

COPENHAGEN  
INSTITUTE  
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STUDIES



Copenhagen Institute for Futures Studies (think tank / NGO)

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## *Chapeau*

*(Add your concise, concrete, and action-oriented language for the Chapeau)*

The chapeau for the UN Pact for the Future (henceforth ‘Pact’) must set a clear tone for a new way of thinking about the future that challenges myopia and fosters longtermism in multilateral cooperation and the UN system. The future is by definition uncertain and thus indeterminate. As such, the chapeau ought to distinguish between the *futures* (n.) as *the distant time yet to come* and the *futures* (vb.) encompassing *the mindset, methods, and processes that use the future to inform the present* – a distinction mirrored in the growing global community of foresight practitioners.

Our narrative and language influence how the next generations perceive the future. It is therefore crucial that the chapeau builds a foundation for the Pact that presents it as the new and long-term direction of the UN global society in relation and contrast to the SDGs. Furthermore, the SDGs arguably lists a series of individual items we either wish to resolve, eliminate, or change, whereas the Pact should aspire to reach consent and articulate a holistic vision and common narrative for the future of our global society.

Lastly, the chapeau must address the two-sided nature of the futures (vb.). On one side we are addressing *method*, meaning the ability to work proactively with potential futures via such designed anticipatory capabilities and processes (e.g. foresight and futures literacy). On the other hand, we are talking about *representation*, meaning representation of the future in the present, a voice for the neglected or overseen perspectives of the future, and future generations.

## *Chapter III. Science, technology and innovation and digital cooperation*

*(Add your organization’s concise, concrete, and action-oriented recommendations for Chapter 3)*

### **1. Define common principles for artificial intelligence**

- We recommend the formalization of the UN Common Principles for Artificial Intelligence, to serve as a foundation for guiding responsible development of AI in society as well as to build AI literacy.

## **2. Disseminate futures thinking in 'STEM' fields**

- The Pact should define objectives and ethics for making 'STEM' (*Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math*) industries better equipped for longterm, systems thinking such as through UN-endorsed upskilling programs and the establishment of a futures committee responsible for informing UN 'STEM' policies.

## **3. Forster social innovation and entrepreneurship**

- To address technological solutionism, we emphasize the need to distinguish different types of innovation and to dedicate a section of the chapter to the transformation of society through social innovation and entrepreneurship at a local level beyond technology.

# *Chapter IV. Youth and future generations*

*(Add your organization's concise, concrete, and action-oriented recommendations for Chapter 4)*

## **1. Define a common understanding**

- The pact should define a common understanding of 'future generations' for the UN-system and its member states to adopt. In our opinion future generations encompass, at any given time, those yet to be born.

## **2. Implement Youth Foresight**

- Youth foresight should be developed and deployed across the UN to give young people a seat at the table.
- Organise by creating a UN Youth Assembly, as young people are ideal representatives of the future as they are less weighed down by the past, are more open to change, and have a larger stake in the future to come.

## **3. Address and support Youth well-being**

- The Pact should define a common understanding of 'well-being' serving as the foundation for a set of shared well-being objectives and priorities for member states to adopt in national social policy frameworks.

## **4. Create a Futures Generations Report**

- The Pact for the Future should include a commitment to continually develop insights regarding opportunities and risks, new tools, and methods for addressing issues of relevance to the unborn generations in the shape of an annual Future generations report.

## **5. Install 'futures' in education**

- Get the future onto the global school curriculum. Teach the future, by educating children and youth how to apply foresight and create futures literacy, giving everyone the right and mandate to engage

with the future, participate, and visualise change, so they can create the best possible future for themselves, society, and the planet.

- Such efforts will evidently create agency and futures optimism.

## *Chapter V. Transforming global governance*

*(Add your organization's concise, concrete, and action-oriented recommendations for Chapter 5)*

### **1. Build commitment**

- The Pact for the Future must identify, present, and formalize a legal basis for which member states are obliged to protect the interests of future generations - regionally, nationally, and globally.

### **2. Develop a Future Generations Governance Framework**

- We recommend the UN constitute a principal organ, a Futures Council (or otherwise high-level entity), which sole purpose is to represent the futures perspectives in the present, being a voice on behalf of future generations and the opportunities and risks of tomorrow.
- Furthermore, this organ is to enforce this very Pact, uphold the 'foresight' element of the Quintet of Change in the UN 2.0 plan.

### **3. Foster cross-sector collaborations**

- The Pact should include encouragement for member states to foster and engage in cross-sector collaborations to avoid siloing the futures work within either public, private, academic, and civic organisations, but rather collaborate across in unity.
- The UN should create a format for this to flourish, e.g. a global futures gathering like a futures festival, to be held annually or every fourth year with shifting host nations.

The Copenhagen Institute for Futures Studies is also part of, and supporting, the submissions by the *Network of Institutions for Future Generations (NIFG)*, the *Coalition for the UN We Need (C4UN)*, and the *Group for the Declaration on Future Generations via Future Climate Cooperation*.

The Institute holds a UNESCO Chair in *Anticipatory Leadership and Futures Capabilities*.