

H.E. Burhan Gafoor

Permanent Representative of Singapore to the United Nations
Co-facilitator on preparations for the UN's 75th anniversary commemoration

H.E. Bergdís Ellertsdóttir

Permanent Representative of Iceland to the United Nations
Co-facilitator on preparations for the UN's 75th anniversary commemoration

cc. H.E. María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, President of the United Nations General Assembly

REF. COMMEMORATION OF THE UN'S 75TH ANNIVERSARY IN 2020

Excellencies,

We write to you in your capacity as co-facilitators on preparations for the UN's 75 anniversary to express our deep concern that nascent plans for the commemorative plenary are not suitably inclusive of civil society.

The anniversary presents a vital opportunity to consider how the Organization must adapt to cope with the global threats facing humanity. As the President of the General Assembly said recently: "*it is a chance to make the UN more effective, more transparent, more accountable and more relevant to 'we the peoples.'*"¹

We are, therefore, alarmed to learn that the zero draft resolution for the commemoration does not envision a meaningful role for civil society. It appears to exclude civil society from the intergovernmental preparatory work, from consultations on any outcomes that may be adopted – and even from the commemorative event itself. This would represent a missed opportunity to ensure the inclusion of a diversity of voices, especially those of the most marginalized, through civil society participation.

Global civil society has been a committed and determined ally of the UN since its inception in 1945 – when delegations worked together with NGO representatives on the text of the Charter. Today, that partnership is even more important – as civil society supports delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals, and plays a key role in policy formulation, innovation and communication of progress to the broader public.

Encouraged by your stated "deep commitment to an open, transparent and inclusive process"² – that reinforces the President of the General Assembly's emphasis on "making the UN relevant to all people" – we call on you to champion the voices of "we the peoples", and to ensure that meaningful participation from civil society is included at every step of the way towards the 75th anniversary of the UN.

In this vein, we ask that you consider engaging civil society in the process you are leading, for example, through an informal hearing with civil society, by inviting civil society representatives to present at the next suitable meeting, or by organizing a civil society briefing.

We thank you for your efforts to date, and we look forward to working with you to ensure that the 75th anniversary is a meaningful event with lasting impact.

Yours sincerely,

Action for Sustainable Development (A4SD)

Action on SDGs Kenya National Coalition (ASDGC-KENYA)

Adéquations, France

African Coalition on Green Growth

Afrihealth Optonet Association, Nigeria

¹ President of the General Assembly statement, 8 April 2019: <https://www.un.org/pga/73/2019/04/08/commemoration-of-the-seventy-fifth-anniversary-of-the-creation-of-the-united-nations/>

² Co-facilitators joint letter, 29 April 2019: <https://www.un.org/pga/73/2019/04/29/commemoration-of-the-75th-anniversary-of-the-united-nations/>

All Win Network Foundation

Asia Development Alliance (ADA)

Association 3 Hérissons

Association for Farmers Rights Defense (AFRD)

Association for Promotion Sustainable Development, India

Association Luxembourgeoise pour les Nations Unies (ALNU/ UNA Luxembourg)

Association of World Citizens

Association pour Action de Développement Communautaire (AADC), Burundi

Association pour l'Intégration et le Développement Durable (AIDB), Burundi

Bangladesh Model Youth Parliament

Bread for the World, Germany

Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation

Campaign for a UN Parliamentary Assembly

Centre for Human Rights - Nis

Centre for Human Rights and Climate Change Research

Centre for Socio-Eco-Nomic Development (CSEND)

Child Rights Information Network

Citizens for Global Solutions

CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation

Climate Change Network Nigeria (CCN-NIGERIA)

Commons Cluster of the UN NGO Major Group

Community Science Centre Vadodara (India)

Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd

Control Arms

Council of Organizations of the UNA-USA

Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW), India

Democracy Matters

Democracy Without Borders

Development Goals Global Watch (DGGW) Inc.

Dr Uzo Adirieje Foundation' (DUZAFFOUND), Nigeria

Echoes of Women in Africa Initiative (ECOWA), Nigeria

Elizka Relief Foundation

Elmoustkbal for Media, Policy and Strategic Studies, Egypt

Emmaus International

End Water Poverty

Enlaces por la Sustentabilidad, El Salvador

EPE (Ethical-Possibility-Enhancement) Movement

Equality Bahamas

Federación de Planificación Familiar Estatal

Federation of Environmental and Ecological Diversity for Agricultural Revampment and Human Rights

Fiji Women's Rights Movement

Fondazione Proclade Internazionale - Onlus
Foundation for Women's Rights Promotion and Development
Free Trade Union Development Center (FTUDC), Sri Lanka
Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung New York Office
Fundación Arcoiris por la Diversidad Sexual, Mexico
Fundación para Estudio e Investigación de la Mujer (FEIM)
Global Citizen
Global Voice
Globalt Fokus
Graduate Women International
Green Hope Foundation
Habitat International Coalition
Housing and Land Rights Network
Idara-e-Taleem-o-Aagahi Public Trust (ITA) / Centre for Education and Consciousness
Igarapé Institute
Institute for Planetary Synthesis
Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary - Loreto Generalate
International Alliance of Women (IAW)
International Environment Forum
International Federation of Business and Professional Women (IFBPW)
International Federation of Settlements and Neighborhood Centers
International Federation of Women in Legal Careers (FIFCJ)
International Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA)
International Federation on Ageing (IFA)
International Media Support (IMS)
International Network for Corporate Social Responsibility
International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (INPEA)
International Presentation Association
Journalists for Human Rights, Macedonia
Justice Coalition of Religious
Justice for All/Burma Task Force
Kenana Association for Sustainable Development and Women Empowerment, Egypt
Kikandwa Environmental Association (KEA), Uganda
Krisoker Sor (Farmers' Voice), Bangladesh
KULU - Women and Development, Denmark
Labour, Health and Human Rights Development Centre
Lanka Fundamental Rights Organization, Sri Lanka
Lawyers Committee on Nuclear Policy
Learning for Sustainability, Scotland
Leiden University
Mahila Dakshata Samiti, India

Mexican Foundation for Family Planning

Millennia2025 Women and Innovation Foundation

National Campaign For Sustainable Development, Nepal

National Coalition of Civil Society Organizations of Liberia (NSACCSOL)

National Society of Conservationists - Friends of the Earth, Hungary

Network of Rural Women Producers Trinidad and Tobago (NRWPTT)

NGO-Coordination post Beijing Switzerland

Nigeria Network of NGOs

Noble Delta Women for Peace and Development

Nonviolence International

NQBSS Livestock Breeders

One World Trust

Partenariat National de l'Eau de Guinée (PNEGUI)

Plastic Pollution Coalition (PPC)

Radanar Ayar Association, Myanmar

Radha Paudel Foundation, Nepal

Rapad Maroc, Morocco

Reacción Climática- Bolivia

Red Dot Foundation Global

Red Dot Foundation, India

RIPESS Intercontinental Network for the Promotion of Social Solidarity Economy

Rural Area Development Programme (RADP), Nepal

Salesian Missions Inc.

Sanctus Initiative for Human Development and Values Sustainability (SIHDEVAS)

Scottish Ahlul Bayt Society

Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations

Servicios Ecueménicos para Reconciliación y Reconstrucción

Shirley Ann Sullivan Educational Foundation

Shishu Aangina

Shumei International

Sisters of Charity Federation

Society for Conservation & Sustainability of Energy & Environment in Nigeria (SOCSEEN)

Society for International Development (SID)

Society for Threatened Peoples - Germany

Society of Catholic Medical Missionaries

Soroptimist International

Soroptimist International Great Britain & Ireland (SIGBI)

Southern Africa Climate Change Coalition

SRS Livestock Development Foundation

Stakeholder Forum for a Sustainable Future

Stanley Foundation

Tamkeen Association for Rights of People with Disabilities, Egypt
The Millenials Movement
The Stimson Center (Just Security 2020 Program)
Theatre of Transformation Academy
Together First
Transdiaspora Network
UN2020 Initiative
United Methodist Church—General Board of Church and Society
United Nations Association – Finland
United Nations Association – Germany
United Nations Association – Suriname
United Nations Association – Scotland
United Nations Association – UK
VOICE, Bangladesh
U-Solve School of Empathic Leadership & Entrepreneurship (SELE)
WaterAid
Women Environmental Programme (WEP)
Women's Federation for World Peace International
Women for Water Partnership
Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF)
Women's Major Group for Sustainable Development
Women's March Global
Workable World Trust
World Citizens Association of Australia
World Council of Peoples for the United Nations (WCPUN)
World Democratic Governance project Association - WDGpa
World Federalist Movement – Institute for Global Policy
World Federation for Mental Health
World YWCA
YWCA Canada
Zimbabwe Climate Change Coalition
Zonta International

(As of 24 May 2019, 160 organisations have signed on to this letter)