



CIVICUS submission to the Zero Draft of the Pact for the Future

12 February 2024

CIVICUS is a global alliance of civil society organisations and activists dedicated to strengthening citizen action and civil society throughout the world. Our vision is of a worldwide community of informed, inspired and committed citizens engaged in confronting the challenges facing humanity. Our mission is to strengthen citizen action and civil society throughout the world. CIVICUS seeks to engage the Summit of the Future as a key opportunity to shape global governance outcomes to enable the creation of peaceful, just, equal and sustainable societies.

This submission should be read in conjunction to our previous [submission](#) to the Summit of the Future co-facilitators in December 2023. Overall, we believe that the Summit of the Future offers a once in a generation opportunity to reframe the parameters of global governance amid a confluence of global crises including violent conflicts, inequality, climate change and breakdown of the rules based international order.

Below are brief comments on various sections of the Zero Draft of the Pact for the Future draft released by Germany and Namibia.

Chapeau

We welcome the affirmation that every commitment in the Pact is guided by the principles of human rights and gender equality.

We urge the inclusion of reference to the critical role of civil society stakeholders in ensuring transparency, accountability and participation as a means to uphold human rights and gender equality norms. Specially, we also urge inclusion of a commitment by states to protect [civic space](#) as a means to enable people's and civil society participation.

With regards to the five broad areas outlined for action please see below comments:

1. Sustainable Development and Financing for Development

General

We urge inclusion of reference to civil society partnerships which help drive innovations in sustainable development policy, service delivery to excluded populations and accountable stewardship of public resources. Further, we urge inclusion of a commitment to resourcing of civil society as equal partners in sustainable development.

2. International Peace and Security

General

We urge recognition of the role of civil society in supporting social cohesion and peace-making efforts. Further, peace and security initiatives should be geared towards ensuring respect for the rights of civil society actors including commitments to protect the freedoms of peaceful assembly, association and expression in line with international human rights and humanitarian law norms.

3. Science, technology, and innovation and digital cooperation

General

We urge the use of information and communications technologies (ICT) to ensure better participation of civil society actors in UN processes. We call for inclusion of commitments to bridge digital divides that exist between global north and south countries as well as between urban and rural populations that inhibit full participation of people and civil society organisations. Notably, we emphasise the adoption of a gender justice approach. We support opportunities to prioritise meaningful civil society engagement including through amending UN processes and procedures.

4. Youth and Future Generations

General

We urge the inclusion of youth focused civil society organisations in the work of the UN. In particular we urge support for youth movements and their right to engage in peaceful protest and acts of civil disobedience.

5. Transforming Global Governance

General

We urge that the starting point for efforts to transform global governance should be the opening words of the UN Charter which begin with an affirmation of 'We the Peoples.' In particular, we urge the appointment of a [UN Civil Society Envoy](#) to enable better and more diverse participation of civil society at the UN and also to drive the UN's outreach to civil society across the globe along-with promotion of best practices on civil society inclusion across UN agencies and offices. We urge that the Pact for the Future should include pathways to enhanced people's participation in the work of the UN beyond state centric ways of working including through adoption of a [UN Citizen's Initiative](#) and a [UN Parliamentary Assembly](#). Notably, we support the strengthening of the human rights pillar of the UN with a view to defending civic space and addressing reprisals against civil society actors for engaging with the UN.

For more information contact:

Mandeep Tiwana mandeep.tiwana@civicus.org ; Jesselina Rana Jesselina.rana@civicus.org