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|  | **Document CWG-WSIS&SDG-40/2** |
| **15 December 2023** |
| **English only** |
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| Contribution by the secretariat | |
| ITU’S CONTRIBUTION TO THE SUMMIT OF THE FUTURE 2024 | |
| **Purpose**  This document provides information on ITU’s involvement in the preparatory process of the Summit of the Future 2024.  **Action required**  The Council Working Group on WSIS and the SDGs is invited **to note** this document.  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  **References**  [*https://www.un.org/en/common-agenda/summit-of-the-future*](https://www.un.org/en/common-agenda/summit-of-the-future)*;*  [*Summit of the Future\_Two-Pager\_SOF\_24Oct23 (un.org)*](https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/our-common-agenda-summit-of-the-future-what-would-it-deliver.pdf)*.* | |

1. Preparations for [the Summit of the Future](https://www.un.org/en/common-agenda/summit-of-the-future) are currently underway at the UN General Assembly. Scheduled for 22 – 23 September 2024, this Summit aims to forge a new global consensus on multilateral solutions. According to the UN General Assembly (UNGA) Resolution on Modalities for the Summit of the Future ([A/RES/76/307](https://undocs.org/A/RES/76/307)), the Summit will adopt an outcome document entitled ‘A Pact for the Future’. The co-facilitators for the Summit of the Future (the Permanent Representatives of Germany and Namibia to the United Nations in New York) have been tasked with facilitating intergovernmental consultations to determine the scope of the Summit, topics and organization of the interactive dialogues and the process of negotiations to conclude the outcome document, with adequate time for the negotiating sessions.
2. On 1 September 2023, the UNGA adopted the Decision on elements for the ‘Pact for the Future’ ([A/77/L.109](https://daccess-ods.un.org/access.nsf/Get?OpenAgent&DS=A/77/L.109&Lang=E)). This Decision, resulting from intergovernmental consultations held during the 77th session of the UNGA by the co-facilitators, considered Member States’ priorities and inputs. It provides a proposed framework for the ‘Pact for the Future’ document, comprising a *Chapeau* – reaffirming the UN Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Agenda 2030, and *five Chapters* – on i) Sustainable development and financing for development, ii) International peace and security, iii) Science, technology and innovation and digital cooperation, iv) Youth and future generations, and v) Transforming Global Governance. As per the Decision, the Pact for the Future will align with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
3. On 19 October 2023, following their reappointment as co-facilitators for the Summit of the Future during the 78th session of the UNGA, Germany and Namibia have unveiled [the Preparatory Process](https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/informal_consultations_on_the_preparations_of_the_pact_for_the_future_on_19_october_2023.pdf) “to facilitate open, transparent, and inclusive intergovernmental consultations on the preparatory process” of the Summit of the Future, aligning with the mandate outlined in Resolution ([A/RES/76/307](https://undocs.org/A/RES/76/307)) and decision ([A/77/L.109](https://daccess-ods.un.org/access.nsf/Get?OpenAgent&DS=A/77/L.109&Lang=E)). Specifically, a series of informal consultations, including one per Chapter of the Pact for the Future, has been scheduled for Member States from 1 to 11 December 2023, followed by a consultation for civil society organization and other stakeholders on 13 December. Member States and observers are invited to submit written input to the Pact for the Future by 31 December 2023. The ‘Zero’ draft for the Pact for the Future is expected to be circulated in early 2024, providing Member States with an opportunity to reflect on the draft before the commencement of negotiations ([further details](https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/informal_consultations_on_the_preparations_of_the_pact_for_the_future_on_19_october_2023.pdf)).
4. In parallel, the co-facilitators for the Global Digital Compact (GDC), the Permanent Representatives of Sweden and Zambia to the United Nations in New York, were reappointed and newly appointed respectively for the 78th session of the UNGA. The assessment resulting from deep-dives and broader consultations conducted during the 77th session of the UNGA by the former co-facilitators for the Global Digital Compact (the Permanent Representatives of Sweden and Rwanda to the United Nations in New York) was reported in [their letter (Issues Paper) to the UN General Assembly](https://www.un.org/pga/77/wp-content/uploads/sites/105/2023/09/Global-Digital-Compact-Issues-paper-September-1-2023.pdf), dated 1 September 2023.

In the Issues Paper, the co-facilitators identified broad support for a GDC based on the principles of the UN Charter, Agenda 2030, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. They emphasized the need for collaborative efforts to strengthen digital cooperation, close the digital divide and ensure an inclusive open, safe and secure digital future for all. The letter also acknowledges the important roles played by IGF, ITU, UNCTAD, UNDP, UNESCO, WSIS, and other UN entities, structures, and forums, emphasizing that the GDC should not duplicate existing processes. Further consultations and negotiations to develop a GDC during the 78th session of the UNGA have not yet been scheduled by the co-facilitators. If there is intergovernmental agreement, a GDC would be annexed to the Pact for the Future, as per the text in Decision ([A/77/L.109](https://daccess-ods.un.org/access.nsf/Get?OpenAgent&DS=A/77/L.109&Lang=E)).

1. ITU, responding to Member States’ strong recommendations during the CWG-SFP and CWG-WSIS&SDGs, is closely collaborating with the Executive Office of the UN Secretary-General and other UN agencies on digital cooperation and other digital and outer space issues in Our Common Agenda (OCA). Among the proposals contained in OCA, ITU has been following up around fifteen that particularly relate to universal connectivity and digital transformation, including those on a Global Digital Compact (GDC), outer space, Transforming Education, UN2.0, as well as the discussions at the High-Level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism and overall preparations for the Summit of the Future.
2. On the GDC specifically, ITU has been particularly engaged, actively contributing to various levels of the GDC processes. For example, ITU submitted its [own inputs](https://www.un.org/techenvoy/sites/www.un.org.techenvoy/files/GDC-submission_ITU.pdf) to the GDC online platform, which was facilitated by the UN Secretary-General’s Tech Envoy, and participated in thematic consultations at the UN in New York organized by the GDC co-facilitators, with keynote remarks by our Secretary-General as well as statements from the floor from ITU subject matter experts. ITU also hosted informal discussions on GDC with the UN Secretary-General’s Tech Envoy during WTDC2022 in Kigali, PP2022 in Bucharest, as well as hosting for the GDC co-facilitators informal roundtable discussions during the WSIS Forum 2023.
3. ITU places great emphasis on the critical role of ICTs for sustainable development while minimizing potential risks. Our messages to the GDC processes have been based on discussions held during key ITU events, e.g., the consultations during PP 2022 and the Ministerial Roundtable in Bucharest, WTDC 2022 in Kigali, WSIS Forum 2023 in Geneva, as well as the outcomes of the last WTPF and relevant PP Resolutions. ITU’s inputs for future digital technology development are, for example but not limited to, connecting all people and all schools worldwide to the Internet, based on future-oriented policies and collaborative regulatory frameworks ensuring availability and inclusiveness. The ITU Secretary-General also made a statement to the Ministerial for the Summit of the Future on 21 September 2023 at UN Headquarters in New York during the UNGA High Level Week.
4. One area that Member States might decide to include in the GDC and/or in the Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) and Digital cooperation chapter of the Pact for the Future relates to AI. The UN Secretary-General [announced](https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/personnel-appointments/2023-10-26/secretary-generals-advisory-body-members-artificial-intelligence) the establishment of an AI Advisory Body (AIAB) on 23 October 2023 to advise on risks, opportunities and international governance of artificial intelligence. The ITU Secretary-General was invited to speak at the press conference for the launch of the AIAB. According to the [press release](https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/231025_press-release-aiab.pdf), the AIAB’s immediate tasks include building a global scientific consensus on risks and challenges, helping harness AI for the Sustainable Development Goals, and strengthening international cooperation on AI governance. The AIAB is to help bridge other existing and emerging initiatives on AI governance, and issue preliminary recommendations by the end of 2023, with final recommendations by summer 2024, ahead of the Summit of the Future. The AIAB met virtually on 27 October and will meet in person at UN Headquarters in New York in the week beginning 4 December. ITU is seeking to follow and contribute to the work of the AIAB, but, to date, has not been invited to attend its meetings.
5. In the lead up to the Summit of the Future 2024, ITU is closely monitoring the preparatory process guided by the co-facilitators under the auspices of the 78th session of the UNGA and intends to take up every opportunity to support and contribute consistent with our mandate. As a specialized UN agency based in Geneva, ITU is also endeavoring to garner support from the Geneva communities, including through initiatives such as organizing informal gatherings, like ITU Secretary-General’s demystifying breakfast on GDC with the co-facilitators and an UNGIS meeting with the co-facilitators, and extending invitations to the co-facilitators for the Summit of the Future and the co-facilitators for the GDC to present in ITU CWG meetings, among other engagements. Earlier in July 2023, the UN Secretary-General’s lead for Our Common Agenda, Guy Ryder, Under-Secretary-General for Policy, was also invited to speak at the ITU Council Retreat and did so.

The High Level WSIS Forum in May 2024 and its outcome could be leveraged to contribute to the Summit of the Future process, and the High Level WSIS Forum in 2025 could support implementations of the digital aspects of the Pact for the Future once adopted. ITU is also exploring co-hosting with other UN agencies a side event before the Summit of the Future in September 2024, as a contribution to it. It is not known at this stage what opportunities there may be for UN agencies to make remarks at the Summit of the Future itself.

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