



THE 68<sup>TH</sup>

# UNITED NATIONS CIVIL SOCIETY CONFERENCE



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## FINAL REPORT

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Organized by the  
**United Nations Department of Global Communications**

in partnership with the  
**NGO/DPI Executive Committee and Salt Lake City**

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# Statement of Maher Nasser

Director of Outreach Division,  
Department of Global Communications

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When Mayor Jackie Biskupski of Salt Lake City shared her vision for bringing our UN Civil Society Conference to Salt Lake City, I knew that we had a special opportunity in front of us. So, with the support of our perennial co-hosts the NGO/DPI Executive Committee, we set out to organize the first major UN conference in the United States outside of UN Headquarters. It was an opportunity to convene a global conversation about the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at a moment when social forces seem to be pulling countries away from working together to find solutions to global challenges.

I travelled to Salt Lake City early on and was awestruck by the broad-based support. In addition to the Mayor and the City Council, we were offered support from the State Legislature of Utah, the Office of the Governor of Utah, Utah Valley University and a broad base of civil society and private sector leaders, including dynamic young people. We also gratefully received guidance throughout from the UN-Human Settlements Programme, UN-Habitat, which is the UN lead agency on Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 11.

We were fortunate to benefit from the poise and experience of conference chair Maruxa Cardama, who co-led the planning process and provided strong leadership to ensure that the conference was a forum for open and respectful sharing of experiences and views on how to successfully make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.



Maher Nasser, Director, Outreach Division, Department of Global Communications, United Nations.

Photo credit: Gabriella Rojas



Our secret ingredient for success is our longstanding partnership with civil society, rooted in the non-governmental organizations that are formally associated with the UN's Department of Global Communications and more than 500 UN grounds pass-holding youth representatives. Some 100 civil society representatives of around 90 organizations based in Salt Lake City, New York and elsewhere, served on the planning committee and dedicated countless hours of their personal and professional time to ensure that together, we made history. Young people played leadership positions throughout both the planning process as well as the conference itself, from the main stages to the dynamic youth-led programmes, workshops and community events. And with the support of the United Nations Foundation and the United Nations Association of the USA, we were able to ensure strong representation of developing country representatives among speakers, and strong attendance.



# Statement of Maruxa Cardama

Chair, 68th United Nations Civil Society Conference

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Maruxa Cardama, Chair of the 68<sup>th</sup> United Nations Civil Society Conference. Photo credit: Gabriella Rojas

Cities and communities concentrate at scale many of the trials and tribulations, but also of the opportunities and hopes, that we have to juggle as we translate global agendas for sustainable development and climate change action into positive local action for improving livelihoods and protecting the Planet. As someone who has dedicated the past 20 years to enabling knowledge and action towards social, economic and environmental justice in cities and communities, chairing the 68<sup>th</sup> United Nations Civil Society Conference - and especially learning from the devoted colleagues who made it possible - has been an incredibly humbling and enriching experience on many fronts.

To the amazing host Salt Lake City, to Mayor Biskupski and her team, to the United Nations Department for Global Communications, to my civil society peers in the NGO Executive Committee, the State of Utah, the Utah Valley University, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Days-Saints, the United Nations Association of the United States of America, UN Foundation, the United Nations programme for cities and human settlements-UN Habitat, the Conference Planning Committee and the Host Committee; to all conference partners and sponsors; to all engaged and engaging conference delegates; to the



particularly inspiring and empowering youth leaders involved in the Conference. To all of them goes my truly sincerest gratitude. With their tireless work and commitment, they have multiplied the positive impact of this 68<sup>th</sup> edition and made its unprecedented achievements and results possible.

The wonderfully overwhelming multinational, multicultural and multisectoral diversity brought to the global conversations held in Salt Lake City by the record-breaking number of conference delegates was a particularly remarkable feature of this 68<sup>th</sup> edition. Delegates learnt from each other about the integrated processes that underpin inclusivity and sustainability in the places where we live. In inspiring respectful and tolerant dialogue, delegates put the wealth of their knowledge and experience at the service of exploring solutions and actions for the positive transformation of cities and communities around the globe – and they did it boldly, addressing the complexity, political cost, innovation and bravery required to deliver on a new paradigm that leaves no one behind.

I was honoured to hand out, on behalf of civil society, the Outcome Document and Youth Climate Compact to Her Excellency María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, President of seventy-third Session of United Nations General Assembly. The presence of a President of the General Assembly was a first-of-a-kind occasion in the history of United Nations civil society conferences and contributes to consolidating. The Outcome Document and the Youth Climate Compact, which resulted from several months of transparent and open consultation at global scale, aim at scaling up existing solutions and empowering the individual and collective sphere of action towards enabling and stewarding the plurality of socio-economic and environmental conditions needed for all peoples to thrive in sustainable and inclusive communities respectful of mother Earth. We call on all United Nations member states and the entire UN system to support and enable the Outcome Document and Youth Climate Compact values, commitments and calls to action with bold commitments for transformative action.

We are living moments when the knowledge about and respect for multilateralism as a form of peaceful understanding among nations and peoples is experiencing dangerous decay. This 68<sup>th</sup> United Nations Civil Society Conference was the first United Nations conference held in the United States of America outside of United Nations headquarters in New York since the San Francisco Conference in 1945 – It has been a historic conference. It has given many delegates the occasion to experience multilateralism and the United Nations for the first time; building upon the success of all previous editions in bringing the United Nations closer to the peoples. On the eve of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, which is being commemorated in 2020, our days in Salt Lake City provided space for the much-needed collective reflection about what type of multilateralism we need in the twenty-first century in order to embrace and curate the positive force in communities and civil society movements in the wake of populism and anti-multilateralism.

All of us involved in the organization of the Conference have been guided by our determination to ensure a legacy beyond August 2019. This task is not exclusive to the Planning and Hosting Committees of the Conference, neither to me as Conference Chair. It is a huge opportunity for all who care about the meaningful engagement of civil society towards sustainable and inclusive cities and communities. So please, carry home the messages, the ideas, the solutions, the new friends and put all the learnings to good use. Become proud agents of positive change in your cities and communities!

Let's remember that inclusive and sustainable communities are the result of complex and also highly rewarding social processes; they are the right and the responsibility of each and every one of us.





# Statement of Jackie Biskupski

Mayor of Salt Lake City

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Jackie Biskupski, Mayor of Salt Lake City. Photo credit: Gabriella Rojas

The realities and impact of climate change present a daunting challenge no matter where we live in the world, from big cities to small towns. We are all effected and should share a collective sense of urgency about the need for action.

Solutions to any problem come through the combination of innovation, commitment and collaboration. And that's exactly what we saw here in Salt Lake City during the 68<sup>th</sup> Civil Society Conference in August; a global conversation and sharing of ideas to help communities around the world create a more inclusive and sustainable future.

As the Mayor of Salt Lake City, I remain deeply honored by the opportunity to link arms with the United Nations and civil society to participate in this critically important conversation. I am also humbled that Salt Lake City was selected to be the first US city to host a major United Nations gathering outside of the New York headquarters.



The gathering of some 4,000 participants from more than 100 countries, almost half youth, was inspiring and energizing. The sharing of information, ideas and expertise from so many bright and deeply committed people gave me great hope for our future.

The Outcome Document and Youth Climate Compact provide an important set of benchmarks for progress. I was particularly heartened by the clear and collective understanding that cities and local communities must play a central role in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals—the type of work Salt Lake City has been doing for years.

I am grateful that President of the UN General Assembly, María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, so enthusiastically accepted and shared these outcomes with every UN member state, further reinforcing the historic legacy of this Conference.

My sincerest thanks to all who helped make this Conference a reality, particularly our local organizing committees who helped Salt Lake City welcome the world. This work would not have been possible without the incredible effort of Baldomero Lago with Utah Valley University, finance chair Chris Redgrave, Scott Beck along with his team at Visit Salt Lake, Ambassador John Price, and Ben Kolendar with Salt Lake City. I'd also like to extend my thanks to the State of Utah, the Salt Lake City Council, Salt Lake County, and the civic, business, and private sector leaders who contributed resources to this Conference.

A special thank you as well to the hundreds of Utahns who served as conference volunteers. As anticipated, they brought their kindness and outstanding Utah hospitality to the event to make sure that those in attendance enjoyed a world class experience.

The 68<sup>th</sup> Annual Civil Society Conference was an historic moment for Salt Lake City, and the world. It is my hope that the promise of its outcomes will spur each of us into action for the betterment of all.



# Statement of Jeffrey Brez

Co-Chair, Conference Planning Committee  
Chief, NGO Relations, Advocacy and Special Events Outreach Division,  
Department of Global Communications

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Together, the United Nations, Civil Society representatives and Salt Lake City had an ambitious vision to convene a global conversation about the Sustainable Development Goals in the heartland of the United States. United by a common desire to build inclusive and sustainable communities, a broad group of partners and volunteers, including a strong contingent of young people, came together and dedicated thousands of hours of their time and expertise to plan the conference, making history in the process. This was the first major UN conference to take place outside of UN headquarters in the United States, and attracted 4,000 participants from more than 100 countries, the largest number in the conference's 68 editions to date. From my first visit to Salt Lake City, I was overwhelmed by the sense of welcome and "can-do" attitude. Successive visits, and the three days of the conference itself, only strengthened my appreciation of Salt Lake City as a community that values inclusion and sustainability, with a wealth of its own best practices to share with the rest of the world. I would like to extend my gratitude to Mayor Jackie Biskupski whose vision brought us all together, to Maruxa Cardama who was co-chair with me of the planning committee and who chaired the conference with great poise and strength of leadership, ensuring a lasting legacy through the outcomes, to all members of the Planning Committee, and to the NGO Executive Committee which is our gateway to partnering with civil society at large. Finally, I would like to thank my extraordinarily committed, hardworking team in the Civil Society Unit led by Hawa Diallo.



Jeffrey Brez, Chief, NGO Relations, Advocacy and Special Events, Photo credit: Jeffrey Brez



# Statement of Fannie Munlin

Chair, NGO/DPI Executive Committee

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Fannie Munlin, Chair of the NGO/DPI Executive Committee. Photo Credit: Gabriella Rojas

Dear Participants of the United Nations 68<sup>th</sup> Civil Society Conference held in Salt Lake City, Utah, on August 26th through 28th, 2019. I send my heartfelt thanks to each of you who participated in the Conference. Over 4,000 persons from 1708 organizations representing 139 countries, participated in Workshops, Youth Activities and Thematic sessions. You made the conference a success. I hope you enjoyed all the sessions and had the opportunity to establish networks to ensure the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. The Conference was an inclusive and a historic event in that it was the first time in the history of the organization that it has held a major Conference in the United States outside of its Headquarters in New York City. It is my great pleasure to offer gratitude to the Mayor of Salt Lake City and Governor of Utah, the staff of the United Nations Department of Global Communications, United Nations agencies, speakers, and NGOs, who worked together on local and global issues and shared common goals to express the United Nations Preamble “WE THE PEOPLES.”





# Concept Note: Building Inclusive and Sustainable Cities and Communities

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Today 55% of the world's population lives in urban areas, and that figure is expected to reach 68% by 2050<sup>1</sup>. As the complexities of urban life grow, communities and local leaders are at the forefront of finding sustainable solutions to poverty and inadequate housing, hunger and health, clean water, energy, environmental degradation and climate change, infrastructure, transport, education, migration, violence and gender equality. These and other challenges are interconnected with similar issues in rural areas and municipalities of all sizes, where activists and civil society organizations partner with governments and the private sector to ensure that communities are inclusive, equitable and sustainable.

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a blueprint for action, advocacy and partnership, and a compass to ensure that no one is left behind, including those who are poor and vulnerable. Women and young people are seizing opportunities to participate fully and prominently as leaders in these efforts, and there are numerous examples of local action contributing to achieving national frameworks and bringing about global impact. The SDGs were designed with direct participation from more than 10 million people globally over a three-year period and were launched in 2015 with the support of all 193 UN Member States. Civil society is key to promoting understanding of these ambitious Goals and achieving them by 2030.

Against this backdrop, this year's UN Civil Society Conference<sup>2</sup>, reflecting Salt Lake City's leadership and demonstrated commitment on sustainability issues, will focus on SDG 11, "to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable by 2030". The agenda will explore the interlinkages among all 17 Goals, including critical issues relating to gender.

The three-day conference, co-hosted by the UN Department of Global Communications, Salt Lake City, and the NGO Executive Committee, will feature opening and closing plenary sessions, interactive thematic sessions, NGO-sponsored workshops, exhibits and a youth hub. Speakers and attendees will include leaders and other representatives from NGOs, UN agencies, academia, faith traditions, the public and private sectors and youth from around the world.

An outcome document will be drafted by civil society under the leadership of the Conference's Chair, submitted for global consultations leading up to and during the conference, and presented at the closing plenary for adoption.

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<sup>1</sup> According to the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs

<sup>2</sup> The UN Civil Society Conference was formerly called the UN DPI/NGO Conference



# Programme

Monday, 26 August 2019

**Youth Caucus: Youth 2030 Now! Making the UN Youth Strategy a Reality**

08:30 - 09:45

**Opening Plenary**

10:00 - 11:30

Exhibit Hall CD

**Live Stream**

**CSO-led Partnership Workshops**

12:00 - 13:15

**Outcome Declaration Townhall**

12:00 - 13:15

Ballroom ABCD

**Lunch & Networking**

13:15 - 15:00

THEMATIC  
SESSIONS

**Inclusive  
Communities –  
Leaving No One  
Behind**

15:00 - 16:30  
Exhibit Hall CD  
**Live Stream**

THEMATIC  
SESSIONS

**Infrastructure  
and Natural  
Resource  
Use**

15:00 - 16:30  
Ballroom EGI

THEMATIC  
SESSIONS

**Building  
Inclusive  
Communities  
Through Education**

15:00 - 16:30  
Ballroom ABCD

THEMATIC  
SESSIONS

**Local/Regional  
Govts Leading  
the Way**

15:00 - 16:30  
Ballroom JHF

**Youth Hub 11:45 - 17:30**

**Exhibits**

**CSO-led Partnership Workshops**

17:00 - 18:15

**Youth Declaration Townhall**

17:00 - 18:15

Ballroom ABCD



Tuesday, 27 August 2019

**Youth Caucus: Engaging Local Governments. Youth and Community Development**

08:30 - 09:45

<div>THEMATIC SESSIONS</div> <div>Peaceful Societies – Recovering from Conflict and Nurturing Peace</div> <div>10:00 - 11:30</div> <div>Exhibit Hall CD</div> <div>Live Stream</div>	<div>THEMATIC SESSIONS</div> <div>Youth-led Session – Creating Opportunities and Economic Success for Youth</div> <div>10:00 - 11:30</div> <div>Ballroom EGI</div>	<div>THEMATIC SESSIONS</div> <div>Civil Society Monitoring SDG 11</div> <div>10:00 - 11:30</div> <div>Ballroom JHF</div>	<div>THEMATIC SESSIONS</div> <div>Impact Investing: Closing the SDG Financing Gap</div> <div>10:00 - 11:30</div> <div>Ballroom ABCD</div>	<div>Youth Hub 10:00 - 17:30</div>	<div>Exhibits</div>
<div>CSO-led Partnership Workshops</div> <div>12:00 - 13:15</div>	<div>Outcome Declaration Townhall</div> <div>12:00 - 13:15</div> <div>Ballroom ABCD</div>				
<div>Lunch &amp; Networking</div> <div>13:15 - 15:00</div>					
<div>THEMATIC SESSIONS</div> <div>Climate Change – Communities in Action</div> <div>15:00 - 16:30</div> <div>Exhibit Hall CD</div> <div>Live Stream</div>	<div>THEMATIC SESSIONS</div> <div>Emerging Technologies and Innovation</div> <div>15:00 - 16:30</div> <div>Ballroom EGI</div>	<div>THEMATIC SESSIONS</div> <div>Civil Society Partnerships for the UN We Need</div> <div>15:00 - 16:30</div> <div>Ballroom ABCD</div>			
<div>CSO-led Partnership Workshops</div> <div>17:00 - 18:15</div>	<div>Youth Mentorship Circles - Setting the Stage for Success!</div> <div>17:00 - 18:15</div> <div>Ballroom ABCD</div>				

Youth Hub 10:00 - 17:30

Exhibits



Wednesday, 28 August 2019

**Youth Caucus: Youth and Climate Action. Taking Firm Action on Saving our Planet**  
08:30 - 09:45

**CSO-led Partnership Workshops**  
10:00 - 11:15

**CSO-led Partnership Workshops**  
11:45 - 13:00

**Lunch & Networking**  
13:15 - 15:00

**Youth Hub 10:00 - 15:00**

**Exhibits**

**Closing Plenary**  
15:00 - 16:30  
Exhibit Hall CD  
***Live Stream***





# Opening Plenary Session

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## Welcoming Remarks

- 👤 Maher Nasser, Director, Outreach Division, United Nations Department of Global Communications (Emcee)
- 👤 Alison Smale, Under-Secretary-General for Global Communications
- 👤 António Guterres, United Nations Secretary-General (video message)
- 👤 Mike Mower, Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of Utah Governor
- 👤 Fannie Munlin, Chair, NGO/DPI Executive Committee
- 👤 Liberato Bautista, President of CoNGO
- 👤 Vlada Yaremenko, Co-Chair, Conference Planning Youth Sub-committee
- 👤 Ali Mustafa, Co-Chair, Conference Planning Youth Sub-committee
- 👤 Maruxa Cardama, Chair, 68<sup>th</sup> United Nations Civil Society Conference

## Cultural Performance

- 👤 Nino Reyes, Native American Group Dance and Music Performance

## Speakers

- 👤 Jackie Biskupski, Mayor of Salt Lake City
- 👤 John Price, Former United States Ambassador to the Republic of Mauritius, Republic of Seychelles, and the Union of the Comoros
- 👤 Christopher Williams, Director of New York Office, United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)
- 👤 Luke Mullen, Actor, Climate Activist
- 👤 Astrid Tuminez, President, Utah Valley University (UVU)
- 👤 Rachel Bowen Pittman, Executive Director, UNA-USA
- 👤 Hanko Kiessner, CEO, Packsize International

## Closing Remarks

- 👤 Maruxa Cardama, Chair, 68<sup>th</sup> United Nations Civil Society Conference



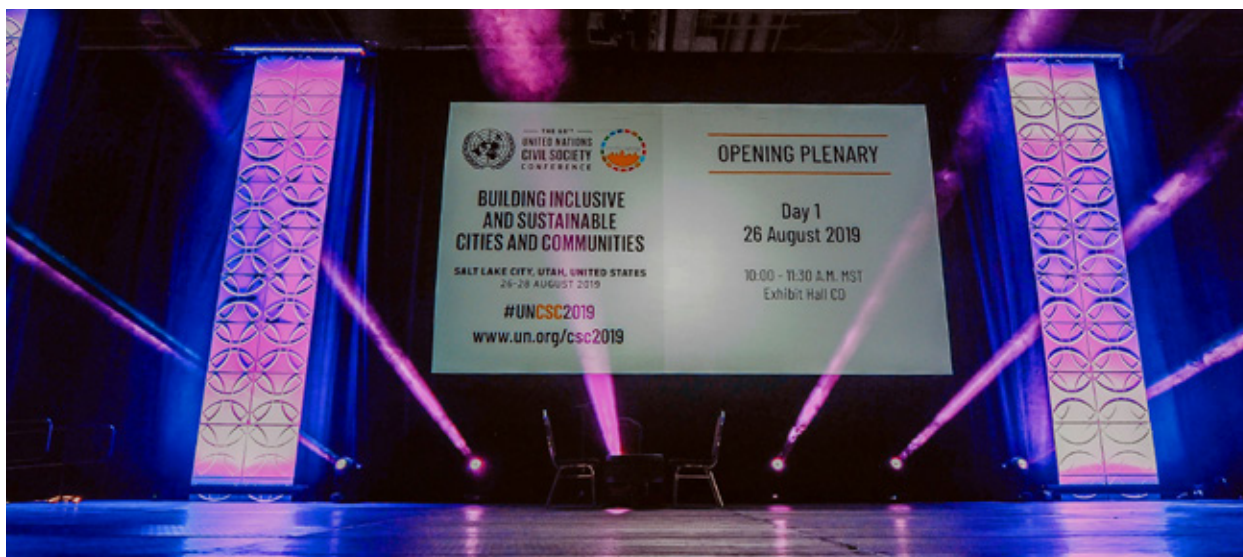


Exhibit Hall CD on 26 August 2019, before the Opening Plenary Session of the 68<sup>th</sup> UN Civil Society Conference.  
Photo credit: Gabriella Rojas

On 26 August 2019, the Opening Plenary Session officially kicked off the 68<sup>th</sup> United Nations Civil Society Conference on “Building Inclusive and Sustainable Cities and Communities.” The keynote speakers welcomed the civil society representatives to the most historic event of its kind for both the United Nations and Salt Lake City. Welcoming remarks were made by United Nations officials, including Secretary-General Antonio Guterres via video message, Alison Smale, Under-Secretary-General for Global Communications, Maher Nasser, Director, Outreach Division of the Department of Global Communications. Mike Mower, Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of Utah Governor; Fannie Munlin, Chair of the NGO/DPI Executive Committee; and Liberato Bautista, President of the Conference of Nongovernmental Organizations in Consultative Relationship with the United Nations (CoNGO), also addressed the civil society community with their welcoming messages. Finally, Co-Chairs of the Conference Planning Youth Sub-committee, Vlada Yaremenko and Ali Mustafa, and Maruxa Cardama, the Chair of the 68<sup>th</sup> United Nations Civil Society Conference, shared their opening remarks.

Speakers of the Opening Plenary introduced the theme of the 68<sup>th</sup> United Nations Civil Society Conference, touching on a variety of topics that relate to Sustainable Development Goal 11, including climate action, education, new technologies, infrastructure and resource use, and opportunities for youth. Jackie Biskupski, Mayor of Salt Lake City; John Price, Former United States Ambassador to the Republic of Mauritius, Republic of Seychelles, and the Union of the Comoros; Christopher Williams, Director, New York Office, United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat); Luke Mullen, Actor and Climate Activist; Astrid Tuminez, President, Utah Valley University (UVU); Rachel Bowen Pittman, Executive Director, UNA-USA; and Hanko Kiessner, CEO, Packsize International, made their remarks which served as an introduction to fruitful discussions during the Conference thematic sessions.

The Opening Plenary featured a cultural performance by Nino Reyes, a Native American group dance and musical performance.

Maruxa Cardama closed the Opening Plenary Session by urging the audience to utilize this Conference as a platform to explore solutions and actions for the positive transformation of inclusive and sustainable cities and communities.

# Welcoming Remarks by Alison Smale

Under-Secretary-General for Global Communications

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Alison Smale, Under-Secretary-General for Global Communications. Photo credit: Gabriella Rojas

Excellencies,  
Distinguished Ambassadors,  
Heads of United Nations Entities,  
Ms. Maruxa Cardama, Chair of the 68<sup>th</sup> United Nations Civil Society Conference,  
Co-chairs of the Conference, NGO Communities,  
Youth participants, Members of the Media,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good Morning! My name is Alison Smale and I am the Under-Secretary-General for Global Communications in the United Nations Department of Global Communications. It is my great pleasure to welcome you to the 68<sup>th</sup> UN Civil Society Conference. Let's have a round of applause!

We are thrilled to be here in the beautiful city of Salt Lake for this historic gathering, where it is the first time that this Conference takes place in the United States, but outside of UN Headquarters in New York. What a bonus to hold it in such a striking mountain location! Salt Lake City provides a great setting for a global conversation on inclusion and sustainability in cities and communities of all sizes.

The work we will do together here over the next three days is extremely important and ambitious. We are here to learn from each other, to share ideas and to strengthen a global coalition to transform our cities and communities to be more inclusive and sustainable.



With a majority of the global population now living in cities and the numbers growing daily, making cities inclusive, sustainable, resilient and safe is critical if we are to achieve the 2030 Agenda and all 17 of the Sustainable Development Goals by their target date.

Those Goals were drafted with the direct participation and input of more than 10 million people globally over a three-year period. They were approved with the support of all 193 Member States. They are our blueprint for the future – a roadmap for tackling global challenges, including how to deal with the complexities of rapid urbanization.

Last month, United Nations Member States reported on the progress they have made towards achieving the SDGs during the High-Level Political Forum in New York. The forum recommended that increased consultation and coordinated efforts among multiple stakeholders, including government ministries, local authorities, metropolitan authorities, national statistics offices, the private sector, academia, youth and civil society are necessary for the successful implementation of SDG-11. This conference enables such interaction to take place and I am confident that the adoption of the Conference's Final Declaration will contribute to that Goal.

Especially important in our efforts to achieve the SDG are youth. I am pleased to see so many young people are highly represented here and I look forward to listening to their voices and conversations that affect them greatly. Youth have gone beyond raising their voices; they have pioneered global movement on the most pressing challenges of our time such as climate change. This Conference will be an occasion to have important conversations around that subject and to build momentum for climate action ahead of the UN Secretary-General's Climate Action Summit taking place next month in New York.

This Conference is also unique because of the special partnership that literally pieces it together – it is planned not by the UN for civil society, but with civil society, for civil society. Allow me now to thank our perennial partners the NGO/DGC Executive Committee, Mayor Biskupski of Salt Lake City, as well as the Utah State Legislature and the office of the Governor for their support.

I would also like to thank the numerous volunteers who served on the Conference Planning Committee, dedicating countless hours of their expertise to bring us all together here. And the volunteers here this week to help make it a success.

It is my hope that through this Conference we recognize that the challenges we face are not insurmountable and can be overcome if we work in unison. This is a platform for civil society, Member States, academia, and the private sector to create new partnerships and conceive the best multilateral approaches to help tackle global crises. It is only through our collective efforts that we can face the critical challenges that lay ahead of us to build resilient societies that progress in peace and prosperity.

On that note, I would like to thank you once again for your commitment and enthusiasm. I wish you all wonderful and productive discussions.

UN Secretary-General António Guterres regrets that he could not be here with us today, due to previous engagements elsewhere, but he has prepared a video for us. Let us hear his message for the Conference. Thank you.



# Statement of António Guterres

Secretary-General of the United Nations

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I am pleased to greet this United Nations Civil Society Conference. I welcome your conference focus on building inclusive and sustainable cities and communities. Well planned and managed cities can steer us towards inclusive growth and service models of harmony among diverse people. Cities are also well placed to help combat the global climate emergency and point the way towards sustainable low emission development. The United Nations and I look to you for ideas and solutions and we will also continue to stress the vital role of civil society in solving all global challenges especially at a time when civic space is shrinking worldwide, and intolerance is on the rise in the spirit of strong partnership. I wish you a fruitful conference, thank you.



United Nations Secretary-General, António Guterres.  
Photo credit: UN Photo/Mark Garten





# Summary of Thematic Sessions

## Thematic Session

### Inclusive Cities and Communities – Leaving No One Behind

🕒 Monday, 26 August 2019; 15:00-16:30

## Overview

Sustainable Development Goal 11 strives to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable. The reality is that livelihoods in cities and human settlements are being experienced in increasingly unequal ways, especially among women, female-headed households, youth, children, and other marginalized groups. These included the poor, stigmatized ethnic groups, the LGBTQI community, the elderly, and people with disabilities.

## Summary

This session was moderated by **Ms. Maruxa Cardama**, Chair, 68<sup>th</sup> United Nations Civil Society Conference. Featured speakers included **Ms. Soraya Sayed Hassen**, Head of United World College, UWC, Mahindra College; **Ms. Millicent Auma Otieno**, Human Rights and Community Activist; **Ms. Annise Parker**, Former Mayor of Houston and President and CEO of LGBTQ Victors, Fund & Institute; **Mr. Ivan R. Shumkov**, CEO, Build Academy and Board member of Liter of Light; and **Ms. Mariarosa Cutillo**, Chief of Strategic Partnerships, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

**Ms. Cutillo** emphasized the global importance of achieving the SDGs; she spoke of the necessity for reaching the deadline of 2030 to keep our world both inclusive and sustainable. **Ms. Cutillo** said that a sense of urgency is vital. She noted that the ultimate goal of the UN is to help the invisible become visible, to give a voice to minorities who rarely have a say in major decisions that impact their community.

**Mr. Shumkov** stated that education and the empowerment of people to create their reality are a priority, and that all change must start with people believing that there is the potential to achieve it. Education was a common theme throughout the session, as many speakers acknowledged that it is the beginning of all major change. Empowerment was brought up throughout the session; panelists addressed its connection to community inclusivity. **Mr. Shumkov** also noted the correlation between the built environment, happiness, and health. People who live in a built environment which they love tend to live happier and healthier lives.

**Ms. Parker** noted the allure of cities for migrants. Cities must work to create an inclusive environment for the provision of social services and law enforcement. **Ms. Parker** emphasized the importance of training the different agencies in city government to create a welcoming, safe, and diverse community.





During the question and answer period of the Thematic Session “Inclusive Communities - Leaving No One Behind.”  
Photo credit: Gabriella Rojas

**Ms. Hassan** addressed global education and its significance in rural communities. She noted the centrality of language and the connections it builds in communities. When students learn a common language, a world of opportunity is opened to them.

Creating inclusive cities and communities will be greatly enhanced by policies that support free health-care (**Hassan**), climate action, and more inclusive governments (**Parker**). Ultimately, change will be sparked through peoples’ ability to listen to all voices in the conversation. **Ms. Otieno** prioritized meaningful public engagement. Local governments must strengthen opportunities for public engagement and embrace their original ideas for reform.

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🎥 Watch Thematic Session ‘Inclusive Cities and Communities – Leaving No One Behind’

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## Thematic Session

### Climate Change – Cities and Communities in Action

🕒 Tuesday, 27 August 2019; 15:00-16:30

#### Overview

As outlined in the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), climate change, with its associated risks, is among the defining issues of our time. Its impact is global in scope and unprecedented in scale and is already disrupting communities and livelihoods, especially for those living in poverty. However, there is a growing recognition that affordable, scalable solutions are currently available that will enable us to leapfrog to more green, clean, resilient economies in the long run.

Cities and communities, supported by strong advocacy from civil society, are acting on reducing carbon emissions and on developing resiliency. They are undertaking innovative strategies such as the decarbonization of transportation and energy systems, the development of zero emissions buildings, innovation in financing mechanisms, and positive behavioral changes among consumers, producers and policymakers.

With the UN Secretary-General's Climate Action Summit 2019 taking place just a few weeks after this conference, this session was an opportunity to boost ambition and accelerate action to implement the Paris Agreement, with a focus on local action and the role of youth.

#### Summary

This session was moderated by **Mr. Maher Nasser**, Director, Outreach Division, Department of Global Communications, UN. Featured speakers included **Mayor Jackie Biskupski**, Mayor, Salt Lake City; **Ms. Selina Neirok Leem**, Youth Delegate, The Republic of the Marshall Islands; **Mr. Olumide Idowu**, Co-Founder, International Climate Change Development Initiative (ICCDI Africa); **Mr. John Rego**, Vice-President, Sustainability Corporate Responsibility and Environmental Affairs, SONY Pictures Entertainment; **Ms. Laura Tobón**, Media Personality; and **Mr. Luke Mullen**, Actor and Environmentalist.

In his opening remarks, the moderator, **Mr. Nasser**, said that the Paris Agreement of 2015 adopted by world leaders outlined the way forward, "But we need to scale up the level of our mission and actions." In the context of the Secretary General's Climate Action summit next month in New York City, **Mr. Nasser** said climate change is "a race we can win, a race we must win. We must redouble our efforts." Climate action must be fair for all, and must support jobs and health, as well as protect the most vulnerable. This starts at the local, community level.

**Mayor Biskupski** said, "As mayor, I have been fortunate to be working with a group of mayors from across the country who have stood up to our President who has decided we are pulling out of the Paris Agreement. The mayors signed a resolution and sent a message to the world that the US was still in." She noted how her city in 2016 committed to 100% renewable energy after the city brokered an agreement with their regional energy provider. **Mayor Biskupski** also mentioned the Utah Transit Authority's new electric buses as an important city initiative.







Panelists of the Thematic Session “Climate Change - Cities and Communities in Action.” Photo credit: Maximilian Sköries

**Mr. Rego** used a new “Angry Birds” Act Now promotional video to discuss the ways SONY has partnered with the UN on its SDG initiative. The video and Act Now campaign emphasize different ways that individuals can shift to more sustainable, climate-friendly practices, including meat free meals and walking. In today’s world, **Mr. Rego** emphasized, “We’re all influencers.” Nabila, a student from the UK, spoke briefly at **Mr. Rego’s** request. She asked those in the audience to pull out their mobile phones, go to [un.org/actnow](https://un.org/actnow), and make a pledge.

**Ms. Tobón** spoke passionately about the 2019 fires in the Amazon rainforest. In years past, she was aware of climate change, but it seemed distant. **Ms. Tobón** became aware when one day, the air in Bogotá was so polluted that the government declared a state of emergency. She created a foundation to protect Colombia’s Cloud Forest. She also adopted a healthier and more sustainable lifestyle, such as banning single use plastic bottles, reducing her intake of meat and dairy, and switching from a plastic to a bamboo toothbrush. **Ms. Tobón** uses her social media platform to promote her concern for these issues.

**Mr. Mullen** became a climate activist when he took his Advanced Placement Environmental Science class, which opened his eyes. He said it is the young generation who will see the worst effects unless we all act now. Being in the entertainment industry has helped him connect and tailor awareness and



messages to youth, in order to help them know what they can do. “The answer is to come together and make change,” he stated.

**Mr. Idowu** said, “climate change is a time bomb.” **Mr. Idowu** listed the main problems in Nigeria as desert encroachment, oil spillage, and waste management. He said that we can start acting when we all understand our responsibilities. “Let us start telling ourselves, our neighbors, that the issue of climate change is not about talking, but about taking action.”

**Ms. Leem** was the final panelist to speak. **Ms. Leem** informed the audience that the Marshall Islands are made of 34 atolls and islands in the Pacific, and that most islands are not even one meter above sea level. She then stated, “Our home needs saving,” and said that she is not alone as a climate warrior. Today, most islands do not have access to the Internet or cell phone service. Many products, including batteries and solar panels, are discarded at the beaches because the local government does not know how to properly dispose of them. She described a mountain of trash being the highest point in the islands. **Ms. Leem** said, “There are many individual actions we can take, but action needs to come from leaders, the 1% who hold the power, influence, and money in the world.”

In closing remarks, **Mayor Bispupski** said the Utah Climate Action Network is sharing information with other cities and networks. Mr. Rego said there needs to be a cultural shift, that policies only get us so far if culture is not there to back it up. **Ms. Tobón** said, “plant a tree, donate, go to act now, use less plastic.” **Mr. Mullen** said he is seeing the shift in youth and that social media is a powerful tool to spread awareness. He stated, “Stay hopeful. With hope comes action.” **Mr. Idowu** also talked about using social media as a tool, using messages that help people to understand the issues and to provide solutions.

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 Watch Thematic Session ‘Climate Change – Cities and Communities in Action’

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## Thematic Session

### Peaceful Societies – Recovering from Conflict and Nurturing Peace

🕒 Tuesday, 27 August 2019; 10:00-11:30

## Overview

Peace is necessary for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and is a specific Goal in itself. This session focused on the interface between peace, justice and strong institutions (SDG 16) and safe, resilient, sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11). The last decade has been marked by increasing skepticism regarding the viability and effectiveness of multilateral approaches to peacebuilding. The Peaceful Societies Thematic Session discussed how civil society organizations are integrating objective measures to achieve an inclusive and sustainable culture of peaceful coexistence in their local activities, while, at the same time, respecting the integrity of nation states' sovereign rights.

## Summary

This session was moderated by **Ms. Alejandra Y. Castillo**, CEO, YWCA USA. Featured speakers included **Ms. Samira Harnish**, Founder and Executive Director, Woman of the world; **Ms. Mirella Dummar Frahi**, Civil Society Team Leader, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC); **Mr. Yinka 'Lamboginny' Lawanson**, Founder of Saving All Lives Together (SALT); and **Mr. Manav Subodh**, Co-founder, 1M1B and Global Senior Fellow, UC Berkley.

**Ms. Harnish** said that there are two developments that need to take place in order to encourage peace. The first is that peace needs to grow on the local level, and the second is that we need to integrate refugees into the community. She challenged communities to embrace those that are in crisis and help them develop the capacity for self-reliance. There are over 70 million displaced people in the world. Governments and civil society should work together to face these challenges. We need to talk repeatedly about this topic and make it a goal to help those in need. The speaker addressed the challenges that women face in re-integrating as refugees. For example, if women were educated elsewhere, they would have to re-certify when they come to another country, and she encouraged them to do that at a local university. Otherwise, they are forced into lower wage jobs; highly educated professionals, for example, end up working as dish washers instead of using their professional skills. Mothers also struggle to help their children navigate the United States because they often do not speak English.

**Ms. Frahi** emphasized the importance of focusing on corruption, as it is the weak link between funds donated and the intended recipient. Civil society must improve the monitoring of this corruption. The poorest areas seem to have the most corruption. Members of those communities believe traffickers, who offer hopes of a better life, and are sold into slavery or terrible work conditions. The UN Convention against Corruption is the only legally binding universal anti-corruption instrument, and it can be used to strengthen anti-corruption law enforcement practices.

**Mr. Lawanson** came dressed as a prison inmate in orange overalls on behalf of prisoners from his home country, Nigeria, for Africa as a whole, and for inmates around the world. He emphasized the need to not leave anyone behind, to strengthen judiciary and correctional systems, and to end stigmatization and segregation. Prisoners would eventually return to society, and reintegration is possible.





Yinka Lamboginny Lawanson, panelist of the Thematic Session “Peaceful Societies - Recovering from Conflict and Nurturing Peace” performed a song “Together We Are United Nations” inspired by the 68<sup>th</sup> UN Civil Society Conference. Photo credit: Gabriella Rojas

Being a musician, he saw that there is segregation between prisons and society. With his voice, he tried to create a peaceful bridge between society and prison systems and to use music as a form of therapy in the prisons.

Young people are in prison because many of them lack job opportunities. Technology has created social media pressure that creates expectations and a sense of entitlement. You need value to create opportunity. Also, you need value to get a job, and a job to survive.

**Mr. Subodh** stated that entrepreneurship can be used to solve world problems. Young people can be given resources to stay and thrive in their home countries. He described the work of his organization 1M1B and its impact on giving village children in India the resources to stay in India, start a business, and develop a credit score.

He wanted to create jobs and thought of Silicon Valley. He led a program in 30 countries and hoped to achieve the participation of people from rural villages, especially in the Middle East, India, and Africa. Big organizations could not necessarily reach these people, nor would they be able to participate in a training program. His goal was to find ways to reach them through technology. He said it is important to consider what scales are being used and whether they accurately measure impact. He noted that while NGOs may fail when embarking on a new endeavor, this is necessary for innovation.

The event concluded with a song written and performed by **Mr. Lawanson**.

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🎥 Watch Thematic Session ‘Peaceful Societies – Recovering from Conflict and Nurturing Peace’

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## Thematic Session

### Youth-led Session: Creating Opportunities and Economic Success for Youth

🕒 Tuesday, 27 August 2019; 10:00-11:30

## Overview

Half of the world's 7.6 billion people are under the age of 30. Youth unemployment stands at a near 60 million worldwide, with many more young people underemployed or in vulnerable and exploitative employment and working poverty. Young people's economic empowerment and access to decent jobs are essential components of a strong foundation for global societies and their futures.

The challenge lies in simultaneously creating decent jobs for the burgeoning youth population and addressing related concerns such as career skills mismatch with available career opportunities, working while living in poverty, and the suboptimal prospects attendant to school-to-work transition, especially in the developing world, as well as preparing for the rapidly changing future of work that is characterized by ongoing automation and technological advancement, while supporting the acceleration of a transition to green and climate friendly economies.

Marginalized youth often benefit most from the creation of new opportunities, skills training, microcredit provision, support for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and investments in education, all of which contribute to providing the knowledge and tools needed to be well-equipped to be competitive in local and international labor markets.

## Summary

This session was moderated by **Ms. Quratulain Tejani**, Director of Communications, School of Writing (Pakistan). Featured speakers included **Ms. Shabana Basij-Rasikh**, Co-Founder and President, School of Leadership Afghanistan (SOLA); **Mr. Beau Bennett**, Vice President of Marketing, Utah Valley University (UVU) Enactus; **Buddha Blaze (Mr. Moses Mbasu)**, Talent Manager, Temple Management Company; **Ms. Stephany Hemelberg**, Entrepreneur; **Mr. Macote Ambrozio**, Founder and Director, Macote Entrepreneur Center; **Mr. Safi A. Thomas**, H+ Founder and Artistic Director; **Ms. Yvonne H. Chow**, H+Director of Operations and Education Director; and **Ms. Victoria Díaz-García**, Partnership and Advocacy Specialist, Civil Society Division, UN Women.

**Ms. Tejani** began by posing a question to the panelists and audience (who responded via an online survey/wordcloud) asking: what barriers do youth face in creating opportunities and economic success? The wordcloud responses, and the ensuing discussion, coalesced around meeting of basic needs (e.g. food, shelter, safety, healthcare): **Ms. Chow and Mr. Thomas** reported that their constituents (dancers and artists in New York City) struggled to meet basic needs like groceries and rent payments. Their organization helps meet these needs, so that dancers and artists can focus on their work more than their survival. They find that while dancers and artists initially do not believe that the resources are free, they have built trusting relationships over time.

**Ms. Basij-Rasikh** described that the girls who attend her school come from different regions across Afghanistan and have varying levels of basic needs being met at their homes. Introducing reusable



sanitary pads has allowed many girls to stay in school during their menstrual cycles, instead of requiring them to go home, where they often stay for weeks or months. The pads have had a major effect of opening conversation about puberty and biological changes amongst girls, mothers, and other women, which traditionally are not discussed. This is an example of a transformative effect resulting from meeting a basic need. Another example of a basic barrier is that the number one barrier for education access for Afghan girls is a lack of teachers, especially female teachers.

The panelists agreed that education is an essential point of access for youth, but considerable divergence exists in current global levels of access, and panelists shared different priorities and mindsets toward the best ways to gain knowledge and other educational benefits.

**Ms. Hemelberg** held that technical knowledge is deeply lacking in many populations. In response to an audience question about student debt, **Ms. Hemelberg** and **Ms. Chow** stated that their university experiences were not worthwhile and that they preferred to support apprenticeship models and self-learning through free online sources. **Ms. Basij-Rasikh** emphasized the need for basic education access amongst the majority of the global population. **Mr. Ambrozio** suggested that more could be done to lower the costs of formal education, especially higher education, but that the model of higher education institutions was not obsolete.

A secondary discussion emerged about educating technical/knowledge-based skills, as well as mindsets of innovation and job creation. **Mr. Ambrozio** stated that youth should learn to see themselves as job-creators, rather than just job-seekers. **Mr. Bennet** and others brought up the need for youth to “learn to learn” so that they can iterate their products and business plans to keep up with the market. **Ms. Hemelberg** underscored the importance of flexibility, especially in technology-based business whose income models are dependent on the algorithms of information platforms (such as Google or Facebook), which are constantly changing.

**Mr. Ambrozio** described how youth in Guinea-Bissau need money to seed their businesses. Money donated to governments or banks rarely makes it to entrepreneurs. **Mr. Bennet** described the successes of microfranchising for solar-power phone charging stands in the Congo. He recommended that small businesses and microfranchise operations must have a sustainability mechanism, such as loans being repaid and beneficiaries donating to other entrepreneurs.

These issues of ageism and mentorship recurred several times through the discussion. **Ms. Chow** suggested that overcoming ageism and finding mentors is a seminal feature of youth economic success and opportunity, but that it is rarely talked about because it involves reconciling relationships with people of other generations. **Mr. Thomas** suggested problems of ageism run in both directions: for example, older people are threatened by the creativity and energy of youth, while youth do not respect the wisdom and experience of older people. Listening is at the heart of resolving these issues.

Several panelists brought up youths’ need for mentors. **Mr. Bennet** and **Ms. Hemelberg** praised the support of their mentors. **Ms. Chow** warned that mentors can provide one commodity (such as knowledge), but if they fail to trust the youth, they may block paths to success in other ways, thus cutting them off from further opportunities. **Mr. Mbasu** described how ageism is an institutional problem in Nairobi: youth finish college, but even entry-level jobs require 10-15 years of experience. The older generation does not trust that youth are capable. They often fail to see the wide reach of social media





Audience at the youth-led Thematic Session “Creating Opportunities and Economic Success for Youth.”  
Photo credit: Maximilian Sköries

for marketing or influencing, for example, whereas youth wield these tools to great effect in influencing ideas and creating constituencies.

**Mr. Ambrozio** asserted that solutions to youth economic opportunity must come at the local level, and that local youth must be involved in strategy and decision-making. Youth entrepreneurs have a better idea of local problems and solutions than large organizations, and their voices need to be heard. **Ms. Garcia** reported that small/medium size companies employ 85% of the Latin American workforce, illustrating how vital they are to providing youth job opportunities. **Ms. Chow, Mr. Thomas, Mr. Mbasu**, and others emphasized the importance of recognizing the importance of youth and local community members perpetuating the help they themselves had received and noted that this is typically a natural instinct amongst the people they work with.

Equal opportunity for women: **Ms. Garcia** emphasized that gender equality is a pervasive issue for women in the workplace: even if women overcome one barrier (such as education), they likely face gender discrimination in hiring, workplace culture, and compensation. In many cases, women do not have the flexibility to both have children and work, such as men usually do. Women being barred or put at a disadvantage has cascading effects: they lose economic opportunity, the company loses their institutional knowledge and experience, and younger generations lose female role models. **Ms. Garcia** recommends supporting public policies that support state-funded childcare, offer more protection for women in the workplace, and that makes it more feasible for women not to have to choose between having children and working.

**Mr. Thomas** asserted that his company is better for having 90% female employees, 90% whom are women of color. He stated that women must be in empowered roles, with autonomy and unilateral decision-making.

The discussion culminated with words of encouragement and advice from the panelists to youth. **Ms. Hemelberg** described her disillusionment that entrepreneurship would be easy or afford her quick wealth and time to manage her own schedule. Both she and **Mr. Ambrozio** described their businesses as mission-driven: they had employees who were now dependent upon them to feed their families. Spiritual and personal growth were recognized as important parts of entrepreneurship. **Mr. Thomas** described his personal journey to building his organization and encouraged people to learn from both failures and successes. Many panelists also recognized the vibrant creativity of the youth they work with, in a variety of forms from visual art to dance, writing, and music.

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 [Watch Thematic Session 'Creating Opportunities and Economic Success for Youth'](#)

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## Thematic Session

### Infrastructure and Natural Resource Use

🕒 Monday, 26 August 2019; 15:00-16:30

## Overview

Infrastructure development and inclusive and sustainable industrialization are key drivers of growth in the service of human prosperity within planetary boundaries. Investment decisions on infrastructure impact the well-being of citizens, the availability of natural resources and the preservation of ecosystem services for decades into the future, affecting the choices of future generations. Transportation systems, buildings, energy production and manufacturing are just a few examples that affect land and water use, waste, air quality and greenhouse gas emissions in profound ways. Given that cities and communities are hubs for innovation, commerce, employment, culture, and science crucial for sustainable and inclusive economic growth and human development, optimal planning and governance are crucial to strike a balance that meets current needs without compromising future ones. With urban growth set to skyrocket between now and 2030, reaching 60% of world population living in urban areas [1], it is more important than ever to “build better”.

## Summary

This session was moderated by **Ms. Gina Damasco**, UU-UNO. Featured speakers included **Mr. Satya Tripathi**, UN Assistant Secretary-General and Head of New York Office, UN Environment Programme (UNEP); **Mr. David Michael Terungwa**, Executive Director, Global Initiative for Food Security and Ecosystem Preservation (GIFSEP); **Ms. Andrea DiGiovanni**, Head of Strategic Projects, Neighbourlytics; **Ms. Amanda J. Nesheiwat**, Environmental Director at Town of Secaucus, NJ; **Mr. Kancheepuram N. Gunalan**, Senior Vice President of AECOM and President Elect of the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE).

**Mr. Tripathi** explained a threefold problem: first, arrogance of the human species thinking that nature exists just for itself; second, ignorance of climate reality even though there are over 1 million peer reviewed journal articles on this; third, unwillingness to act despite the overwhelming facts. With reference to Martin Luther King Jr., he said he has a dream that all people can be champions. He drew a comparison between what is happening now with the Amazon rainforest burning and what happened when the Notre Dame Cathedral burned (1 billion dollars raised in 1 week). In other words, we can fix the problem, but we must believe we can.

**Mr. Terungwa**, from Nigeria, described his work with rural farmers who do not have access to social media or even television. They know about climate change because it is affecting their livelihoods. When farmers are asked not only about their problems but about solutions, they have answers. Many issues can be solved by the community members themselves, especially women. The use of participatory mapping is helpful for the community to go around their district, know the boundaries, and identify where it is good to farm or graze animals. This approach gives power to the people and supports solutions from local knowledge.



**Ms. DiGiovanni** said that her organization uses data to understand how communities use infrastructure in order to better understand what the infrastructure needs truly are for those communities. This kind of data-driven development is especially important given the tendency to prioritize planning for physical infrastructure, rather than what is needed to increase social prosperity. In their study of 10 cities around the world that had experienced significant job growth, the finding was that the cities had been developed for the experience of people (e.g., parks and other community spaces).

**Ms. Nesheiwat** explained that Secaucus, New Jersey is a small town located in a unique urban estuary. Due to poor planning for infrastructure, the New Jersey Meadowlands, a large ecosystem of wetlands in Northern New Jersey, became filled-in such that flooding became a problem, especially during hurricane Sandy. As a result, the town came to see protecting natural resources as protecting the community. They have been expanding electric charging stations, purchasing carbon offsets, and implementing major energy efficiency upgrades. They partner with the private sector to do river clean-ups and protect pollinators. She urged the other youth delegates to get involved because they can make a difference.

**Mr. Kancheepuram N. Gunalan** described the priorities of the American Society of Civil Engineers: do the right project, transform the profession, and make the case. In regard to transforming the profession, he mentioned several ways ASCE has been doing this. Similarly, with respect to AECOM, a private company, he said that they had embraced the UN SDGs. He cautioned that greed can sometimes guide the private sector too much; the public sector needs to make sure there are good policies and procedures in place.

There were several questions from the audience that generated further responses from the panelists. The discussion revealed several additional inspiring initiatives happening locally, as well as a pointed critique that the conference itself could be more “green.”

The final action items the panelists wanted to share included: think differently about everything we produce so that it becomes easier to recycle; do not forget about addressing population growth; include a diversity of voices and perspectives to make better decisions; tell your representatives what you want and get involved locally; reconsider consumption and take only what you need from the planet.

The overarching take-away of the session was that change can happen, but people must feel empowered to act.

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 **Watch Thematic Session ‘Infrastructure and Natural Resource Use’**

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## Thematic Session

### Emerging Technologies and Innovation

🕒 Tuesday, 27 August 2019; 15:00-16:30

#### Overview

Billions of people are connected by mobile devices with unprecedented processing power, storage capacity, and information sharing—all of which foreshadows stunning global possibilities. This potential is multiplied by the emergence of artificial intelligence, robotics, 'big' data processing, the Internet of Things, autonomous vehicles, 3-D printing, cryptocurrencies, and blockchain technologies.

This 4th Industrial Revolution is recognized as one of the most significant ways to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030, because technology cuts across all of the SDGs. The challenge to the public and civil society is to tap the power of technology to ensure that cities and communities across all socio-economic contexts can harness innovation that inspires sustainable lifestyles, eliminates extreme poverty, and increases shared prosperity.

#### Summary

The session was moderated by **Mr. Daoud Kuttab**, Director General Community Media Network. Featured speakers included, **Ms. Kelly A. Lovell**, Youth Mobilizer, Speaker and CEO, Lovell Corporation; **Mr. Curtis Thornhill**, CEO, APT Marketing Solutions; **Ms. Jasmin Crowe**, Founder and CEO GoodR; and **Ms. Ann Rosenberg**, Vice President of SAP and **Mr. Salem Avan**, Director at the United Nations Office of Information and Communications Technology (UN OICT).

**Ms. Lovell** discussed rapid technology advancements; the widening skill set gap and how stakeholders could mitigate this impact. Technology is displacing high and low skilled jobs. Using the SDGs, how institutions prepare individuals to solve local challenges and provide needed skills and resources. Although digital literacy is essential, it is equally important to focus on the 'soft skills:' creativity, empathy, emotional intelligence, leadership, and teamwork. These "soft skills" will help to 'future-proof' the next generation and enable them to thrive in the Fourth Industrial Revolution. Inclusivity should be a major focus and requires effective scale, access shifting from teaching people to be focused specialists, to more holistic generalists

**Mr. Avan** considered the impact of the Fourth Industrial Revolution on the implementation of the SDGs. Using the analogy of the light bulb, **Mr. Avan** commented that today, more than 1.3 billion people globally still do not have access to electricity. Conversely, in the least developed countries, one in seven people have access to the internet. Such access must be inclusive; and reach the most vulnerable. There is a digital divide and a digital gender divide that must be addressed. In 1975, there were three mega-cities, i.e. Tokyo, New York and Mexico City. Today there are 21 mega cities. In China alone, there are over 221 cities with more than one million people. This has infrastructure implications. Although becoming a smart city is important, resilient cities are crucial.

**Mr. Thornhill** evaluated the impact of technology on global issues, using Salt Lake Cities' mitigation of air quality issues as an example of the effective use of technology. He viewed that effective im-



plementation was dependent upon three important elements: Economic Development, Work Force Transition and K-12 Education. 15.5% of the global economy is now derived from technology-based solutions, and, to effectively engage governments, we must understand all implications of technology.

**Ms. Crowe** addressed minimization of a critical need through the creative use of technology – specifically elimination of food waste and distributing otherwise wasted food to feed those without access to nutritious food. 72 million pounds of food is thrown away annually. Using technology and focused logistics, facilitates simple and legal methods to distribute resources that would otherwise be squandered. Currently, disadvantaged children are provided free meals during the school week but may not have access to nutritious food after school hours. The challenge is to collect data to incentivize businesses to address these issues.

**Ms. Rosenberg** used Science Fiction as an analogy to address technology issues. What was considered crazy 100 years ago, is reality today. Evaluate problems from the perspective of a three-legged stool. All legs are needed for the stool to stand. For example, when you look at communities and community service, volunteering, and social innovation. you get credits for taking action that can be traded for necessary resources; this encourages young people to implement meaningful change. We must expand the minds of the next generation - 3D thinking not linear.

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 **Watch Thematic Session 'Emerging Technologies and Innovation'**

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## Thematic Session

### Impact Investing: Closing the SDG Financing Gap

🕒 Tuesday, 27 August 2019; 10:00-11:30

## Overview

The gap to financing the Sustainable Development Goals remains in the trillions; yet the world's philanthropic funds, even when combined with the global development and aid budgets of governments, add up to only a fraction of this funding need. How do we close this gap and how can public and private actors create an environment to attract private capital and more efficiently and transparently disburse public funds for inclusive and sustainable development in cities and communities?

Impact investors are playing a key role in addressing the SDGs, including in how they are measuring and managing the positive impact they seek—a hallmark of impact investing. Impact investing is a powerful tool to build and strengthen socially, economically and environmentally sustainable cities and communities. Participants will engage in investment case examples presented by public and private sector investors that are partnering together in order to mobilize more capital toward financing the SDGs and specifically towards Goal 11.

## Summary

This session was moderated by **Ms. Fran Seegull**, Executive Director of the U.S. Impact Investing Alliance. Featured speakers included **Mr. Jim Sorenson**, entrepreneur & American businessman, an impact investor who is excited about how impact investing can be used to address societal issues in the future; **Ms. Georgie Benardete**, entrepreneur and CEO of Align17; and **Mr. Ji Yongjun**, Member of the CPAFFC (Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries) and Deputy Director General from the Department of American and Oceanian Affairs.

**Ms. Seegull** gave a brief explanation as to how impact investing has the potential to make great strides in providing adequate & affordable housing, safe & accessible transportation, reducing the impact of natural disasters, green infrastructure, sustainable planning, and air quality. **Ms. Seegull** opened the discussion by asking the panelists to each share an example of a successful impact investment. **Mr. Sorenson** mentioned his Sorenson Impact Foundation and some of the projects they have been working on around the world. **Mr. Sorenson** also highlighted the Indie Dwell construction company which has been modulating shipping containers for low income housing that is 30-40% cheaper than current alternatives. **Ms. Benardete** talked briefly about Sanergy, an organization that focuses on improving sanitation and waste management in areas of impoverished high density living. **Mr. Yongjun** discussed the alarming number of Chinese youth who need to leave their impoverished hometowns to work in big cities where there are more job opportunities. All of the panelists agreed that the SDG 11 finance gap requires so much wealth to be mobilized that government aid is not enough.

**Ms. Seegull** had the panelists explain in a bit more depth whether or not profit should be traded off for positive social or environmental impact, or if the two can be compatible. **Mr. Sorenson** explained how there are investors who put purpose above profit meaning they are willing to take risks to put more





Thematic Session “Impact Investing: Financing the SDGs.” Photo credit: Maximilian Sköries

money behind the cause, while other investors seek returns, either social or capital. These different types of interests cause mixed markets. In the mixed market, great collaboration between the government, investors, philanthropists, and service providers can have an impact on humanitarian issues such as, as **Mr. Sorenson** explained, cyclical poverty. **Ms. Benardete** elaborated off her earlier remarks as to how Align17 helps investors find third party platforms that are working on achieving the 17 global goals. **Mr. Yongjun** mentioned how there is growing interest in impact investing in China, especially in addressing climate change.

The panel opened questions to the audience. An audience member commented on how the US has not done enough to address poverty and asked the panelists how they see impact investing helping poverty. **Ms. Seegull** answered by pointing out that 180 US CEOs have signed a declaration to shift their business focus from investor profit to stakeholders. This shows a new commitment to serving humanity. **Mr. Sorenson** talked about how impact investing enables individuals to increase their income with the aim of addressing poverty and can motivate capital to be invested in distressed areas, areas where the poverty level is 3 times the national average.

Another audience member asked about how we can build a society that supports indigenous people whom are the most impacted by climate change. **Mr. Sorenson** answered the question by telling how some areas are more vibrant for impact investors while investors are neglecting certain other communities. In the future **Mr. Sorenson** wants to focus on addressing more issues from forgotten communities.



A youth in the audience asked about how students can get involved with this kind of investing. **Mr. Yongjun** answered first by talking about the growing number of university students working with the organizations he works with and are excited to continue in the field. **Mr. Sorenson** then answered with stating that the research team of 50-60 students at his foundation are hard working individuals who are making great connections through impact investing that last their adult lives, **Mr. Sorenson** states that impact investing is growing the most with new generations.

An attendee asked if wealth decolonization has hit the radar of impact investors and if investors are informed about the importance of climate migration. **Ms. Benardete** answered that she has many clients who have expressed concern over wealth decolonization, but neither **Ms. Benardete** or **Mr. Sorenson** have had clients show concern over climate migration.

The last audience question was about how we should change the normality of investing to favor impact investing. **Mr. Sorenson** and **Ms. Georgie** agree that change needs to come faster, but all we can do right now is put pressure on investors and make legislation motivate the investors to invest in our humanitarian issues.

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 **Watch Thematic Session 'Impact Investing: Closing the SDG Financing Gap'**

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## Thematic Session

### Local and Regional Governments Leading the Way to Sustainable Communities

🕒 Monday, 26 August 2019; 15:00-16:30

## Overview

Local and regional governments are leading the way to “Build Inclusive and Sustainable Communities.” As the closest government entity to their citizens, they are uniquely positioned to make a difference in people’s lives, while also being on the frontlines of responding to climate change and its impacts on communities. These local governments are making meaningful progress in reducing carbon emissions, becoming more resilient to a warming world, and improving air quality while doing so in an equitable manner to ensure that the needs of their citizens are being met.

Collaboration is the key to success. This Thematic Session explored and emphasized the power of multi-stakeholder networks to share information and amplify impact. Concrete examples from several Utah communities highlighted how local governments and civil society organizations worked together to craft programs, policies, and regulations to create more sustainable communities. Speakers included senior-level city sustainability staff, a state representative, and local nonprofit partners. They will detail legislation that created a pathway for large-scale renewable energy development, electrified transportation initiatives, and community food production.

## Summary

This session was moderated by **Ms. Vicki Bennett**, Salt Lake City Sustainability Director. Featured speakers included **Representative Patrice Arent**, Utah State Legislature; **Ms. Luke Cartin**, Park City Sustainability Manager, Salt Lake City; **Ms. Supreet Gill**, Salt Lake City Food Program Manager; **Ms. Debbie Lyons**, Salt Lake City Deputy Sustainability Director; **Mr. Tyler Poulson**, Salt Lake City Energy Program Manager; and **Ms. Sarah Wright**, Director, Utah Clean Energy.

**Ms. Bennett** introduced this session by talking about how critical collaboration is in making sustainable changes. She explained that Salt Lake City and Park City have demonstrated success in addressing local climate issues, particularly as they relate to air quality. The goal of this session was to give concrete examples of ways to move the needle on climate issues, as well as on land use for local food projects. It was noted that Utah is widely known as a very conservative state, yet, through collaboration, clean air initiatives have been adopted; transportation changes have been funded; and some of the most ambitious goals in the world have been set for net-zero carbon and 100% renewable energy by 2030 for these communities.

**Mr. Poulson** and **Ms. Wright** suggested four keys to tackle climate change and advance clean energy: 1-use the power of networks via sustained dialogue. 2-leverage leaders. Identify key leaders/influencers and garner their support through education about the realities of climate change and the need for clean energy. Use data to educate. 3- engage the voice of youth. 4- make system changes that result in lofty, but achievable goals.







Panelists of the Thematic Session “Local and Regional Governments Leading the Way to Sustainable Communities.”  
Photo credit: Gabriella Rojas

**Rep. Arent** and **Mr. Cartin** gave examples of the power of partnerships. In Utah, air quality unites both sides of the aisle. Salt Lake City and Park City have partnered with the state’s largest utility, Rocky Mountain Power, to work towards the goals noted above.

Park City seeks efficiency, to electrify, and to regenerate, through wise land use. The city has funded a fleet of electric buses to reduce pollution. No fare is charged. Funding the fleet is far less costly than a mile of asphalt.

**Ms. Lyons** and **Ms. Gill** explained the role of local food production in helping the environment, the economy, providing equity of food sources, and improving community health by growing and supplying fruits and vegetables. Unused city property has been turned into thriving gardens.

All speakers and the moderator invited anyone interested in learning more to contact any one of them and offered to assist in replicating their work in other communities. The website is: [Slcgreen.com](http://Slcgreen.com)

There were two calls to action: 1-Learn to collaborate; 2- Build partnerships.

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📺 Watch Thematic Session ‘Local and Regional Governments Leading the Way to Sustainable Communities’

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## Thematic Session

### Building Inclusive Communities Through Education

🕒 Monday, 26 August 2019; 15:00-16:30

#### Overview

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) call for ensuring equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including at the university level. Rapid technological changes present opportunities and challenges, but the learning environment, the capacities of teachers, and the quality of education have in many parts of the world not kept pace, and in others still need to catch up. New models in higher education are emerging, as lawmakers and higher education professionals look for ways to address declining enrollment numbers, lack of diversity and skyrocketing tuition, as well as knowledge gaps in today's rapidly evolving global workforce. Access for all to a quality education and learning opportunities – starting with children – will play a central role in increasing the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship to meet today's global and local challenges.

#### Summary

This session was moderated by **President Astrid S. Tuminez**, Utah Valley University (UVU). Featured speakers included **Mr. Reuben Ng**, Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, National University of Singapore; **Mr. Jamal Watson**, Executive Editor, *Diverse: Issues in Higher Education*; **Mr. Ramu Damodaran**, Chief, Academic Impact, Department of Global Communications, United Nations; and **Mr. Thomas George**, Senior Urban Advisor, The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

**Mr. Watson** explained how we need to look at issues of inclusion and access at the post-secondary level. He addressed the question of how we can make colleges and universities in this country more accessible to students who have been marginalized—not just racial minorities, but also first-generation students and those with disabilities. We must find ways to meet students where they are and take them where we want them to be.

**Mr. Ng** focused on the question of how education can catch up to Industry 4.0. Four intelligences are needed – ABCI: (1) augmented intelligence; (2) behavioral intelligence; (3) contextual and cultural intelligence; (4) Data intelligence. Industry 4.0 promotes the gig economy that increases labor force participation. For example, full-time parents and caregivers can now get gig jobs through new hiring platforms, promoting economic and social inclusiveness.

**Mr. George** discussed how there is more to learn in school today than ever before, but, at the current pace, we will not reach the SDG 4 targets by 2030. It is estimated that, in 2030, of the 1.4 billion children, 825 million will not have acquired the secondary level skills and basic competencies to be competent in the labor market. We need to focus more on education in urban areas, particularly slum areas. In doing so, we can find localized solutions involving all stakeholders.





Thematic Session “Building Inclusive Communities Through Education.” Photo credit: Maximilian Sköries

**Mr. Damodaran** noted two important phrases are often used in the United Nations realm: 1. The dignity and worth of the human person. 2. Unite our strength. We begin with the individual and then combine our strength to make great accomplishments. How does education fit into this? The UN is rich in the use of acronyms. When he saw the word “UTAH,” he said he thought it might stand for: “Unleashed Truth and Hope.” Truth and hope are the two things we need today which education can provide – truth in what is and can be, to counter ignorance, error, deception and hate; and hope for progress and a better future.

Action items presented by **President Tuminez** reflected audience and panel input given during this session: Governments should prioritize funding for education and ensure that such funding is sufficient, transparent and accountable. Primary education should be provided for free, in line with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of the Child. The United Nations should foster partnerships between the public and private sector, bringing together governments, civil society, and private industry to collaborate on education. Such collaboration should include advocacy on using technology to make education more accessible, inclusive and affordable. The “fourth industrial revolution” should not lead to another century of continuing inequality, especially in education.

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📺 Watch Thematic Session ‘Building Inclusive Communities Through Education’

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## Thematic Session

### Enhancing the Role of Civil Society to Monitor Implementation of SDG 11

🕒 Tuesday, 27 August 2019; 10:00-11:30

## Overview

There are significant challenges associated with the monitoring of SDG 11, given that the majority (13 out of 15) of SDG 11 indicators are new – with no formal data being collected at the local, city, and national levels. Less than 30 per cent of Member States are consistently collecting data on the urban dimensions of the SDGs through their national statistical systems. This is far below the threshold of 50 per cent (97) of Member States required to make meaningful analysis at the regional and global levels.

Civil society and other stakeholder groups have a critical role in contributing to the data gaps and in advocating for the prioritization of SDG11 implementation, monitoring, and reporting. This session provided an opportunity for civil society to share their experience. It also explored approaches required to enhance monitoring of SDG11 indicators, including recognition of data and information collected by civil society.

## Summary

This session was moderated by **Ms. Kristie Holmes**, Co-Chair, Press and Media Sub-committee, Conference Planning Committee and Board member, UN Women-USA. Featured speakers included **H.E. Michael Mlynár**, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Slovakia to the United Nations; **Ms. Sharon Eubank**, President, LDS Charities; **Ms. Smruti Jukur**, Programme Officer, SPARC-Society; **Ms. Shamoy Hajare**, Founder, The Jamaica School for Social Entrepreneurship (JSSE); **Ms. Mukite Rosemary Mukhwana**, Ag. Commissioner for Urban Planning Minister of Lands, Housing and Urban Development, Kampala; and **Mr. Christopher Williams**, Director, New York Office, UN Human Settlements Program (UN-Habitat).

**Mr. Williams** introduced the session, saying that because Goal 11, Sustainable Cities and Communities, was added more recently, it is a challenge to measure the progress of something that has not been done before. Lack of big data, along with inconsistent monitoring, adds to the challenge.

In this broad-ranging session, six panelists offered their perspectives and suggestions for involving civil society in the monitoring process, all of them agreeing that we must work together to create sustainable cities and communities and be willing to work on a small scale to gather data that feeds into a larger network of data.

Moderator **Ms. Holmes**, an urban planner, said that reliable, large-scale data is available in a few areas: slums, displacement/disaster planning, solid waste management, and urban air pollution. There are many more aspects lacking data. She suggested that we need to ask questions in a way people can understand, such as: How does your city recover from a disaster? Does your city have a way for citizens to participate in planning?







Thematic Session “Enhancing the Role of Civil Society to Monitor Implementation of SDG 11.”

Photo credit: Maximilian Sköries

**H.E. Michael Mlynar**, Permanent Representative of Slovakia to the UN in New York, said, “How we manage urban growth will determine how successful we are with SDG 11.” He offered six words for civil society’s monitoring: participation, partnerships, coherence (in implementing policies), coordination, localization (implementation on the local level is critical), and appropriate leadership at every level.

**Ms. Eubank**, Director of Latter-day Saints Charities, spoke of the preparedness and resilience of cities and communities when emergencies arise but emphasized the importance of individuals, neighborhoods, and families (micro stakeholders) being involved in not only preparing, but also providing, small-scale data that feeds into a macro network. She said that we should ask five questions: Do households and families have 72 hours’ worth of emergency supplies of food and water? (This must be scaled to specific communities/households). Has the neighborhood designated a council of leaders? Communities need the capability to communicate without technology. Have we tested the plan? (Testing will reveal gaps in the plan). Have we mapped the community? Do we know where the medical personnel, temporary shelter, alternative power sources, and water supplies are? What could we do to minimize loss of life/property that we are not doing now?

**Mr. Ndugwa**, Chief of the Global Urban Observatory and statistician whose work supports UN Habitat, said that the most important question in monitoring is, “Are we hitting the milestones we set out?” He noted that SDG 11 is the first opportunity we have had to monitor at the local level, yet only 60% of the indicators are being applied at the local level. He said that to aggregate and order/consolidate expertise, we need to work with a stream of indicators in an organized way, sharing information, rather than working in silos. Then, “We must move the data into policy.”



**Ms. Katz** of UN Habitat asked, “How do we engage and work with your governments?” She is looking for ways to change more land policies globally to create more affordable housing. Mapping communities with the use of drones and using the Global Housing Indicators Database can help make housing affordable. Although the definition of “affordable housing” varies widely, **Mr. Ndugwa** suggested that it needs to be less than 30% of household income. **Ms. Katz** and other panelists urged standardized data-gathering methodologies.

**Ms. Jukar**, an urban planner and community mobilizer with Slum Dwellers International, described her NGO as “trying to bring the voices of the poor up to government.” The government census is inadequate, she said, because many people do not have an address. There is no data aggregation on a national level, so it is hard to visualize how many people are living in “informal settlements” (slums) in poverty. She gave an example of one of these places that her organization recently mapped; locals are helping gather data in order to meet the needs of these people. There are standards in place in different sectors which have not been questioned for decades, she said, and these need to be updated.

**Ms. Hajare**, founder of the Jamaica School of Social Entrepreneurs, mentioned that young people in Jamaica are learning how to make and sell crafts and small jewelry from plastic bottles, thereby recycling them and creating a usable product that allows them an income. Unfortunately, she said, no data on this is being captured. With public-private partnerships working together effectively, these entrepreneurs could provide data to the larger system. She believes “the potential for youth participation and technology is huge.”

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📺 Watch Thematic Session ‘Enhancing the Role of Civil Society to Monitor Implementation’

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## Thematic Session

### Civil Society Partnerships for the UN We Need

🕒 Tuesday, 27 August 2019; 15:00-16:30

## Overview

Renewed support for global cooperation could not be more urgent. To mark the 75th anniversary of the United Nations in 2020, the UN@75 campaign will invite people worldwide to participate in a series of global dialogues – physical and online – to explore how renewed commitment to collective action can secure the world we want in 2045, when the UN reaches its 100th anniversary.

Tackling issues such as the climate crisis, poverty and inequality, protracted conflict, migration and displacement, and the rapid changes in demography and technology will require effective cooperation across borders, sectors, and generations. Failure to do so will have far-reaching consequences for the welfare of our children and grandchildren – and our planet itself.

Yet, just when we need bold collective action more than ever, multilateralism is being called into question by powerful governments. Unilateralism is on the rise, as the world becomes more multi-polar but also more polarized. In many parts of the world, there is a growing disconnect between people and institutions.

Participants discussed how we can collectively navigate the gap between the future we need and where we are headed, if current global trends confronting humanity are left unchecked. What new forms of global cooperation will we need to shape the future we want?

## Summary

This session was moderated by **Ms. Poonam Kumar**, Capital City News, Salt Lake City. Featured speakers included **Ms. Alison Smale**, Under-Secretary-General for Global Communications; and **Mr. Fabrizio Hochschild**, Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on the Preparations for the Commemoration of the 75th Anniversary of the United Nations. Panelists included **Ms. Maruxa Cardama**, Chair of 68<sup>th</sup> UN Civil society Conference & Secretary General of the Partnership on Sustainable, Low Carbon Transport; **Ms. Uzma Gul**, Asia Pacific Regional Coordinator, Commonwealth Youth Peace Ambassadors Network; and **Mr. Fergus Watt**, Coordinator, UN2020 Campaign.

The audience was an even balance between foreign, national, and local attendees.

**Ms. Smale** reviewed the focus of the United Nations (UN) from its inception to today. She said the UN was established on the back of the carnage of World Wars I and II with the goal to stop future wars. It has been nearly 75 years since it was created, and it is time to reflect how effectively it has reached its goals and mandates. The UN has a lot to be proud of, but many things to yet work on to more effectively achieve its goals and mandates.

**Mr. Hochschild** introduced the UN75 initiative's discussion of the framing questions and Toolkit for global dialogues. He admitted that there is a gaping chasm between the world we want, where it



currently is, and where the trends are leading the world of the future. He mentioned many current problems, such as climate change, urbanization, growing inequality, conflict throughout the world, nuclear war threat, population displacement, and the rewards and risks of technology. He introduced the framework for the UN2020 discussions: What is the world we want to see for our children and grandchildren and for the UN as it reaches its 100th anniversary in 2045) Where is the world heading if current trends continue? How can invigorated, inclusive, and meaningful cooperation help us make a positive impact on our future trajectory?

The UN was created to stop humanity from descending into another world war, but the threats are equally bad, even if they are different. We need cooperation now as we did then.

Panelists **Maruxa Cardama**, **Uzma Gul**, and **Fergus Watt** discussed the questions and goals of UN2020:

**Ms. Cardama** said in her day-to-day work, she aims to decarbonize the way we transport people and goods. She also stressed the need of understanding differences and using a common language to put solutions into action involving all levels of government, business, and civil society. Now the trends are heading to a bleak world, and the UN needs to work with civil society to correct the trends. She mentioned the increasing difficulty of working multilaterally based on the trend of nation states' quest for a new identity.

**Ms. Gul** said multilateralism is difficult in the area of peace building. In Asia, there are many complex issues, and each country should be considered individually. The world is moving towards unilateralism, and we must be specific on what we are aiming for with multilateralism. More than half the population is under the age of 30; will these questions engage our youth? We pamper youth, but they must be the key drivers of the change. They can create the change. We are working for the generation that comes behind us. There are many issues that they must look at, discuss, and solve. Key takeaways and tips for leaders to further engage the youth session: Be inclusive in dialogue with more stakeholders at the table.

**Mr. Watt** defined multilateralism as international cooperation to achieve global goals, which would entail bargaining among nation states. It is important to include local leaders in policies, admitting the UN struggles with this. He shared that further discussion and notes will be taken throughout this year.

Audience comments included: Why are we focusing on the 100 year anniversary when the problems exist now? This is a conversation we should have started earlier to have it finalized by the 2020 summit. Global leaders need input from all levels of government to solve these problems. Increase political education aimed at youth. There is a displacement crisis that seems to be propelled by nationalism and populism.

**Mr. Hochschild** concluded that everyone agrees on the fundamental premises, that we need to worry about the future, that we need action now, that the discussion needs to be driven by youth, civil society, business groups, and we must have a UN that is far more effective.

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 **Watch Thematic Session 'Civil Society Partnerships for the UN We Need'**

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# Workshops

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A total number of 122 workshops led by 108 civil society organizations were held over the duration of the Conference. The workshops were led by NGOs and highlighted examples of partnerships and best practices to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. The Workshops Planning Sub-Committee, along with the co-hosts, vetted submissions based on the pre-approved criteria.

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 [Click here to view the Workshops Report](#)

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Jackie Biskupski talks to a workshop panelist. Photo credit: Gabriella Rojas



A Civil Society Workshop. Photo credit: Gabriella Rojas



# Exhibits

A record number of organizations showcased exhibits during the 68<sup>th</sup> UN Civil Society Conference. One hundred twenty-six organizations from 15 countries manned featured exhibits. The exhibitions were based on the Conference Theme: “Building Inclusive and Sustainable Cities and Communities.” The topics included a diverse range of areas, from preserving biodiversity and culture to building resilient infrastructures, while showcasing innovations in technology to support green economic growth.

 [Click here for a complete list of exhibits.](#)



Exhibit of Tzu Chi Foundation at the 68<sup>th</sup> UN Civil Society Conference. Photo credit: Maximilian Sköries



Exhibit of We Love U Foundation at the 68<sup>th</sup> UN Civil Society Conference. Photo credit: Maximilian Sköries



Sister Sharon Eubank, first counselor in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Relief Society General Presidency, packages pasta dinners for a service project during the 68<sup>th</sup> United Nations Civil Society Conference at the Salt Palace Convention



Exhibit at the 68<sup>th</sup> UN Civil Society Conference. Photo credit: Maximilian Sköries



# Youth Participation

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The conference in Salt Lake City afforded the opportunity to bring together global youth voices in the local context. This convergence of ideas and cultures led to fruitful discussions and action around the conference theme (SDG 11) and sustainable development.

The 68<sup>th</sup> United Nations (UN) Civil Society Conference included a large presence of youth from various parts of the world. The planning process of the conference featured a strong outreach and engagement of youth globally. Leading on the conference, youth around the world were encouraged to organize community-based activities and projects focused on SDG 11 that culminated in the largest number of youth participation at the conference to date. Youth comprised approximately 40 % of the total number of attendees participating in the conference.

To achieve these numbers, the UN Department of Global Communications, supported by members of its Youth Steering Committee, undertook field missions and developed campaigns to deepen its reach to youth globally, especially those living in developing countries, to include them in the conference planning process. The outreach activities included:

- 📅 China Pre-Conference Youth Forum, Chengdu, Sichuan Province
- 📅 Youth and Global Issues - Pre-Conference Event in Colombia, Armenia City
- 📅 Youth and Student Dialogues in Argentina, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, and Somalia
- 📅 25th Youth Assembly, Washington D.C., United States
- 📅 Youth Dialogue, The Gambia

Social media engagement, online consultations, and articles on youth played a pivotal role in drawing attention and securing commitment of youth participation in the conference. Facebook Live conversations were hosted in various regions globally.

The goal of the community-based activity was to “give back” to Utah for hosting the international community for the Civil Society Conference through service projects. Participants undertook activities prior to the conference, with the opportunity of collaborating with others for a social cause. The activities related to the theme of the conference, *Building Inclusive and Sustainable Cities and Communities*. The community-service activities were mirrored in other parts of the world, encouraging individuals to take similar actions. By sharing their work through social media, the activities motivated even more youth to work towards achieving SDG 11.

The youth-led thematic session, ***Creating Opportunities and Economic Success for Youth***, featured youth speakers and practitioners sharing their experiences and insights on how to position young people towards sustainable futures. This session fostered conversations on the third priority of the UN Youth Strategy, Youth 2030, Economic Empowerment through Decent Work.



The session was moderated by Quratulain Tejani, Director of Communications, School of Writing (Pakistan). Featured speakers included Shabana Basij-Rasikh, Co-Founder and President, School of Leadership Afghanistan (SOLA); Beau Bennett, Vice President of Marketing, Utah Valley University (UVU) Enactus; Buddha Blaze (Mr. Moses Mbasu), Talent Manager, Temple Management Company; Stephany Hemelberg, Entrepreneur; Macote Ambrozio, Founder and Director, Macote Entrepreneur Center; Safi A. Thomas, H+ Founder and Artistic Director; Yvonne H. Chow, H+Director of Operations and Education Director; and Victoria Díaz-García, Partnership and Advocacy Specialist, Civil Society Division, UN Women.

Activities at the **Youth Hub** were open to all participants at the conference and provided a designated space to interact, network, and learn about the work of young people around the world. Programmes at the Hub featured a daily youth caucus, interactive sessions, social media moments, music, art performances, and presentations. Youth from around the world expressed their concerns and immediate pledges to action regarding the climate crisis.

Four **youth-led workshops** were organized to address important youth issues related to SDG 11. The workshops included panelists who shared their expertise on issues, including homelessness, climate adaptation techniques in Small Island Developing States (SIDS), and youth advocacy. They also highlighted the work of youth in achieving inclusivity in society and in combating climate change.

The youth-led workshop on Ensuring Equal Rights and Fair Treatment of LGBTI People for Sustainable Communities featured platforms and initiatives that support LGBTI persons internationally, such as the UN Free & Equal Campaign. It discussed alternatives and solutions to ensure equal rights and fair treatment of LGBTI people around the world and created a linkage with building more inclusive and sustainable cities and communities.

Youth Sub-committee Co-Chairs based in Salt Lake City took the lead to organize activities in **Salt Lake City** to incentivize local youth, to bring the conference theme closer to Salt Lake City young people in their respective communities. These activities kicked off at the Salt Lake City International Peace Garden with a tree planting event, followed by canoeing at the Jordan River. A garden yoga session and outdoor games were also organized.

An interactive discussion on the **SDGs** took place at the Salt Lake City Public Library to spark conversation on sustainable cities and communities. Students, local community leaders, and conference participants shared local experiences and best practices to support the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.

More than 400 youth and global experts and practitioners came together in Salt Lake City to share and exchange their experiences at a session titled **Youth Mentorship Circles: Setting the Stage for Success**. Young people attending the mentorship circles received guidance on career development and on opportunities related to the conference theme, as well as on key issues on the global agenda. Conference youth activities culminated with a celebratory **Youth Festival** that brought together people in song, dance and cultural performances.

A **Youth Climate Compact** was adopted by acclamation as part of the overall Outcome Document of the conference. The success of the Compact is a direct result of a series of global youth consultations,





from Somalia to Colombia to China to Pakistan, leading up to the conference. The Youth Sub-committee made a tremendous effort to reach out in all regions to gather the views of young people around the world in expressing their concerns and immediate pledges to action in light of the climate crisis.

H.E. María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, President of the 73rd Session of the UN General Assembly, officially received the Outcome Document and subsequently shared it, including the Youth Climate Compact, with the Member States of the General Assembly.

Following the conclusion of the conference, the Youth Climate Compact served as the basis for the programming of the SDG Action Zone, held on the margins of the September UN Youth Climate Summit and UN Climate Action Summit 2019. COP 25 also provided a platform to further expose young people and their constituencies the pledges of the Compact. Plans are now underway to follow up action on how the Compact is being further shared and implemented. Moving forward, it is hoped that the Compact will serve as a viable framework to engage youth on climate action within their networks and in local actions.



China Pre-Conference Youth Forum, Chengdu, Sichuan Province.



Youth Participation Colombia Pre-Conference.



Salt Lake City Hike and Clean-up, 20 June. Photo Credit: Rebecca Hardenbrook





Sign of the Youth Hub at the 68<sup>th</sup> UN Civil Society Conference. Photo credit: Gabriella Rojas



Youth Leadership Circles. Photo credit: Civil Society Unit, UN DGC.





Audience at the Youth Hub of the 68<sup>th</sup> UN Civil Society Conference. Photo credit: Maximilian Sköries



Pre-Conference Activity -  
Tree Planting, 24 August  
Photo Credit: Vlada Yaremenko



# Closing Plenary Session

On 28 August 2019, the Closing Plenary Session marked the culmination of the civil society gathering and discussions that took place in Salt Lake City over the three days and marked the end of the official Conference programme. The key stakeholders who contributed to the organization of the 68<sup>th</sup> United Nations Civil Society Conference took the stage to make remarks, including Mr. Maher Nasser, Director of the Outreach Division of the United Nations Department of Global Communications; Mr. Baldomero Lago, Chief International Officer at Utah Valley University; and Bishop Gérald Caussé, Presiding Bishop of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. In addition, the remarks of Ms. Barbara Lee, U.S. Representative for California's 13th Congressional District; Sarah Benj, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Coordinator, Salt Lake City; and Samira Harnish, Founder and Executive Director, Women of the World also highlighted the importance of the Conference and the role of civil society in building inclusive and sustainable cities and communities.

The focus of the Closing Plenary was the presentation of the Outcome consisting of two documents. The young civil society representatives read out the "Youth Climate Compact," which presented the pledges to which the young people committed in support of climate action. Following the youth, the Conference Outcome Statement was read by the Outcome Document Sub-committee. The Outcome narrative was supported with a visual specifically designed for the Conference by a company based in Salt Lake City.



H.E. Ms. María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, President of the 73rd Session of the UN General Assembly, receives the Outcome Statement from Maruxa Cardama, Chair of the 68<sup>th</sup> UN Civil Society Conference. Photo credit: Gabriella Rojas





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**H. E. Ms. María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés said: “I encourage you to take forward the commitments outlined in this conference’s Outcome Document, which hits all the right notes on inclusivity, youth, climate action, peace, education, infrastructure, and technology, and which reflects a much-needed blend of individual action and responsibility, as well as transformative change at all levels of society.”**

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The highlight of the Closing Plenary was the delivery of the Outcome Document to H. E. Ms. María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, President of the 73rd session of the UN General Assembly, by Maruxa Cardama, the Chair of the Conference. This symbolic act demonstrated that the voice of civil society was heard by the General Assembly and by the UN Member States. For the first time in the history of the Conference, the President of the General Assembly received the Outcome Document in person and promised to present it to the UN General Assembly.





# 68<sup>th</sup> United Nations Civil Society Conference Outcome



The visual component of the 68<sup>th</sup> UN Civil Society Conference Outcome presented in an animation.  
With thanks to Digital Gravy

## Statement

***“Building Inclusive and Sustainable Cities and Communities”***

**68<sup>th</sup> United Nations Civil Society Conference**

**Salt Lake City, Utah, United States of America - 28-29 August 2019**

We, as members of civil society, adopt this document to advance the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, building on the education and global citizenship focus of Gyeongju (2016) and the concept of people-centered multilateralism we developed in New York (2018). This year, we concentrate specifically on Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 11: “to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable by 2030.” We underscore the need to understand cities and communities as central to the achievement of all SDGs and not only SDG11. We highlight the importance of inclusivity, peace, family, education, youth, and the empowerment of women and girls. Further, we explore the ethical development of the economy, infrastructure, and technology needed to support balanced, sustainable communities. We recognize the interdependence of rural and urban prosperity,



as well as the need to address the specific conditions of mountainous areas and small island developing States. We also highlight the need for collaboration of governments, civil society, and the United Nations in this work and stress the urgent need for climate action. For each of these, we affirm our beliefs and shared values, urge others to partner with us, and commit ourselves to actions that uplift the human spirit, create humane cities in which people can flourish, and enhance the quality of life and dignity for all. Without recognition of the challenges to our quest for sustainable and inclusive communities, we will accomplish nothing.

Therefore, we affirm:

The importance of inclusivity and respect for the dignity and human rights of all. Thus, sustainable cities and communities must foster opportunities regardless of age; gender; race; nation of origin; sexual orientation; religion; socio-economic status; disability; language; universal, societal, and individual traditions and values; or political opinion.

“[The] family-related provisions of the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits and their follow-up processes [that] continue to provide policy guidance on ways to strengthen family-centered components of policies and programs as part of an integrated comprehensive approach to development.”<sup>[[1]]</sup>

There is a need for immediate and effective action in response to the climate crisis. It poses a grave threat today, not only to the sustainability of human society, but to life itself, especially in coastal communities and other vulnerable places. Furthermore, the window for effective action is closing rapidly.

The need to recognize peace as a fundamental component of sustainable societies, defining it not just as the absence of war and civil strife, but as the active presence of justice, security, social stability, inclusivity, accessibility, and lives lived in harmony with one’s neighbors and the earth’s ecosystems. We specifically recognize the need to address forced migration and its impact on both migrants and communities of origin, transit, and destination.

The engagement of all members of civil society in global and local governance. Good and accountable governance, free of corruption, is key to the achievement of the SDGs, rule of law, and justice for all.

The significance and potential of youth. More broadly, we affirm the need to empower all generations with education, skills, and opportunities. These will allow youth to sustain themselves; contribute to the health, well-being, prosperity, and resilience of society; and thereby enable all generations to thrive. The need for adequate, affordable, accessible housing, public services, infrastructure, mobility, and land management. These will reduce poverty, homelessness, and hunger while sustaining connectedness, human and environmental health, and community-led development.

The potential for the ethical use and development of technology to address critical challenges faced by communities, harness opportunities, meet the needs of our planet, and re-envision the way we live. The need for community-relevant, goal-oriented private and public investment at all levels of society. The pivotal importance of education, including technological literacy; it is key to raising awareness of the SDGs and to our capacity to achieve them, especially Goal 11.



The central role of local governments in the localization of the 2030 Agenda, its 17 SDGs, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, and the New Urban Agenda. These global agendas are only as good as the positive transformation they trigger for people, planet, prosperity, and partnerships.

Simple recognition of a problem does not generate progress unless stakeholders actively facilitate solutions. Thus, we encourage all stakeholders to form integrated, goal-oriented action plans that are tailored to the unique circumstances of their cities and communities. Stakeholders include individuals, children, youth, families, women, farmers, indigenous peoples, non-governmental organizations, faith-based communities and organizations, scientific and technology communities, education and academia, workers and trade unions, persons with disabilities, volunteers, aging people, business and industry, philanthropies, and governments at all levels.

Therefore, we urge all stakeholders:

To enhance inclusivity and respect for the dignity of all, from which human rights originate. Accordingly, we work to remove unjust systemic barriers to success, noting that bias and discrimination marginalize and segregate large segments of society. We especially call out racism, religious intolerance, and gender inequality.

To support the family in its essential educating and nurturing roles, recognizing its important contribution to social integration.

To recognize the severity and urgency of the climate change crisis and the destructive impact of our human footprint. We must act on clean, renewable sources of energy, low-emission mobility modes, and net-zero energy buildings. This change will mitigate greenhouse gas emissions by cities and will protect our air, water, and ecosystems, thus sustaining biodiversity. Further, we recognize that countries and cities will experience climate and environmental challenges differently and have different resources with which to address them.

To replace excessive consumerism with balanced production, consumption, reuse, and recycling.

To build and sustain safe, peaceful, and just societies, free from war, civil strife, human exploitation, hate speech, and other crimes. Conflict resolution; respect for the faith, values, and traditions of all; and access to healthcare, including mental and behavioral health, are central to this effort.

To ensure a vibrant and sustainable future for our youth through educational, vocational, and mentorship experiences that meet individual needs and facilitate inclusive, effective intergenerational dialogue. These will develop skills needed to create or access local socio-economic opportunities.

To invest in sustainable housing, public services, mobility systems, safe drinking water, sanitation and waste systems, and other infrastructure accessible to all citizens. This investment will enable resiliency and prosperity and reduce poverty and hunger. It will also ensure that development minimizes environmental harm while connecting people with jobs, services, commerce, and each other.

To develop and appropriately use old, new, and future technology to address challenges to sustainability, inequality, accessibility, human and environmental health, education, climate change, communication, commerce, agriculture, and safety.



To establish legal and institutional frameworks that enable community and business investments to positively impact every level of society and every social and economic group.

To ensure that governments and organizations at all levels take human needs and the environment into account while addressing societal, economic, infrastructural, and administrative policy.

To encourage and support all stakeholders in their efforts to collect, maintain, and monitor relevant SDG data, thereby allowing analysis by all demographic groups and by territory.

To incentivize all educational organizations to encourage pluralistic mindsets and engagement in civic and political processes. These efforts should emphasize the role of civil society and contribute practically to the achievement of the SDGs.

To enable local strategies that embrace the universal vision of the 2030 Agenda, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, and the New Urban Agenda while remaining sensitive to local contexts.

Concrete actions and mechanisms for accountability must follow our affirmations and commitments if we are to build cities and communities that are economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable.

Therefore, as global citizens, we commit individually and collectively:

To apply conscious inclusivity and respect for human dignity and rights in our daily lives while advocating for similar efforts in our corporate and organizational lives; in our laws, regulations, policies, and practices; and in our economy. This should facilitate the inclusion of marginalized, vulnerable, and deprived members of society.

To practice environmental stewardship by proactively mitigating climate change and its adverse impacts.

To promote sustainable peace as the presence of harmony, respect, and inclusive collaboration in our communities, within and among countries.

To inspire and support youth in their visions of, preparation for, and access to a robust future.

To urge governments, together with community partners, to build, upgrade, and repair infrastructure in ways that maximize sustainability, improve accessibility, minimize adverse environmental impacts, and ensure the ability to withstand climate change and natural disasters.

To use appropriate technologies to ensure inclusivity and accessibility, economic prosperity, and to mitigate climate change and other adverse environmental effects.

To mobilize public and private sector funds and investments to impact the implementation of SDG 11 related projects. Namely, these should include efforts to provide housing and basic services; upgrade slums; deliver sustainable transport systems; plan and manage participatory and integrated human settlements; protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage; reduce disaster risk and



increase disaster resilience; reduce the adverse environmental impact of cities; develop green and public spaces; create links between urban, peri-urban, and rural areas; integrate policy making; and support Least Developed Countries in building sustainable, resilient infrastructure using local materials.

To form civil society collaborations, including public-private partnerships, in order to formulate policies, mechanisms, and regulations that foster peaceful, prosperous, inclusive, and sustainable cities and communities. These efforts must include ways to track progress via key performance indicators. To protect a free press and make wise and productive use of social and conventional media to communicate, build consensus, and bring together policy makers, businesses, families, and individuals to advance shared interests for the common good.

We urge UN Member States and UN system entities:

To engage and collaborate with ECOSOC and Department of Global Communications accredited organizations [[2]] in strategic actions that support and advance the 2030 Agenda, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, and the New Urban Agenda.

To build on the vision, values, and commitments enshrined in this Outcome to deliver concrete multi-stakeholder discussion spaces, policies, partnerships, and implementation tools for sustainable and inclusive cities and communities.

To facilitate robust inputs and interactive discussions with UN Major Groups and Other Stakeholders during the SDG Summit on 24-25 September 2019. We call on the Secretariat of the SDG Summit to provide a visible platform and modalities for the public dissemination of relevant analyses and reports produced by UN Major Groups and Other Stakeholders.

To establish robust monitoring mechanisms for the transformative initiatives that will be showcased at the UN Secretary General Climate Action Summit on 23 September 2019. This should be done via mechanisms existing under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

To provide meaningful spaces and mechanisms for the sustained engagement of civil society in the dialogues that mark the 75th anniversary of the UN. We underscore that this anniversary provides a much-needed opportunity to reflect on the direction of the UN and to ensure its ability to address the global challenges of the 21st century as experienced by people in their communities.

We call on governments at all levels and all other stakeholders:

To commit during the SDG Summit to actions that accelerate SDGs implementation and localization with people-centered strategies. Furthermore, we underscore the need to understand cities and communities central to the achievement of all SDGs and not only SDG11.

To give follow-up to their actions to accelerate SDGs through Voluntary National Reviews and UN Major Groups and Other Stakeholders reports.

To actively support and engage in the tenth session of the World Urban Forum (WUF10), convened by the UN Human Settlements Program (UN-Habitat) on 8-13 February 2020 in Abu Dhabi, United Arab





Emirates. We underscore the critical importance of WUF to share practices, tools, and knowledge on how to achieve the SDGs and deliver climate change action in cities and communities.

We have only 11 years to deliver on the promises we made through the Sustainable Development Goals. We have less than 11 years to avoid the worst impacts of climate change.

Therefore, be it resolved:

We, the participants of the 68<sup>th</sup> United Nations Civil Society Conference, will continue to actively contribute to our communities individually and in collaboration with other stakeholders to further the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as we move toward the United Nations' 75th Anniversary in 2020.

We endorse and support the Youth Climate Compact, the objective of which is to identify specific actions that can be taken to reduce the devastating effects of the climate crisis and adapt our communities in mindset and structure.

We thank the people and the governments of the United States of America, the State of Utah, and Salt Lake City for the kind welcome and gracious hosting they have given to the 68<sup>th</sup> United Nations Civil Society Conference and for their efforts to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.



The illustration of the Outcome Statement of the 68<sup>th</sup> UN Civil Society Conference was presented as a mural now displayed in the Salt Palace Convention Center on 30 December 2019, where it will be on permanent display. Photo credit: Office of the Mayor of Salt Lake City



## Youth Climate Compact

***Drafted in the spirit of the 68<sup>th</sup> United Nations Civil Society Conference:  
"Building Inclusive and Sustainable Cities and Communities"***

***Salt Lake City, Utah, United States of America - August 26-28, 2019***

We, the youth, unite in action against the climate crisis. The Earth's climate is nearing the point-of-no-return from which life on the planet cannot recover. The cost of inaction is too immense. Threats to the climate menace every aspect of our world; and the sustainable communities we must build for the future depend on our collective will to meet and overcome these existential challenges.

This compact identifies specific actions we can take to reduce the devastating effects of the climate crisis and adapt our communities in mindset and structure. The large-scale changes that the world needs cannot happen without the cooperation of countries, cities, civil societies, and the private sector. However, each individual can play a role in this movement. Recognizing that access to resources varies throughout the world, we urge all to adopt pledges that resonate with them and incite climate action in their own communities. As each signature is added to this compact, a global network of motivated and concerned youth grows. Over half of the world's population are youth. Such a network will be able to tackle the systemic processes which have enabled and propelled the climate crisis.

Without an immediate paradigm shift, we will continue to see profoundly destructive consequences on human life across the planet. Rising sea levels and temperatures, water acidity and pollution, and abnormally severe natural disasters are causing the rapid decrease of Arctic sea ice extent, the decimation of biodiversity, the gradual disappearance of geographically vulnerable regions, particularly Small Island Developing States, and the disproportionate burden on economically disadvantaged areas in the Global South.

Climate change is aggravating global crises, intensifying drought and the lack of access to clean water and, subsequently, heightening global conflicts. By 2050, over 143 million people will be displaced as a result. Rapid industrial development coupled with inadequate regulation will hasten air pollution, deforestation, and acid rain, consequently undermining the ability both of natural habitats and human societies to support the thriving of their lifeforms, and thereby precipitating negative health outcomes for all species alike.

Overwhelming empirical evidence prove that the rapid intensification of the climate crisis was caused by human activity. We now must undo the damages. The Montréal Protocol successfully scaled back ozone depletion, but new climate crises require that we assert a more comprehensive global agreement. The future is uncertain, and the devastation to the planet will become irreversible without immediate global action.

Hereby, we the youth pledge to:

1. Raise awareness in our own communities about policy that is detrimental to the health of our planet and promote policy which works to confront the main causes of the climate crisis;
2. Educate ourselves, our families, and our networks through formal and informal channels, including social media, on the impacts that we as individuals and as a collective society have on the climate through daily lifestyle choices;





Civil Society Youth Representatives Reading the Youth Climate Compact at the Closing Plenary Session of the 68<sup>th</sup> UN Civil Society Conference. Photo credit: Maximilian Sköries

3. Innovate climate-conscious solutions to local and global challenges and support scaling of sustainable products for widespread use;
4. Advance the widespread education of women and girls, understanding that doing so is a critical step in combating climate change;
5. Be mindful of the effects of our consumption, compounded in the manufacturing, transport, storage, sales, use, and disposal of products;
6. Implement the 6Rs: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Repair, Rethink, and Refuse in order to fulfill a net-negative carbon future to reverse environmental degradation;
7. Use our purchasing power to encourage businesses to prioritize sustainable models and environmental well-being over short-term profits;
8. Prioritize environmentally friendly mobility options; influence relevant governing bodies to center the “Avoid, Shift, and Improve” framework in their building of sustainable local mobility systems and infrastructure;
9. Properly dispose of waste, and advocate for improved waste management infrastructure;
10. Avoid single-use plastic products and packaging to reduce the accumulation of waste;
11. Shift our diets to be plant-forward and climate conscious, reducing meat consumption and demanding reforms in food production industries as appropriate;
12. Call attention to the environmental harms caused by factory farming and unsustainable agricultural practices; opt for local food and support sustainable producers;



13. Caution against the toxic composition and limit our use of certain cosmetic, personal care, cleaning, and menstrual hygiene products, thereby reducing their contribution to pollution and ozone depletion;
14. Reduce consumption of products that exacerbate deforestation and urge our governments to improve forest ecosystem health and reforest desertified land;
15. Protect forests and rainforests, which produce large amounts of oxygen, from fires and destruction;
16. Use renewable sources of energy such as hydropower, solar, wind, geothermal, and biomass when accessible; divest from fossil fuels, mining, and other businesses that profit at the expense of our planet;
17. Commit to conserving current energy reserves and sources through sparing usage only when necessary, effectively reducing carbon output and protecting energy security;
18. Invest in climate solutions and green jobs, ensuring our industrial transition toward a net-negative economy is just, equitable, and does not leave people and communities behind;
19. Integrate climate-resilient infrastructures and business models to reduce the effects of natural disasters;
20. Support organizations that strive to reduce negative impact on the environment while actively engaging in innovative and sustainable practices;



Civil Society Youth Representatives reading the Youth Climate Compact at the closing plenary session of the 68th UN Civil Society Conference. Photo credit: Maximilian Sköries



21. Actively participate in climate-related political processes, maximizing the voice of the people and challenging the influence of profiteers; urge political representatives to understand the pressing nature of the climate crisis and support policies that promote the health of our planet;
22. Condemn laws and regulations that deny environmental justice to and disproportionately affect marginalized groups; call attention to the disproportionate effects of climate emergencies on developing countries, especially the Least Developed Countries;
23. Mobilize to remedy the disproportionate effects of resource depletion, environmental degradation, and pollution on vulnerable populations, such as indigenous peoples;
24. Foster inclusion when addressing the pledges in this Compact, realizing that collaboration within and between communities is crucial in ending the climate crisis;
25. Acknowledge all forms of life on Earth, understanding that we are all interconnected in the global ecosystem.

Through this collective agreement, we strive to harness the power of the youth to build a future that is certain and free of the devastation of the climate crisis.

We seek cooperation and support from all generations, governments, civil society organizations, and the private sector in achieving the targets of this compact. Thus, we further our commitment to the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, leaving no one behind.

At the advent of the 75th anniversary of the United Nations, we request the United Nations Department of Global Communications Civil Society Youth Representatives Programme submit a report on the progress made by young people to address climate change. The unique challenges of our time also present unique opportunities. We remain hopeful that united in action, we can build a sustainable future for all.





# Side Events

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The Tabernacle Choir and Orchestra at Temple Square perform a concert for people attending the 68<sup>th</sup> United Nations Civil Society Conference in Salt Lake City, August 27, 2019. Copyright 2019 by Intellectual Reserve, Inc. All rights reserved.



Reception organized by the City of Salt Lake for the participants of the 68<sup>th</sup> UN Civil Society Conference. Photo credit: Gabriella Rojas







Reception organized by the City of Salt Lake for the participants of the 68<sup>th</sup> UN Civil Society Conference.  
Photo credit: Gabriella Rojas



Robert Redford's Spoken Word at The Way of the Rain performance on 26 August 2019.  
Photo credit: Beau A. Pearson/Karsten Staiger



The Way of the Rain performance on 26 August 2019. Photo credit: Beau A. Pearson/Karsten Staiger

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