



Network of Institutions and Leaders for Future Generations (NiFG)

<https://futureroundtable.org/en/web/network-of-institutions-for-future-generations>

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Chapeau

We thank you for the opportunity to provide written input for the zero draft of the Pact for the Future as decided on in the General Assembly Decision 77/568.

The Summit for the Future will convene those who believe that a better tomorrow can be attained for the benefit of people and planet. Currently we are faced with dire scenarios which challenge aspirations for a safe and sustainable future. Together, we have a duty to current, and future, generations to raise the ambition and the Pact for the Future must serve as a compass to provide orientation and guide these efforts.

We are the ***Network of Institutions and Leaders for Future Generations (NiFG)***, an independent network of national institutions, organisations and leaders seeking better international governance, multi-lateral collaboration and joint-up decision-making to assure the rights, interests and wellbeing of future generations. We are responding to the consultation on the Pact and take this opportunity to comment on the overarching approach and ambition of this document.

Whilst we welcome the Summit and the Pact, we call for minds and efforts to be focused on recasting and reframing the way we govern and engage, rather than simply seeking to provide a reflecting platform for the future. Essentially, the document needs to be more ambitious in its quest to combat unsustainable development. We need not only to inspire but define pathways for attaining this fairer, healthier, and more equitable future. The Pact of the Future needs to make concrete and actionable recommendations. We reflect on this below.

The Secretary-General speaks with conviction and vision for a better future for us and coming generations but the Pact falls short in this matter. In a world torn apart by war and conflict, poverty and hunger, social and cultural divides, and the exploitation of people and planet, there's a pressing need for a fresh and fairer vision of the future. Addressing present, medium-, and long-term needs and goals offers a unique opportunity to begin transforming societies today. We need a vision that will bring us together to reframe our future and strive towards an alternative, sustainable world for everyone now and in the future.

We need to carve new ways of governing and engaging greater participation to ensure that the rights of all are respected. The Pact can benefit from better linking with other UN processes to maximise impacts.

For example, we need to position the UN Charter and 1966 Human Rights Covenants at the centre and MEAs must be anchored in the Pact so that human rights are fully reflected.

We have no sustainable future without addressing the greatest threat humanity has had to date – climate change. The Paris Climate Accord and the ambition to halt the rise in temperatures to below 1.5C pre-industrial level must also be at the heart of this document. We have a duty to protect global biodiversity and safeguard the quality of our air, waters, land and phase out fossil fuels. We also need to recognise that the roots of the environmental crisis we currently face partly arise from a lack of long-term thinking.

A lack of futures thinking is not a problem confined to the environmental sphere. There are multiple other societal challenges, such as the stark increase in inequality both within and between countries. At the heart of current complex challenges, is a lack of intergenerational vision and awareness. The document should outline actions that break with the intergenerational cycle of (un)fairness.

Education for the future is missing. We should stand together to ensure that education becomes not only a universal right but also adequately prepares individuals for the future. Enhancing educational quality is essential to empower youth and facilitate their engagement in the economy, society, and politics. To navigate uncertainty and embrace the future openly, a stronger focus on developing curiosity, imagination and resilience is needed. The education system should impart the skills of caring for the wellbeing of friends, family, communities, and the planet and shatter short term frames that limit our decision-making processes.

We need to build relationships, trust, hope and also alternatives to the future that both the young and old are currently being exposed to. Creating a future-fit governance system can aid this quest, particularly if structures and processes embed long-term thinking, indicators are improved, and democratic participation is renewed. To ensure that the process leading to the Pact and its related processes do not miss this opportunity, continuous engagement with civil society and the organisations that represent them is essential. This should build on effective, transparent, and clear communication and information-sharing, representative and diverse collaborations, and strong alignment between sustainable development and future generations, building on the UN 1986 Brundtland Commission.

Finally, the Pact for the Future also currently lacks clarity on vision of what a successful Summit of the Future would look like. There is a need – and impetus – for the development of a broader ecosystem of governance for future generations. An UN Special Envoy for Future Generations can embrace and support multilateralism efforts and institutions with a strong focus on future generations around the world. It could enable a forum for sharing lessons learned and best practices. Furthermore, the Envoy might coordinate and encourage future-oriented accountability by UN Member States, as well as engage with platforms to assist Member States in developing and implementing structures and processes that are long-term integrated in policy- and decision-making.

We also need to solidify our collective view of future generations. Adopting a robust Declaration on Future Generations ahead of the Summit is key for moving forward the post-2030 debate and is an opportunity to advance on the future of the sustainable development goals to strengthen the multilateral system as a whole. Both processes should draw on established examples and involve multiple stakeholders, including youth and children.

The Pact for the Future represents more than just a collection of chapters, but an opportunity for visionary leadership of the UN. NiFG stands willing to support the UN on this endeavour and related reforms. We can assist by bringing a wealth of knowledge in policy and inter-governmental engagement within this

agenda as well as bottom-up experiences of involving stakeholders and international collaboration. We can facilitate a close connection between the UN and Member State level work on long-term thinking governance and future generations, whether this be implementation, development of new institutions, or understanding challenges or best practice in operationalising these endeavours.

Seeing the world through the eyes of future generations can change the way we relate to others, we organise ourselves, make decisions and act. Let's embed these new frames and insights into intergovernmental governance for a more secure and safe future for all.