



PRESIDENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

President of the General Assembly Town Hall meeting with Civil Society

***Midway through the implementation of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development:
Push for Accelerated Progress towards the SDGs***

20 April 2023, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Conference Room 1, UN Headquarters, New York

Concept Note

I. Background and Objective

As H.E. Csaba Kőrösi, President of the General Assembly, has stated since the beginning of the 77th session, it is critical to engage with civil society organizations, youth representatives and academia to define transformative solutions for our global challenges.

While Member States remain the decision-makers of the United Nations, all stakeholders should assume their role as decision-shapers. As the world is in the midst of an unprecedented set of interlocking crises, and we are at the midway point of the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), it's worth recalling that no actor has a monopoly over good ideas.

As part of his effort and commitment to hear from the civil society and encourage them to bring their contributions regarding key issues under discussion in the General Assembly, the President will convene his second Town Hall meeting with civil society with a focus on the need for accelerated progress towards the achievements of the SDGs by 2030.

Recent reports on the Agenda 2030 have a sobering conclusion: the achievement of the SDGs is seriously off track due to a combination of factors, including the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and a series of complex and intersecting crises. The role of civil society representatives is critical to ensure a push for accelerated progress towards the achievement of SDGs by 2030. Standing at the helm of the UN's main policy-making body, the President of the General Assembly is committed to ensuring that Member States can benefit from the insights of civil society on the road towards the implementation of the SDGs.

In this regard, the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development to be convened under the auspices of the General Assembly (SDG Summit) in September 2023 will be a key moment to find bold and transformative solutions on how to get back on track towards the achievement of the SDGs. Civil society's inputs and experience from the ground should inform the deliberations of the Member States in preparation of the Summit.

The Town Hall meeting aims to bring relevant data, perspectives and contributions from civil society to the United Nations. It will serve as the platform for brainstorming on how to develop and enhance the tools, resources, inputs, and processes to produce a quality change in the implementation of the SDGs.

Recognizing the crucial importance of civil society engagement in the work of the UN, it is important to note that the Town Hall is not part of the formal preparatory process of the 2023 SDG Summit. As such, no outcome is expected following the event.

The Town Hall is supported by the Department of Global Communications, with additional support by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the SDG Action Campaign and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

II. Format

The Town Hall Meeting will be held in person on Thursday, 20 April 2023, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., in Conference Room 1 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. The meeting will be webcast live on UN WebTV. The moderated event will consist of an opening statement by the President of the General Assembly followed by three short keynote statements from civil society representatives that will address the following questions:

- How can we make the political declaration most relevant, impactful, and a source of high-level political guidance?
- What are the most important elements that need to be included in the political declaration, keeping in mind the need for it to be succinct, impactful, and easy to read while providing up-to-date recommendations to advance the Sustainable Development Goals?
- What transformations are necessary in order to improve the implementation of the SDGs until 2027 (the next SDG Summit) and what do Member States need so as to achieve that?

The floor will then be opened for discussion and for questions from civil society representatives.

The Town Hall will include concluding reflections by the co-facilitators of the political declaration of the 2023 SDG Summit, H. E. Mr. Fergal Tomas Mythen, Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations and H.E. Ms. Alya Ahmed Saif Al-Thani, Permanent Representative of the State of Qatar to the United Nations.

III. Logistics

Civil Society Organizations in consultative status with ECOSOC, formally associated with the Department of Global Communications, and Major Groups are invited to attend the Town Hall meeting in person.

All in-person participants are required to register in advance [here](#).

For in-person events at the UN headquarters, the use of masks is strongly encouraged.

By registering to attend in person, all participants attest that their COVID-19 vaccination record is up to date to access the UN Headquarters complex in New York, based on the guidelines provided by local health authorities. *Civil Society Representatives are reminded to carry proof of COVID-19 vaccination while on UN premises in New York and must be prepared to show them if requested to do so by UN personnel.*

Keynote statements - To register an interest in delivering a keynote statement during the Town Hall, please fill in the online form [here](#) no later than 31 March. Please note that all keynote statements will be delivered in person or by pre-recorded video. CSO representatives will be selected by taking into account geographical and gender balance, as well as thematic diversity. The time for interventions will be limited to **4 minutes** for each speaker.

Due to time limitations, it will not be possible to accommodate all requests for **questions** from the audience. We appreciate your understanding.

To ensure a wider participation from all geographical regions, CSO representatives will also have the opportunity to submit **pre-recorded questions**, a selection of which will be presented during the questions and answers segment of the event. Please register your interest in submitting a pre-recorded question [here](#) no later than 31 March.

IV. Provisional Programme

20 April 2023

10:00 – 12:00 Town Hall meeting with Civil Society on the 2023 SDG Summit

- Introductory remarks by the moderator
- Opening statement by the President of the General Assembly
- Remarks by speakers from Civil Society Organizations
- Discussions, questions and answers with the PGA
- Concluding remarks by the President of the General Assembly and the co-facilitators of the SDG Summit