



United Nations Activity Report

From 22 to 24 August 2018, the [67th United Nations Non-Governmental Organization Conference](#) was held at the United Nations headquarters in New York, NY and at Long Island University, Brooklyn, NY. The theme of the conference was “We the Peoples” and the focus was “Together Finding Global Solutions for Global Problems.”

Report Submitted by Connie Sobon Sensor, Sigma United Nations Liaison

I had a planning role in this conference and worked closely within the Workshop Planning Committee before the conference and on the days of the conference to monitor and moderate the many workshop sessions. I enjoyed the format of the conference with some plenary sessions, panel presentations, and many topic experts. I thought the environmental issues were very relevant to health promotion and disease prevention. Climate change affects health more than we realize. There were many opportunities for networking, and I got to spend time with Aden Hamza, Sigma’s former United Nations Youth Representative, who was also very involved in a different aspect of the conference planning. Here are the highlights of the outcomes document from the conference:

Therefore, as civil society, we commit:

- To embrace gender equity as an integral component of social justice,
- To operationalize the Global Compact on Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees by prioritizing the rights and dignity of forced migrants and people in fragile and conflict-affected states,
- To affirm the importance of international law and principles of cooperation,
- To share information and digital technology, media, and communication tools in a democratic manner to amplify the voices of those who are systematically marginalized and silenced,
- To act in solidarity with civil society representatives whose safety and rights are threatened,
- To empower and engage young people as partners to achieve the SDGs as outlined in the “‘We the Future’: Youth Declaration,”
- To build on economic and cultural innovations that strengthen social, economic, and environmental foundations of development, and
- To serve as independent sources of analysis, advocacy, and action to hold states, corporations, and other stakeholders accountable to the standards and values adopted in the 2030 Agenda.

A Time to Join with Civil Society

Cooperation and partnerships with Member States, the UN development system, and the private sector are needed on all levels to achieve the 2030 Agenda.

Therefore, as civil society, we call upon

Member States to:

- Respect, protect, and promote the rights of civil society to hold public and private institutions accountable and to participate in decision making,
- Advance people-centered multilateralism by developing proposals to revitalize the United Nations on the occasion of its 75th Anniversary in 2020,
- Fulfill their obligations under international law,
- Honor and uphold the commitments made in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,
- Reaffirm the Declaration on Human Rights Defenders on its 20th anniversary by working to ensure the safety, expression, and freedom of association of those who speak out on abuses, and
- Enact policies aimed at eradicating extreme inequality, including by preventing individual and corporate tax avoidance and rights violations, with particular attention to the upcoming Special Session on Financing for Development;

Multinational corporations to:

- Adopt business models that shoulder social and environmental responsibility aligned with the SDGs and the Global Compact, and
- Deliver fair economic returns on value added by local communities;

The United Nations Secretary-General and the United Nations to:

- Play their historic roles as conveners of states and stakeholders, to guarantee that the most marginalized peoples throughout the world are heard most clearly and to ensure that our planet remains a place where all of humanity can flourish,
- Demand an end to tax avoidance, corruption, and rights violations by corporations, and
- Remain focused on intergenerational equity, safeguarding the planet's health and natural resources for generations to come;

All decision-makers to:

- Engage in real partnerships with civil society that, as called for by the “‘We the Future’: Youth Declaration,” enable vulnerable groups to shape policies that affect their lives, and
- Financially support and promote change-makers, regardless of age, in public policy decisions and to follow the example of innovative and powerful social movements.

Here are links to the relevant outcome documents from this conference:

<https://outreach.un.org/ngorelations/content/youth-declaration>

<https://outreach.un.org/ngorelations/content/outcome-document>

These documents raise awareness about what is possible with cooperation and good will. Here is a link to the conference program:

[https://outreach.un.org/ngorelations/sites/outreach.un.org/files/67th_un_dpi_ngo_conference -
_programme.pdf](https://outreach.un.org/ngorelations/sites/outreach.un.org/files/67th_un_dpi_ngo_conference_-_programme.pdf)