



Written Submission for the Zero Draft for the Pact for the Future

LGBTI Stakeholder Group¹

<https://www.lgbtistakeholdergroup.org/>

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Chapeau

Against the backdrop of multiple ongoing crises – pandemics, a climate emergency, multiple armed conflicts – and at the midpoint of the 2030 Agenda, we see stagnation and even regression towards the attainment of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Pact should not only address the immediate crises of our times but also lay down a resilient and equitable foundation for the future. It must be inclusive, effective, meaningful visionary, transformative and sustainable. It will only achieve this if it recognizes, includes and addresses the perspectives of “We the People”: those ultimately affected by these crises.

Persons of diverse sexual orientations, gender identities, gender expressions and sex characteristics (SOGIESC) including LGBTI persons², are amongst those of “We the People” that are disproportionately affected. The incorporation of our perspectives in the Pact therefore brings vital, solution-oriented perspectives born from our diverse and intersectional experiences. We see solutions that are born from our experiences not only as people of diverse SOGIESCs, but also people who live in all communities and are of all ages. We are workers, families, children and youth, persons of faith and no faith, indigenous persons, persons with disabilities, persons of all colours and ethnic backgrounds. We therefore seek a Pact that works for all people and especially one that includes those who are too-often left behind. We are committed to actively participating in global decision-making processes and initiatives.

¹ [The LGBTI Stakeholder Group](#) is one of the “Major Groups and Other Stakeholders” recognized by UN DESA to participate in UN processes related to sustainable development.

² In this statement, LGBTI will be used as an acronym to cover the immense diversity of sexual orientations, gender identities, gender expressions and sex characteristics (SOGIESCs) that people hold. In particular we note the multiple forms of sexual and gender diversity that have existed in different cultural contexts around the world, and recognise that the term “LGBTI” is sometimes wrongly perceived as a western concept.

Chapter I. Sustainable development and financing for development

Sustainable development and financing are at the heart of building a resilient future. The world must harness the skills, creativity and imagination of all to achieve the SDGs and secure a safe, healthy, prosperous planet for future generations. Efforts to forge a sustainable future for all means leaving no one behind, including LGBTI persons. These persons face challenges accessing financing for sustainable development, due to multiple and complex reasons, including a system failure to include them in the design of finance mechanisms as well as the existence of systemic discrimination in their implementation.

We therefore call:

- for the Pact to address the equitable distribution of resources and the creation of support systems that address the needs of marginalised communities. The Pact should also address the creation of economic opportunities that are accessible and beneficial to all, fostering an inclusive environment where diversity is not just accepted but celebrated.
- on States to reframe their economic growth policies, moving beyond Gross Domestic Product as the primary measurement of development, and instead adopt approaches that account for human well-being and planetary sustainability. Policy making should take account of the multidimensional costs of exclusion and inequality³, as well as include measurements for factors often excluded such as unpaid care work, environmental degradation, sustainability, and resilience.
- on global financial institutions to uphold human rights standards and geopolitical realities, including by decolonizing and democratising their governance and promoting long-term funding for sustainable development, available without discrimination. The global financial architecture must also ensure its funding is not utilised to further entrench discrimination and inequality, and take action when an actor uses access to financing to actively discriminate, including against LGBTI persons.
- for the development of regional funding programs specifically for projects that combine sustainable development with LGBTI inclusion, encouraging initiatives that address environmental, racial⁴, and social justice issues.
- for the creation of a global fund under the auspices of the UN, earmarked for sustainable development projects in countries with strong human rights policies with LGBTI inclusion.

³ “The Economic Costs of LGBTI Exclusion” issued by the World Bank <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/collections/55618edd-2384-4707-8fec-a4d56105c3b7>)

⁴ Agenda towards transformative change for racial justice and equality issued by the Office of the UN Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) <https://www.ohchr.org/en/racism/agenda-towards-transformative-change-racial-justice-and-equality>

Chapter II. International peace and security

The UN Secretary General noted in *A New Agenda for Peace*, “as long as gendered power inequalities, patriarchal social structures, biases, violence and discrimination” hold back our societies, peace will be elusive.⁵ Gendered power dynamics are used as narratives to justify attacks on international, regional, national and interpersonal levels, and conflict serves to further entrench pre-existing patterns of discrimination. To achieve international peace and security, the UN and Member States must dismantle oppressive power structures, including by listening to, respecting, and upholding the perspectives of people of diverse SOGIESC. At the same time, protecting vulnerable communities, including LGBTI individuals, is paramount during conflict. These individuals often face heightened risks in conflict zones, necessitating targeted protection measures. Inclusion in peace processes is critical; the perspectives of LGBTI representatives can provide invaluable insights into conflict resolution and peacebuilding efforts.

We therefore call:

- on the UN and its member states to ensure the meaningful participation of LGBTI people in conflict and atrocity prevention in order to prevent violence from arising. We further entreat member states to commit to the eradication of all forms of gender-based violence, including violence against people of diverse SOGIESC, both online and offline, acknowledging that gender-based discrimination is both a driver and a consequence of conflict.
- For the UN and member states to methodically monitor and report on the situation of LGBTI individuals in conflict zones, ensuring that international peacekeeping efforts are informed and inclusive, and making certain that violence against people of diverse SOGIESC during conflict is documented and evidence is preserved.
- on member states to guarantee people of diverse SOGIESC have access to remedies and peacebuilding processes after conflicts and crises.
- for the implementation of community-based conflict resolution programs that include LGBTI persons, empowering individuals to contribute to peacebuilding efforts in their local communities.
- for the organization of regional peace fora that include LGBTI groups, focusing on sharing best practices and strategies for maintaining peace and security while respecting diversity and human rights.
- on the UN and regional, national, and global authorities to ensure that human rights in their entirety are included in international, regional, and national violence prevention strategies, being critical to guarantee conditions of inclusion, protection, and social cohesion.

⁵UN Office of the Secretary General, *A New Agenda for Peace*, July 2023
<https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/our-common-agenda-policy-brief-new-agenda-for-peace-en.pdf>

Chapter III. Science, technology and innovation and digital cooperation

The rapid advancement in science, technology, and digital cooperation offers unprecedented opportunities for growth and development. Policies in these areas must be inclusive, considering the unique needs and rights of LGBTI individuals, and based on a foundation of human rights. By encouraging research and development that addresses specific challenges faced by LGBTI persons, we can foster innovation that benefits everyone. Promoting digital literacy and inclusion is crucial in bridging the digital divide and empowering these individuals through technology. At the same time, technology has been harnessed to abuse human rights, including by surveilling, tracking, and harassing people of diverse SOGIESC and LGBTI human rights defenders.

We therefore call:

- for the creation of local innovation hubs that encourage LGBTI individuals to engage in science and technology development, fostering an inclusive environment for technological creativity.
- for the promotion of regional collaborations among nations to develop inclusive digital literacy programs, with a focus on reaching marginalised groups including the LGBTI communities.
- on the UN to launch a UN-led global initiative to fund and support research in science and technology that addresses specific challenges faced by the LGBTI community, ensuring that innovation benefits all.
- on member states to close the digital divide to connect all people, including LGBTI communities and other marginalised groups, to the internet in ways that are meaningful.
- on member states to ensure online spaces are non-discriminatory and safe for all people, including by protecting against surveillance and harassment.
- on member states to prevent internet shutdowns in response to civil society organising, which can amount to a violation of many human rights

Chapter IV. Youth and future generations

The voices of youth, including LGBTI youth, are vital in shaping the future. Their active engagement in decision-making processes ensures that policies reflect their needs and aspirations. Educational programs that promote understanding and acceptance of diverse SOGIESC are essential in fostering an inclusive society. Additionally, creating robust support systems for LGBTI youth, including mental health services and anti-bullying initiatives, is crucial for their well-being and development. Future generations are affected by the decisions we make today. We must act in ways that will preserve the ability of future generations to enjoy their human rights and meet their needs in a healthy environment. Decisions we make today to preserve our planet ensure it is equal, inclusive, and non-discriminatory will provide future generations with a greater ability to thrive.

We therefore call:

- on member states to facilitate local mentorship programs for LGBTI youth, focusing on personal and professional development, and fostering individual empowerment.
- on member states to implement national campaigns in partnership with educational institutions to promote inclusivity and awareness of LGBTI issues among youth.
- on the UN to establish a UN-led global platform for youth dialogue, ensuring that LGBTI youth voices are represented in international policy-making processes.
- for the UN and member states to ensure meaningful engagement of diverse youth, including LGBTI youth, in decision-making processes at all levels. Meaningful engagement entails including diverse youth in formal policymaking spaces at all levels, requisite resourcing and capacity building, and clear monitoring and accountability frameworks to ensure follow up on commitments to include diverse youth voices.
- for the UN to strengthen the access and engagement of youth, including youth of diverse SOGIESC, in all UN processes, including the Security Council, General Assembly, and Economic and Social Council.
- on member states to create laws, policies and practices that will serve people alive today and generations yet to come, including through enacting measures to shrink inequalities, empower diverse populations, bolster human rights, and protect the planet.
- on States to consider innovative ways to use the concept of Trusteeship to safeguard the planet for future generations.

Chapter V. Transforming global governance

Global governance structures must rapidly adapt to be fit for purpose in a world where conflict is on the rise, the degradation of the environment presents an existential crisis, and social and global inequalities are exacerbated. We face threats that can only be overcome by working together as one human family, and yet the creation of the current global governance structure occurred in a different period and was led by colonial and/or imperial powers operating often with colonial, patronising or racist mindsets. We believe that the current international governance architecture must ultimately be restructured and be truly built on the principles that underlay the founding of the : to practise tolerance and for peoples to live together in peace with one another as good neighbours. Any change in global governance also brings risks. As power shifts, there is a danger that persons who are marginalised will only be further excluded in the process.

We therefore call:

- on States to ensure that our global governance structure reflects principles of trust, cooperation, decolonialism, transparency, accountability, interdependence and power distribution.
- on global governance bodies to increase civil society access, especially the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the UN General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, and the UN Security Council. This would include changing procedures to significantly strengthen the engagement of civil society.
- on States to deeply consider the proposals by Member States to truly revitalise UN processes, including especially a proposal to revitalise the Commission Status of Women. Any such proposed changes should increase the participation of civil society and also maintain hard-fought gains at the international level over the years for gender equality.
- on States to ensure that international human rights obligations are reinforced and not weakened in any change to global governance structures. Worthy efforts for new global governance must also avoid disruption to existing UN human rights initiatives. We specifically recommend that States ensure that the Pact will not modify the Call to Action on Human Rights, the Disability Strategy, the Strategic Action Plan on Racism, the UN Youth Strategy, or the UN Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech, or any other similar Strategies.

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