

ICH Special Bulletin on the Declaration on Future Generations, September 2024

BACKGROUND: The intergovernmental process for a Declaration on Future Generations was initiated in June 2022, under the leadership of the Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the Permanent Representative of Fiji to the United Nations, the latter being succeeded by the Permanent Representative of Jamaica. On 10 October 2023, the President of the General Assembly reappointed the Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and newly appointed the Permanent Representative of Jamaica to the United Nations as co-facilitators to continue co-facilitating the intergovernmental process for the Declaration on Future Generations during the 78th Session. The [Zero Draft](#) of the Declaration on Future Generations was issued in April 2024, followed by Rev. 1 in May 2024. The Declaration on Future Generations was then revised ([Rev. 2](#)) in July 2024, with the third revision ([Rev. 3](#)) issued in August 2024. [Rev. 4](#) was released in September 2024, followed by a Rev. 5 in September 2024, which we assume is the final document out of the intergovernmental negotiations. This bulletin will highlight the key topics addressed in Rev. 5 and also summarize the evolution of the above-mentioned revisions of the Declaration on Future Generations.

KEY TOPICS - REV.5:

- The Declaration on Future Generations reaffirms commitments to the **UN Charter**, the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights**, and the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**.
- The **Declaration on Future Generations** recognizes **future generations** as inheritors of the planet and highlights the need to safeguard their interests, emphasizing **intergenerational solidarity, justice, and equity**, and acknowledging **youth** as agents of change.
- It commits to learning from **past achievements and failures** to ensure a **sustainable and just future**.
- The **Declaration on Future Generations** promotes **international peace and security** in alignment with the **UN Charter**, stressing the need to **respect, protect**, and promote **human rights** and **fundamental freedoms** for all, while calling for the elimination of **intergenerational poverty, hunger, inequality, and injustice**, especially in **vulnerable countries**.
- **Intergenerational solidarity, social cohesion**, and the **role of families** are recognized as vital, along with **urgent action** to address **climate change** and promote **environmental protection**.
- It emphasizes the responsible, **ethical use of science, technology**, and **innovation** to bridge divides, while **gender equality** and the **empowerment of women and girls** are seen as essential for a sustainable future.
- **Full participation of persons with disabilities** in decision-making processes is encouraged, alongside the elimination of **racism, xenophobia**, and related **intolerance** to build a **sustainable future**.
- The need for an **inclusive, transparent**, and **effective multilateral system** for **international cooperation** is stressed.
- Commitments include promoting **international stability, peace**, and a world **free of nuclear weapons**, ensuring **peaceful, inclusive**, and **just societies** that address **inequalities**, and implementing **gender equality policies** to eliminate **discrimination** and **violence against women and girls**.
- There is a focus on addressing **historical and structural inequalities**, preserving **cultural diversity and heritage**, promoting **intercultural and interreligious dialogue**, and recognizing the **rights of Indigenous Peoples**, their **lands**, and **ecosystems**.
- The **Declaration on Future Generations** prioritizes **inclusive economic growth, food security, poverty eradication**, and addressing **environmental challenges**, with accelerated **climate action**.

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- **Inclusive governance of emerging technologies and bridging digital divides** are highlighted, along with strengthened **cooperation on demographic trends** and enhanced **safe, orderly, and regular migration pathways**.
- Investing in **inclusive, quality education, lifelong learning, universal health coverage**, and access to **affordable, quality healthcare** are key commitments.
- **Actions** include using **science, data, and strategic foresight** for **sustainable, evidence-based decision-making**, ensuring **equitable access to knowledge, science, and information**, and strengthening **global accounting** and **anticipatory risk analyses**.
- Investing in **the capacity to respond to global shocks and crises**, coordinating across **governments** to safeguard **future generations**, enhancing **stakeholder cooperation**, and promoting **intergenerational partnerships** are emphasized.
- **Equipping the UN** to support **long-term, future-oriented policymaking** is a key focus, fostering an **organizational culture** centered on **future generations** and **long-term thinking**.
- The **Declaration on Future Generations** takes note of the **Secretary-General's proposal** to appoint a **Special Envoy for Future Generations**.

Evolution from the Zero Draft to Rev.5:

The **Declaration on Future Generations** has evolved significantly from the Zero Draft to Revision 4 (Rev. 4), refining its approach to intergenerational equity, sustainability, and human rights. Each revision builds on the previous one, enhancing specificity, inclusivity, and proactivity. From the Zero Draft to Rev. 1, the **Preamble** transitions from reaffirming global frameworks like the **UN Charter** to expanding on the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**. **Rev. 1** emphasizes the role of **youth** as change-makers and broadens its scope to include **climate justice** and the rights of **persons with disabilities**. **Commitments** in Rev. 1 strengthen recognition of **Indigenous Peoples' rights** and **intergenerational solidarity**, while **Actions** advocate for a **whole-of-government** approach to long-term planning and governance. These items have been preserved throughout the process. In **Rev. 2**, there is a shift towards protecting **vulnerable populations** and enhancing **human rights**, with added emphasis on **racial equality** and **gender equality**. **Actions** include formalized **UN reporting and accountability** mechanisms, ensuring that future commitments are regularly assessed. **Rev. 3** introduces more direct language on **past failures**, expands on the **right to development**, and strengthens commitments to **nuclear disarmament** and **gender equality**. It also deepens the focus on **cultural diversity** by addressing the **restitution of cultural property**. **Rev. 4** refines the **Preamble** with more assertive language on **nuclear disarmament** and strengthens its focus on **vulnerable populations**. It emphasizes **global risk management** and enhances cooperation on **technological capacity building** for future generations. **Rev. 5** of the Declaration on Future Generations emphasizes the importance of families and family-friendly policies, expanding on the role of intergenerational solidarity mentioned in **Rev. 4**. Additionally, it simplifies commitments regarding peace and security, strengthens the focus on cultural diversity and Indigenous Peoples' rights, and highlights the need for global resilience in economic growth. In conclusion, the Declaration has grown into a more detailed, inclusive, and actionable document, with each revision reinforcing commitments to **vulnerable populations** and long-term, inclusive governance.

RESOURCES:

1. [Summit of the Future](#)
2. [Declaration on Future Generations](#)
3. [ICH Bulletins - Declaration on Future Generations](#)