

“The Future We Want, the UN We Need: Shaping the UN@75 Global Dialogue”
Friday, 21 June 2019, UN HQ, Room S-2723
Co-sponsored by UN2020 & Together First

Summary

Session Objectives:

- Briefly outline the Secretary General's vision for the 75th anniversary and its relationship to other anniversary events in 2020
- Introduce the Special Adviser's UN@75 project, beginning an ongoing consultation and collaboration with civil society and other stakeholders
- Identify opportunities for a side event during the upcoming HLPF

This session was recorded and is available on [UN2020's website](#)

Remarks by Fabrizio Hochschild, Special Adviser of the Secretary-General for the Commemoration of the UN's 75th Anniversary

Fabrizio Hochschild shared that when the SG appointed him as Special Adviser for the 75th year, a colleague joked that the SG had made him “Chief Party Organizer”. However, the SG doesn't want the 75th commemoration to just be a celebration because there isn't much to celebrate. He wants the UN to kick off a process, a journey of discovery, to explore why multilateralism matters to “We the Peoples”.

We are living in the heart of a contradiction. Humanity is faced with acute global threats such as climate change, disruptive technologies, and demographic changes that can only be managed effectively through international cooperation. Yet many governments are turning their back from international cooperation. We see the growth of populism, nations turning inward, the idea that globalism deprives people of their values. There is a resurgent nativism & nationalism. Others think that multilateralism has failed.

The SG wants to stimulate a global debate with as many different audiences as possible to ask: what is the future we want? How can multilateralism and the UN deliver a safer, more secure and sustainable community?

We will be looking at major trends and asking: where are the trends taking us? If left unchecked, what will climate change look like in 25 years? If left unchecked, how will new technologies impact jobs and social cohesion? Demography? We want people to reflect upon the mismatch between the world we are moving towards, and the world we want. What sort of international institutions do we need to shape the future we want? How can we renew our global institutions?

UN@75 hopes to develop a **feedback loop** to reflect the main aspirations, fears and models of global cooperation generated by the global debate. We will be developing a **toolkit** in the next few months to stimulate the discussion, including **leading questions** to guide the debate. We will build partnerships as we unroll the global dialogue through Resident Coordinators at country level, SG representatives, Member States, civil society networks and the private sector.

First, the global debate will not be linked to specific dates but will be opportunity driven. Second, in parallel, there will be a more scientifically driven global consultative process organized by a professional company to obtain formal results. Third, special events will be organized by governments, civil society and universities.

Discussion

With a full room at the UN HQ and more than 80 participants online, this initial brainstorming session provided an ideal space for a rich and ambitious conversation. Several

offers of support were made by participating NGOs. Issues mentioned as important to the UN@75 debate included the 25th anniversary of the UN Conference on Social Development in 2020, Beijing+25, financing of the UN, nature loss, trade, and the role of youth, women, indigenous peoples, local communities, schools and universities. Mention was made of developing a calendar of global events to link to major events such as the Tokyo 2020 Olympics and World Expo 2020 in Dubai. There was an emphasis on a commitment to action in honor of the 75th to ensure accountability. An online “Thank You UN” book was proposed where people could express their thanks to the UN. Mention was made of the “Welcome Global Monitor 2018” and the Gallup World Poll on trust and science as useful models to consider. It was advised that the UN@75 toolkit should avoid using UN jargon and try to define the basics. While a global listening tour is useful, the question was asked, what will the SG do with the results?

Some of the issues and questions raised that require further consideration included:

- How do we encourage member states to take this agenda seriously and commit to taking forward the solutions the conversation identifies?
- We should find ways to ensure proactive mobilization for African stakeholders to participate fully on a countdown to UN 2020, most especially with funding for remote causes.
- What should be the role of national NGOs in helping bridge cultures to address the most challenges issues for achieving “the future we want”?
- Who is going to coordinate the meaningful and inclusive participation of young people in this UN@75 project towards the Youth Plenary April 2020 and the UNGA High level event in Sept 2020? Will their recommendations and inputs be taken into account towards the political declaration and how?
- We must help and encourage young people to be drivers for sustainable development. How are we reaching the most marginalised young people off urban areas? Most young people are not aware of what the UN is doing. How can we protect young activists and advocates who want to drive the SDGs?
- It was noted that a worldwide group of Rotary Youth are looking to use mass marketing to mobilize tens of millions of youth within just 12 months.
- How can we ensure equity regarding access to the UN and participation in events? Could we consider a 75th Commemoration Accreditation to support the interest of We the Peoples, especially for women, youth, grassroots, marginalized communities, indigenous, those who are not associated with an organization but want to participate in many UN processes?
- We are in 2020 and the world is only getting worse. We need something “sexier” to mobilize people to reinforce the UN and multilateralism. Even if it’s not possible to launch concrete and shocking proposals directly from UN or from a large coalition of civil society organizations, but someone must put in the floor of the debate some crucial questions/proposals around sovereignty of states, some real possibility of political participation of people (like the UN Parliamentary Network and Parliamentary Assembly proposals).

Conclusion

While conversations generated by a global listening tour have a value in and of itself, Mr. Hochschild liked the idea of stimulating a commitment to specific actions. The aim of UN@75 is to make people aware of their identity as global citizens. Given that this is an open-ended conversation, he cautioned against suggesting in advance that various issues should be discussed as a part of the dialogue. Rather than seeking to engineer a predetermined outcome, he wants to be surprised about the results that will emerge. The UN@75 team has been consulting with other agencies like UN Women about ways to link UN@75 with other 2020 anniversaries like Beijing+25 and the 20th anniversary of UNSC 1325.