

Global Policy UN Watch
Special Edition: Summit of the Future
No.8 | 2024

Down to the wire: Pact for the Future & annexes adopted by consensus; Africa Group motion for no action on Russia amendment

22 - 23 September 2024 | SOTF website | GDC Website | DFPG Website
The Pact for the Future (PFF) and its annexes, Global Digital Compact (GDC) and Declaration on Future Generations (DFG), were adopted by consensus after many months of negotiations and five revisions.

At the opening of the Summit of the Future on 22 September, the Russian Federation introduced draft amendment A/79/L.3 to the Pact for the Future: "the United Nations and its system shall not intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any State".

In response, the Republic of the Congo on behalf of the Africa Group introduced a motion for no action on the proposed amendment: "The African Group would like to address our warm congratulations to the President of the General Assembly, to the co-facilitators, as well as to the Secretary-General of the United Nations for all of the efforts that we have undertaken together to ensure that we have gotten through these very complex, difficult negotiations... The African Group believes we need to show our unity and our ability to provide common, concerted answers to the multiple and complex challenges that we are facing today."

Table showing voting results for motion for no action on draft amendment A/79/L.3. Includes columns for 'Item 123 - Motion for no action on draft amendment A/79/L.3' and 'Rev. 1' through 'Rev. 5 & Adopted'.

Member State Fault Lines at the SOTF and UNGA 79

19 September 2024 | SOTF website | Adopted Pact for the Future
In the last round of negotiations, Pakistan, on behalf of the Like Minded Group (Algeria, Bolivia, China, Cuba, Egypt, Eritrea, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Libya, Nicaragua, the Russian Federation, Sri Lanka, the Syrian Arab Republic, Venezuela, Zimbabwe & Pakistan), had broken silence on paragraphs 70, 78 (b) and 80 in Rev. 5.

Twitter screenshot of a tweet by Munir Akram, PR of Pakistan to the UN. The tweet discusses the UN system's role in achieving peace and development, and the Pact's alignment with these goals.

Para 20: Common but Differentiated Responsibilities (CbDR) & Sustainable Development

Rev. 5 Adopted Rev. GPF
20. We reaffirm that the Sustainable Development Goals are a comprehensive, fit-for-purpose and people-centred set of universal transformative Goals and targets...

Para 78b: Sovereign Debt Restructuring
78(b) invite the International Monetary Fund to undertake a review of ways to strengthen and improve the sovereign debt architecture...

Para 80: Development and Climate Finance
80. Climate change and biodiversity loss exacerbate many of the challenges facing the international financial architecture...

The principle of Common but Differentiated Responsibilities (CbDR) was highly contested in the negotiation process with many developed countries arguing that CbDR should only be included in the context of climate action and not sustainable development.

In subsequent statements during the Summit of the Future and the UNGA General Debate, Russia and Argentina distanced themselves from commitments of the Pact.

Member State Expectations for the future beyond the Pact

22 - 30 September 2024 | SOTF website | General Debate of the 79th session website
Many Member States noted that the adoption of the Pact is not an end but a beginning for reforming multilateral global governance.

Antigua and Barbuda: "The climate crisis neither affects everyone equally, nor are everyone equally responsible. We who have contributed least to the climate crisis are suffering its worst impacts. To add insult to injury, the large polluters are paying trillions of dollars for carbon credits, to protect their profitable use of fossil fuels at the expense of SIDS."

Brazil: "The conditions for accessing financial resources remain prohibitive for low- and middle-income countries. The debt burden limits the fiscal space to invest in health and education, reduce inequality and tackle climate change."

Indonesia: "First, creating a lasting peace. Peace is not merely the absence of war, but the presence of justice, stability and development. That peace can only thrive if we consistently uphold international law without double standards."

USA: "The United States believes that [UN Security Council reform] should include two permanent seats for Africa, one rotating seat for Small Island Developing States, permanent representation for Latin America and the Caribbean."

Finland: "Now, of course, the main task of the UN Security Council is to preserve peace. And let's be honest, it has failed to do so. The UN Security Council [permanent 5 members], in my mind, does not reflect the world of today."

For more Member State statements, see GPF's repository or specific themes: Development | Institutional Reform | Peace & Security.

Pact Evolution: Rev. 1 to the Final Outcome

September 2024 | SOTF website
The Summit of the Future was convened as Member States sought to address the fissures in multilateralism and lay out ambitious, trust-rebuilding reforms.

GPF has compiled side-by-side comparisons of the Pact for the Future revisions for Chapters 1 and 5. See also GPF's in-depth unpacking of Revs. 1 and 2; on Chapters 1 and 5 & on the Intergovernmental Negotiations (IGN) for Security Council reform.

Table titled 'Sovereign debt architecture' comparing Rev. 1, Rev. 2, Rev. 3, Rev. 4/Rev. 5, and the Adopted version.

Table titled 'International Financial Architecture Reform' comparing Rev. 1, Action 49, Action 3, and Rev. 4, 5 & Adopted.

Table titled 'Beyond GDP' comparing Rev. 1, Action 48, Action 54, and Rev. 4, 5 & Adopted.

Table titled 'Tax' comparing Rev. 1, Rev. 2, Rev. 3, and Rev. 4, 5 & Adopted.

Takeaways from the Summit of the Future & looking ahead to FFD4 & WSSD2 in 2025

Barbara Adams, GPF Senior Policy Advisor
The Summit of the Future was pushed to the front of the agenda the failures and fault lines of international cooperation, nature, scope and quality of multilateralism and global governance.

Global governance is still littered with veto and veto-like instruments that reflect or protect power asymmetries in global decision-making.

The yawning and unaccountable gap between the realities driven by power asymmetries and the injustices and insecurities of peoples' lives - from income and genocide, and planetary collapse to relentless poverty and inequalities.

The Summit has shown hints and indicators of a power shift in Member State dynamics and a broader understanding of the challenges of unjust governance practices and rules.

With more intergovernmental negotiations coming up in 2025 and beyond, will the momentum, analyses and organizing built during the Summit and related processes, especially at national and community levels, help close the gaps and injustices in global governance and strengthen accountability to values and justice?

Latest from GPF: Perspectives from Global South Report

"Multilateralism 'a la carte' and 'forum shopping' are the modus operandi of powerful actors to shape global outcomes in their interests, undermining their own commitments and obligations as UN members and signatories of human rights and environmental treaties," commented Barbara Adams, co-editor of the report.

"Future of Global Governance: Perspectives from Global South" report highlights the views of diplomats, governments and civil society leaders in their own words, quoting from their interventions in a variety of recent forums.

Drawing extensively on the work and publications by Global Policy Forum, particularly its briefings and monitoring fact sheets on multilateral negotiations, the report observes through Southern lenses key issues in the global agenda, such as the reform of the UN Security Council and the International Financial Architecture.

It includes a chapter on the Right to Development, which spels out the duty of countries to cooperate and explores the need to measure progress with indicators that go "beyond GDP".

The reform of governance must take place. It is not sufficient to continue the current practice of multilateralism has to be reformed, many countries striving to go to foster international cooperation are now providing feedback - and also ignore or exacerbate inequalities, within and between countries.

