

## Summary of #UN75 Dialogue on Climate Change and Sustainability

Date: 25 June 2020

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Report submitted to UN75 at: <https://www.research.net/r/VJ59YQ7> on 29 July 2020.

### 1. What should the international community prioritize to recover better from the pandemic?

Considering the current state of our planet, the life-threatening consequences of our irresponsible

actions (or rather inaction), as well as the recent pandemic the world finds itself battling, we have

identified four main areas of concern which we believe need to be addressed without delay:

1. Education
2. Accountability
3. Interconnectedness of environments
4. Economic restructuring

As a collective, we believe that the lack of education surrounding climate change and the benefits of acting for the preservation of our planet have played an important role in preventing states, corporations, industries and individuals from making the transition to a sustainable way of living, producing and governing. Consequently, we want to emphasize the need and importance of worldwide action to educate and inform the masses on the topics of climate change and sustainability. This may take the form of seminars, conferences, classes and/or mass media campaigns, must be accessible to anyone no matter their gender, race, income, or location and must be mandatory when possible. National education systems should be encouraged to incorporate classes on climate change and sustainability, companies and industries should dedicate days every year for sensitization campaigns, responsibility projects and educational seminars. Furthermore, all resources must include steps which can be taken individually, collectively, nationally, and internationally to better the state of our

planet. Lastly, we believe that emphasizing the disastrous outcome and consequences of climate change on the Western World and core countries will more likely result in action. This may include using the current pandemic as an example of how climate change is leading the world towards more health crises, mass migration, lack of basic resources and wars, all of which impact the Western World drastically. We hope that outlining the effects of climate change on nations which take their prosperity and abundance of resources for granted will trigger real action.

## 2. Will people in 2045 be better off than, worse off than, or about the same as today?

The group hoped that people in 2045 will be better off but the caveat is taking urgent action against inaction now. We are aware that as an international body, the United Nations does not always have enough resources or power to actively bring about durable change at a national level in specific member states. Indeed, the group has noted with concern that whilst inequality amongst nations is declining, it is increasing within nations. This is only one trend, amongst many, which calls for a reform of the IR system and of the UN powers, by extension. We are aware of the efforts under way for many years now to reform for example the SC. The stalemate in relation to this effort is symptomatic of the wider constraints which the present IR system imposes on its own forward thinking, on recognising changes and shifts within the system (after all, this is not 1945), on addressing the changing nature of security (including climate security) and improving the resilience of our environments and societies at the requisite pace.

It is increasingly clear that in a capitalist-dominated international system, member states are incentivized to act only if and when there are tangible economic gains. Therefore, the United Nations' responsibility lies in ensuring member states are economically disadvantaged if they do not meet the requirements and expectations set out by the UN, such as for example the SDGs framework indicators.

## 3. What did your group most want to see in the year 2045, when the UN will turn 100?

Much greater interactions between people and their environments, as well as a much faster pace of addressing the interconnectedness of said environments is our key objective for the year 2045. Over the past few decades, medicinal, technological, and scientific progress has enabled us to expand our horizons and improve our understanding, discovering the world faster and better than ever before. Whilst we recognize that these advancements offer us many new opportunities and give us a greater understanding of our diverse and extraordinary world society, they have also negatively affected the way we interact with our environments and the way those environments interact with each other. And yet, we are conditioned by these environments; it follows that we have so far failed to use these advancements to improve the environments. It is clear, for example, that our relationship with food is now

strictly reduced to mass consumption. Our shopping habits prioritise fast fashion and we still buy without thinking of where our consumables go when we eventually discard them. It is essential that we rethink our approach to food, clothes and objectified production processes, quality, quantity, and consumption. Moreover, we want to highlight the need to reconnect our environments to effect real, deep, and meaningful change. Change in one industry or one sector of consumption is not good enough until all industrial sectors undertake change. We exist within deeply interconnected systems and depend on each other more than we have thus far realised. The role of the UN should be to reconnect communities and environments in every respect and to advance the principles of shared value creation. It is extremely difficult to suggest specific ways by which the UN should influence and change the world's consumption habits.

However, we believe that one way to do so is through social media. It is undeniably the most powerful tool in the world right now and should be used for good. We recognize that the United Nations is not an online organization and that it has touched people far beyond social media. However, today, social media will reach the furthest at the fastest pace. Whether it is through celebrities, campaigns, events or sponsoring, elevating the experiences of the common individual, the UN and its goals to save the planet need to be visible everywhere, and not just on Earth Day.

#### 4. What are the main obstacles and challenges that your group thought will most affect this vision?

As mentioned already, we are calling for more awareness and sensitization to what is around us. The way the economic system is currently structured prevents anything other than economic growth and gains from influencing people and the way they live their lives. There needs to be tangible shift in priorities from short-term economic gains (survival) to self-expression and the emergence of a civic culture in its most fundamental understanding, which includes bettering ourselves and the world around us. The COVID-19 pandemic has shown the inability of swaths of contemporary leadership to respond to a life-threatening disease and their complete inadequacy in leading countries and people in the wake of the response effort. We have the evidence before us that our system the way it currently is, is heading for destruction.

The United Nations is the only globally inclusive organisation in the world with power and resources to attempt to change the status quo. We urge you to act and lead the way to a better world. Our generation will fight with you, the next generation will thank you for saving their lives.

#### 5. How can global cooperation – and in particular, the UN – better help manage these challenges?

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#### 6. What would your group advise the UN Secretary General to do to address these challenges?

The United Nations is the only globally inclusive organisation in the world with power and resources to attempt to change the status quo. We urge you to take action and lead the way to a better world. Whether by using social media to bring about greater transparency in the course of action, whether by engaging young people around the world directly, such as through the UN75 initiative, whether by creating opportunities for young people to directly partake in initiatives, such as through the SDGs app, the UN should do more of these types of activities, should position itself strongly at the centre of climate change, and should create consistent framework links between global goals and national programmes for climate change.

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