

Zero Draft of the Declaration on Future Generations

Preamble

1. We, the Heads of State and Government representing the peoples of the world at the Summit of the Future, at the United Nations Headquarters on 22 and 23 September 2024,
2. Reaffirming our commitments in the Charter of the United Nations, as well as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,
3. Recalling that we have repeatedly reaffirmed our obligations to future generations and our determination to safeguard their needs and interests, including, *inter alia*, in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 2023 SDG Political Declaration,
4. Observing that many social, cultural and religious or spiritual belief-based practices, as well as numerous national constitutions and legal systems exist, that seek to safeguard future generations and promote intergenerational solidarity and responsibility,
5. Recognizing that our decisions, actions, and inactions today, have an intergenerational multiplier effect, such that our conduct today will impact future generations exponentially, and therefore emphasizing that present generations, carry a responsibility towards future generations to act with their interests in mind,
6. Recognizing the need for intergenerational dialogue and engagement, including among the elderly, youth and children, in our decision-making in order to safeguard the interests of future generations,
7. Acknowledging that investing in building a strong foundation for sustainable peace, prosperity and the protection of human rights is the most effective way to safeguard the needs and interests of future generations,
8. Recognizing the complex and interrelated challenges and risks faced by present generations, including the projected consequential changes to the global demographic landscape, which, if left unaddressed, will compound harm to future generations, and acknowledging that these challenges are now more foreseeable than in the past,
9. Further recognizing the importance of a stronger, more resilient and credible multilateral system, underpinned by confidence and trust, for the benefit of future generations,
10. Cognizant that future generations are all those generations that do not yet exist, are yet to come and who will eventually inherit this planet.

Guiding Principles

In order to seize the opportunity that present generations possess to leave a better future for generations to come and to fulfill our mandate to meet the demands of the present in a way that safeguards the interests of future generations, we will adhere to the following principles:

11. The maintenance of international peace and security, and the full respect for the international rule of law, must be promoted in line with the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity,
12. The fundamental principles of human rights, encompassing political, civil, economic, social and cultural rights, and fundamental freedoms for all, and of the right to pursue and enjoy them, must be respected and observed without distinction or discrimination of any kind,
13. The rights of future generations to thrive in prosperity and achieve sustainable development must be guaranteed, including by addressing intergenerational transmission of poverty and hunger, and inequality and injustice,
14. A safe, healthy, and sustainable environment must be created and maintained by addressing the pressing issues of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution, as well as other environmental concerns,
15. Safe, secure and trustworthy technology and innovation are necessary to promote digital transformation, while bridging the digital divide by ensuring equitable access to advances in new and emerging technologies,
16. The achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls are required for a sustainable future,
17. A strong, efficient, effective and robust multilateral system is essential to enhance cooperation and rebuild trust among countries and other stakeholders, and create a world that is more equal, more resilient and more sustainable.

Commitments

Guided by these principles, we hereby pledge to:

18. Promote peaceful, inclusive and just societies while taking into account inequalities within and between nations and the special needs of developing countries, as well as those of systemically marginalized communities and groups in vulnerable situations,
19. Implement policies to eliminate gender discrimination in all its forms and promote women's empowerment by providing equitable economic and leadership opportunities for all women and girls, as appropriate, in all spheres of society,

20. Eliminate all forms of persistent historical and structural inequalities, including racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, and all other forms of discrimination,
21. Honor and promote cultural diversity, foster intercultural dialogue to ensure tolerance, preserve ecosystems and communities, protect territorial rights, languages, knowledge systems and traditions, while safeguarding spiritual and ancestral beliefs of Indigenous Peoples and ensuring their full, equal and meaningful participation in decision-making processes,
22. Undertake comprehensive and targeted strategies to achieve sustainable development, global resilience and to eradicate poverty, including extreme poverty, in all its forms and dimensions, to meet the needs of the present generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs,
23. Guarantee climate justice by prioritizing urgent action on climate change, biodiversity loss, pollution, desertification, water scarcity, and other environmental challenges to safeguard vulnerable communities and ensure a safe, healthy, and sustainable environment,
24. Harness the benefits of new and emerging technologies and mitigate the associated risks in a constructive and safe manner through effective and equitable governance at the global and regional levels, including through building capacity and promoting the transfer of technology on mutually agreed terms to eliminate the digital and innovation divide, as outlined in the Pact for the Future and the annexed Global Digital Compact,
25. Strengthen cooperation among states in their response to demographic trends and realities, including on safe, orderly and regular migration between countries of origin, transit and destination, to ensure that the interests of both present and future generations across all regions will be fully safeguarded,
26. Invest in inclusive, equitable and quality education for current generations, as well as opportunities for lifelong learning, allowing for the intergenerational acquisition and transfer of knowledge and skills to advance the prospects of future generations,
27. Guarantee the rights of future generations to the highest standard of health, through universal healthcare, to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all throughout the life course.

We will implement, institutionalize and monitor the above commitments in national, regional and global policy-making by:

28. Leveraging science, data and strategic foresight to ensure long-term thinking and planning, develop and implement sustainable practices and the institutional reforms necessary to future-proof decision-making while making governance more anticipatory, adaptive and responsive to future risks and challenges,
29. Ensuring that knowledge and data are widely shared and build transparent, inclusive, effective and practical accessibility to information, while promoting critical thinking and life-skills to create generations of citizens that are agents of positive change and transformation,

30. Transforming our systems of national and global accounting by promoting the use of future impact assessments, developing stronger anticipatory risk analysis and elaborating a multidimensional approach to take account of indices beyond GDP,
31. Investing in capacity to better prepare for and respond to future global shocks by avoiding and mitigating risks by using forecasting and foresight, while ensuring that the most vulnerable groups and countries do not bear disproportionate costs and burdens of mitigation, restoration and resilience building,
32. Undertaking a cross-sectoral approach that involves the coordination of government Ministries and agencies, including at the local government levels, in the development, assessment and implementation of policies that safeguard the interests of future generations,
33. Developing partnerships with relevant stakeholders, including civil society, academia, the scientific and technological community and the private sector, as well as intergenerational partnerships, to share best practices and develop innovative, long-term and forward-thinking ideas in order to respect, protect and fulfill the needs, interests and rights of future generations,
34. Equipping the multilateral system, including the United Nations, to support Member States in their efforts to embed future generations and long-term thinking in policy-making processes by fostering and facilitating greater use of foresight, science and data, and raising awareness of and advising on the likely intergenerational or future impacts of policies and programmes,
35. Adopting a more future-oriented organizational culture and ways of working across the United Nations system to facilitate science-based sustainable decision-making by developing diverse capabilities, including foresight and futures literacy, and systematically promoting long-term and intergenerational thinking at all levels.
36. Recognizing the important advisory and advocacy role of the United Nations with respect to future generations, we:

Encourage the Secretary-General to appoint a Special Envoy for Future Generations;

[and/or]

Decide to establish a facilitative, inclusive annual forum or high-level meeting on future generations that will review this Declaration every [five years] to reaffirm and update the responsibility of present generations to safeguard the needs and interests of future generations, creating a living compact between past, present, and future;

[and/or]

Decide to include the question of future generations as an agenda item of the General Assembly;

[and/or]

Request the Secretary-General to submit an annual report on the implementation of commitments and the embedding of long-term thinking in the interest of future generations within the United Nations system for consideration by the General Assembly.