



Policy Note

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A vehicle to articulate development issues and foster dialogue

Forging a Resilient Future: Crafting A Better Pact for a Better Future

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Summary: The Summit of the Future², scheduled for 22-23 September 2024, aims to build a new global consensus to address current and future challenges through strengthened multilateral cooperation. The Summit will reaffirm global commitments to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030, promote inclusion and equity, leverage technological and digital innovation, and drive ambitious climate action. The outcome will be an inter-governmentally agreed *Pact for the Future*, focusing on sustainable development, financing for development, international peace and security, science, technology, innovation and digital cooperation, youth and future generations and transforming global governance. This pact aspires to foster inclusive economic growth, environmental stewardship, social well-being, resilient communities, and global solidarity, while ensuring transparent, adaptable, and inclusive multilateral governance to build a sustainable, equitable, and resilient world.

1. Introduction

In 2020, through the UN 75 Declaration, Member States called for recommendations on addressing current and future challenges and restoring trust in multilateralism. In September 2021, the Secretary-General responded with the *Our Common Agenda*,³ report — a call to accelerate the implementation of the SDGs and drive inclusive, networked, and effective multilateralism to better serve people and the planet. This report led to the proposal for a Summit of the Future, welcomed by the General Assembly and scheduled for 22-23 September 2024.

Current progress on the SDGs is insufficient to meet global targets. The world faces increasing challenges, with the rapid pace and complexity of global developments leaving many, especially vulnerable groups, behind. Challenges such as extreme poverty, hunger, record-high global emissions, human displacement, climate change, conflict, food security issues, weapons of mass destruction (WMDs), pandemics, health crises, and technological risks are escalating.

Traditional multilateral governance struggle to keep pace in today's dynamic, interconnected world. The Summit of the Future presents an opportunity to chart a new course toward a more effective and equitable future. It aims to address global challenges, renew trust and solidarity, and revitalize multilateralism, by forging a new,

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² [Summit of the Future website](#)

³ <https://www.un.org/en/common-agenda>

more inclusive and effective approach to global governance, with focus on sustainable development, peace, and security.

We have the "what" in existing agreements like the UN Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the 2030 Agenda, the Paris Agreement, and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. The Summit of the Future will focus on the "how" —how to better cooperate to achieve these aspirations and goals and how to meet the needs of the present while preparing for future challenges.

This Summit represents a crucial venue for civil society organizations to influence global policy and ensure the voices of historically marginalized communities are heard. The President of the General Assembly has appointed Germany and Namibia as co-facilitators of the intergovernmental preparatory process for the Summit.

2. What will the Summit of the Future Produce?

The Summit of the Future will produce an inter-governmentally agreed *Pact for the Future*, structured around five key themes: sustainable development and financing for development, international peace and security, science, technology, innovation and digital cooperation, youth and future generations and transforming global governance.⁴

The Pact will reinforce existing commitments and address pressing new challenges and gaps. The Summit's agenda, structured around these five key themes, reflects the most urgent global issues. The deliberations and outcomes of the UN Civil Society Conference in Nairobi (May 9-10)⁵ will contribute to Member States' work towards the *Pact for the Future*.

3. A Better Pact for the Future⁶

A better pact for the future should enhance multilateral cooperation, bringing nations together to form cohesive, action-oriented alliances to effectively tackle global challenges like climate change, inequality, and health crises. It should reaffirm the global commitment to achieving the SDGs by 2030, introducing innovative strategies and increased funding mechanisms to ensure no country is left behind. This pact must emphasize inclusion and equity, prioritizing marginalized and vulnerable populations in all policy decisions, with strategies designed to bridge socio-economic gaps and promote social justice.

Furthermore, the role of technology and digital innovation in achieving a sustainable future should be a central focus, with countries committing to leveraging technology for the common good and ensuring digital advancements are accessible to all. Ambitious climate action commitments are essential, with countries pledging to reduce emissions and transition to renewable energy sources, supported by a global framework for climate resilience and adaptation.

A better pact should also promote inclusive economic growth, ensuring everyone has access to opportunities and can contribute to and benefit from economic prosperity. Environmental stewardship must be a priority, with commitments to preserving natural resources, reducing pollution, and mitigating climate change. Social well-being should be ensured through access to quality healthcare, education, and social services for all, reducing inequalities and promoting well-being. Resilient communities must be built, capable of withstanding economic, social, and environmental shocks, supported by strong social safety nets.

⁴ https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/pact_for_the_future_-_rev.2_-_17_july.pdf

⁵ <https://www.un.org/en/un-civil-society-conference>

⁶ <https://www.passblue.com/2024/05/07/summit-of-the-future-a-historical-pivot-or-mere-footnote/> and <https://dashboards.sdqindex.org/chapters/part-1-recommendations-of-the-un-sdsn-for-the-summit-of-the-future>

The proposed Pact represents a significant step forward in addressing some of the most pressing global challenges of our time. By fostering cooperation among nations, this multilateral effort has the potential to create substantial and lasting change, particularly in areas such as climate action, poverty reduction, and sustainable development. To illustrate the potential impact of this Pact, we can look at successes of similar multilateral initiatives.

For example, the Paris Agreement on climate change, despite its challenges, has spurred nations worldwide to commit to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The concerted global effort has led to significant progress, including the widespread adoption of renewable energy technologies and the mobilisation of financial resources for climate finance. Similarly, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) brought together countries, international organizations, and civil society to achieve remarkable reductions in extreme poverty and improvements in health and education outcomes. These examples demonstrate the power of collective action and the tangible benefits that can arise from a well-coordinated, multilateral approach.

However, for the Pact to truly succeed, it is imperative to establish robust accountability mechanisms. Without clear and enforceable measures, there is a risk that commitments made under the Pact may not be fully realized. This could undermine the Pact's objectives and diminish the trust and cooperation among participating nations. Therefore, the implementation of transparent reporting systems, regular reviews, and independent assessments will be crucial to ensure that all parties remain committed and on track to achieving the agreed-upon goals.

In conclusion, while the Pact offers a promising pathway to addressing global challenges, its success will depend on the lessons learned from past multilateral efforts and the strength of the accountability mechanisms put in place. By prioritizing these elements, the Pact's credibility and effectiveness can be significantly enhanced, ensuring it delivers the transformative change required for a more sustainable and equitable future.