can do.

Climate change is inevitable; justice is not. The transformation to a fair economic system must have green energy and sufficiency at its core, and be based on social dialogue and meeting the human rights of all. This would revitalise the social contract which has been sorely damaged.

The outcome document must be in plain language, and tied to a global communications strategy which is accessible to all.

Chapter I. Sustainable development and financing for development

The Pact should acknowledge that the next decade will require the greatest investment to drive the transformation in order to avoid the most existential risks related to the climate emergency. Therefore it should encourage governments to be active and strong, and willing to invest in projects that attend to the needs of the present *and future generations*. This requires a political paradigm shift, *long-termism*, as most governments are beholden to short-termism given the electoral cycle.

All investments in all countries must be aligned with the goal of achieving the SDGs, rather than spurring economic growth for growth's sake. There must also be a global push to de-risk investments in clean energy and sustainable food systems.

Financing priorities globally must shift. An estimated \$3.8 trillion is required annually in order to avoid breaching 1.5C. However in 2022, \$7 trillion in fossil fuel subsidies were granted. It's obvious that the finance of reaching the SDGs is not adding up. SDG implementation could be financed through the taxation of extraction and consumption on non-renewable resources, with a focus on progressive taxation that is sensitive to the welfare of marginalised and low-income people, while phasing out corporate tax incentives and harmful subsidies.

In many countries, debt burdens are syphoning crucial funds away from the services required to meet people's needs. The UN must commit to establishing a sovereign debt workout mechanism which should include private debt as well as multilateral. The definition of 'debt sustainability' as per DSAs¹ must be revised to ensure that countries are not forced to incur debts where doing so would negatively affect their population. High-income countries should cancel the debt of low-income countries and create a viable system for debt relief for all debt-stressed middle- and low- income countries. In addition there should be a moratorium on debt repayments in the wake of disasters related to climate change, as the countries most affected by these disasters have done the least to cause climate breakdown.

The governance of the Bretton Woods Institutions must be more inclusive, and the interminable US-EU leadership should end, in the case of the World Bank and IMF respectively. Voting rights in these institutions should no longer be tied to GDP. The International Monetary Fund should create over US\$1 trillion per year in new "Special Drawing Rights" and allocate additional funds from unused SDRs to low-income countries for green jobs-creating investments.

The OECD should implement both BEPS pillars in full, but in future the UN should be responsible for global tax agreements.

¹ Debt Sustainability Assessments

High-income countries and the World Trade Organization (WTO) should, in low-income countries, allow local protection of fledgling and indigenous industries and encourage sustainable export expansion.

Chapter II. International peace and security

Deep economic polarisation due to inequality has a destabilising influence on democratic societies making it difficult to make long-term decisions that benefit the majority of people. More than a quarter of the world's population now live in countries that are backsliding on democracy. Two-thirds of the world lives in either non-democratic regimes or backsliding democracies.

The transformation to wellbeing economies is likely to be disruptive given the narrowing window of time in which the global community can avoid 1.5C. What's more, rising inequality and the impacts of the climate and ecological crises will very likely contribute to rising social tensions and be employed as rationalisation for a move to an exclusionary politics of scarcity. This transformation must therefore be fair and just. Otherwise, it risks facing rejection, and increasing conflict.

It is well documented that the climate crisis is a threat to global security. That's why a new Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty must be endorsed by the UN. This treaty has been inspired by the Treaty for the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons that slowed the spread of nuclear arms in the 1960s and 70s, and served to delegitimize and shame the actions of countries that, despite the treaty, continue to stockpile and test nuclear weapons.

The power imbalance on the UN Security Council must be addressed. The veto power exercised by certain actors in recent months and years risks making a mockery of multilateralism, a development which is evidently a threat to global security.

To achieve the SDGs the WTO must amend TRIPS to ensure that potentially life-saving treatments reach all globally and that vaccine apartheid never happens again². This is central to ensure the resilience of our global social fabric and trust in multilateralism.

AI and large language models should be internationally regulated to mitigate the serious risks involved.

Countries should be encouraged to reduce unnecessary military spending and instead spend taxpayer funds on public services.

Chapter III. Science, technology and innovation and digital cooperation

² In the 1990s and 2000s, anti-retroviral drugs for HIV reached the LMICs 10 years after their discovery resulting in the prolongation of the HIV crisis in the Global South. Unfortunately, the same is happening with the Covid-19 vaccines as we witness 'vaccine apartheid'. India and South Africa proposed at the World Trade Organization to temporarily suspend the intellectual property rights of the COVID-19 vaccines but were met with resistance from many of the HICs like the United Kingdom, Canada, and the European Union. These countries had by December 2020 procured 8.2, 10.1, and 6.9 doses of COVID-19 vaccines respectively for each individual. On the contrary, LMICs like Cambodia, Pakistan, Mauritius, Albania, Ecuador, Guyana, and Bolivia had received less than 0.1 doses as of February 2021.

The worrying spread of anti-science narratives, misinformation and disinformation is destabilising efforts to achieve the SDGs. Social media platforms must be bound to an international code of conduct in order to counter this trend.

Efforts must be made to diminish the power of the ‘attention economy’ and especially its deleterious impacts on children and young people whose developing brains are more susceptible to the impacts of addictive technology.

A global data protection mechanism should be developed, similar to GDPR.

Governments should pass laws to strengthen worker’s rights and trade unionisation. In a time of deep digital and green transformation, workers need economic protection and new skills development opportunities. Workers must be protected in the ‘gig’ or app-based economy, and the algorithms under which work-based apps operate must be worker-friendly.

National governments should be encouraged to increase their funding to National Statistical Organisations (NSOs) which require vastly more resources in order to collect disaggregated data on all the protected grounds of discrimination. Wellbeing indicators must not be merely an add-on to existing economic governance but must replace an economic system designed to grow exponentially.

The UN must scrutinise its own accessibility in the digital (as well as physical)³ realm, given that those hard of sight or hearing, and those with intellectual disabilities are currently unable to participate in online fora. The UN should develop a policy whereby all online meetings must have closed captioning and sign language, and all online materials should be developed using Universal Design Principles.

A vibrant economy does not have to mean one that relies on the continuous extraction of resources and commodification of the commons. Companies that are contributing positively to the wellbeing economy and that are not doing social or environmental harm should be rewarded with an international certification akin to ‘B Corp’, and the Pact must encourage the move to an economy that adequately acknowledges the crucial role of care work, which is mostly done by women.

All industries should move to circular and regenerative business models.

Agriculture is the biggest driver of deforestation, biodiversity loss and vast dead zones in our waterways and one of the biggest sources of greenhouse gas emissions. The adoption of regenerative and sustainable agricultural and land use practices is essential. Clean energy and regenerative, small-scale agriculture must grow, and smallholder farmers should be protected in all international and regional agreements such as the CSDDD.⁴

The WTO should enable Intellectual Property Rights waivers on the patented technologies necessary for public health, and the energy transition.

Chapter IV. Youth and future generations

³ During the High Level Political Forum in July 2023, a ramp had to be installed at the podium of the General Assembly so that a keynote speaker who uses a wheelchair could speak.

⁴ Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive

The Pact for the Future should promote ‘cathedral thinking’, the long-term and intergenerational approach to solving the problems of our time, and the Seventh Generations Principle, an indigenous philosophy that the decisions we make today should result in a sustainable world seven generations into the future.

On our current trajectory, global average temperature is likely to hit 2.5C this century. This overshoot is likely to trigger unstoppable, self-reinforcing tipping points of warming, setting in motion feedback loops of climate travesty, yet those not yet born do not have a voice or a vote in our societies at large.

That is why we recommend that the Pact commit to establishing a UN Special Envoy for Future Generations. It should also encourage all countries to establish independent Future Generations Commissioners on a statutory footing, following the innovative example set by Wales, whose task would be to assess the actions of public bodies for their alignment with meeting the needs of future generations.

Governing for Future Generations is different to governance of and by the children and youth of today, yet it is they more than the adults of the world who will face the consequences of the decisions made today. Therefore enabling young people to *lead* is crucial. We must go beyond tokenistic inclusion and instead act on the recommendations of our young people today.

Underpinning the transformation is lifelong global citizenship and skills-based education and empowerment, especially of women and others disadvantaged in current systems. All should have de-risked and equal opportunity to access education, economic and social rights, power and assets.

Chapter V. Transforming global governance

A Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty must be endorsed by the UN.⁵

The power imbalance on the UN Security Council must end.

The governance of the Bretton Woods Institutions must be more inclusive.

⁵ This treaty has been inspired by the Treaty for the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons that slowed the spread of nuclear arms in the 1960s and 70s, and served to delegitimize and shame the actions of countries that, despite the treaty, continue to stockpile and test nuclear weapons.