

Curtain Raiser

Act for Our Common Future

Summit of the Future Preview

Date	Time	Venue
September 16, 2024	9:00 - 10:30 AM ET	Registration Link Zoom Link

On 22-23 September, world leaders will come together for the UN [Summit of the Future](#) to forge a new international consensus on how to tackle the present day global challenges and better safeguard the future. This unique moment in UN's history is an inflection point to reinvigorate international cooperation, update the tools at humanity's disposal to wrestle with the twenty-first century challenges, and build trust among all actors to deliver on the 2030 Agenda with the wellbeing of future generations in mind.

The United Nations Foundation will host a virtual Curtain Raiser event on **September 16th**, a week in advance of the Summit of the Future. The Curtain Raiser is designed to build momentum and awareness in anticipation of the adoption of the Pact for the Future at the upcoming Summit. It will also serve as a platform for leaders and experts to share their views of the Pact and visions on how ideas contained in it can be operationalized. The event aims to inspire and mobilize a variety of stakeholders, including civil society, young people, and key decision-makers, to support the Summit's ambitious outcomes and contribute to a better future for all.

This event is part of the broader [Engine Room series](#), a digital intergenerational platform led by young people to reimagine how the United Nations thinks, plans, and acts for the future. To date, the Engine Room has attracted thousands of young leaders around the world to contribute to turbocharging the SDGs, and last year alone we worked closely with 6,000 young people and engaged more than 44, 000 youth globally.



Format and Event Highlights

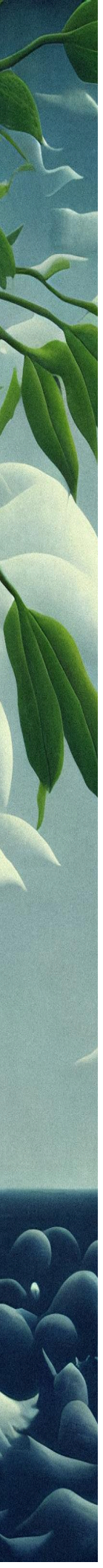
- **Intergenerational Keynote Address:** Two prominent leaders will deliver keynote speeches on the significance of the Summit of the Future and the urgent need for renewed global cooperation.
- **Power Panel - Forging Our Future: SDGs, Climate, tech and Intergenerational Action**
Bring together experts and youth leaders to tackle key issues and solutions anticipated for the Summit of the Future, focusing on SDG and climate financing, the impact of technology and AI, and the necessity of intergenerational collaboration. Panelists will present visionary ideas for investing in youth and creating a sustainable future for all.

Objectives

- **Raise Awareness:** Generate global attention and spark discussions about the Summit's outcomes through compelling storytelling and multimedia content.
- **Mobilize Action:** Encourage diverse stakeholders, including civil society and young people, to leverage the Summit's outcomes and begin to map the implementation of the ideas and commitments in the Pact for the Future.
- **Secure Stakeholder Buy-In:** Engage a diverse group of actors in securing a long-term vision for the implementation of commitments from the Summit of the Future to ensure sustained impact.

Agenda

<p>9:00 - 9:03 AM (3 mins)</p>	<p>Welcome to the Curtain Raiser event which aims to build momentum and awareness for the Summit of the Future, serving as a platform for leaders and experts to share insights on how the United Nations can address current and future challenges.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Presenter: Inés Yábar, UN Foundation Lead Next Generation Fellow
<p>9:03 - 9:08 AM (5 mins)</p>	<p>Creative Segment: A powerful and emotive piece to inspire the urgency to Act Now for a Common Future</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Kabin Studio, Ireland Youth Group
<p>9:08 - 9:23 AM (15 mins)</p>	<p>Charting Our Intergenerational Future : A visionary outlook on the vital role of the SDGs and the power of intergenerational cooperation to deliver for people and the planet.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Guy Ryder, Under-Secretary-General for Policy at the United Nations (6.5 mins) ● Txai Suruí, Indigenous Young Leader (6.5 mins) ● Moderator: Inés Yábar, UN Foundation Lead Next Generation Fellow (2mins)
<p>9:23 - 10:03 AM (45 mins)</p>	<p>Power Panel - Forging Our Future: SDGs, Climate, Tech and Intergenerational Action. Bring together experts and youth leaders to tackle key issues and solutions anticipated for the Summit of the Future, focusing on SDGs and climate financing, the impact of technology and AI, and the necessity of intergenerational collaboration. Panelists will present visionary ideas for investing in youth and creating a sustainable future for all.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● H.E. Yoka M.G. Brandt, Permanent Representative of the Netherlands to the United Nations ● H.E. Dr. Chola Milambo, Permanent Representative of Zambia to the United Nations ● Ayisha Siddiqa, Member of UN Secretary-General’s Youth Advisory Group on Climate Change ● Kelechi Achinonu, UN Foundation Next Generation Fellow ● Obiageli “Oby” Katryn Ezekwesili, President of Human Capital África and Senior Economic Adviser at África Economic Development Policy Initiative (AEDPI). ● Moderator: Elizabeth Cousens, President and Chief Executive Officer, UN Foundation
<p>10:03 AM - 10:23AM (15 mins)</p>	<p>Interactive Q&A: Panelists will answer participants' questions facilitated by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Moderator: Elizabeth Cousens, President and Chief Executive Officer, UN Foundation



10:23 - 10:25 (2mins)	Next Steps Summarize the key takeaways from the panel discussion and creative segments, reinforcing the main messages of the event. Concluding with a forward-looking message, the closing remarks will inspire commitment to the upcoming Summit of the Future and the Pact for the Future. <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Elizabeth Cousens, <i>President and Chief Executive Officer, UN Foundation</i>
10:25 AM - 10:30 AM (5mins)	Storytelling Segment: A powerful and emotive piece to inspire the urgency to Act Now for a Common Future.

Speakers



Inés Yábar

UN Foundation Lead Next Generation Fellow



Inés is a young activist from Peru who's been actively working towards a more sustainable future since she was 15. By volunteering in beach cleanups in the coastline of Peru, she helped collect data and organize thousands of volunteers to help inform policies in Peru: leading to the country banning single use plastic bags!

Inés's role as an advocate and activist have merged her passion with her full time job and she currently serves as the Next Generation Fellow lead, supporting young people's leadership in the achievement of the SDGs through local and global actions.

Inés is on the board of L.O.O.P. (a grassroots women led Peruvian social impact company conserving the marine ecosystem) and is a co-founder of Ensemble pour TECHO (an organization seeking to overcome poverty in Latin America). Her previous experiences include working with organizations in Sierra Leone, France, Lebanon and Japan to reach the 2030 agenda.

Her personal belief for administering the world God created, has taken her to multiple COPs, from the conference of Youth in 2014 where she was an interpreter right ahead of the historic Paris agreement to being part of the Peruvian delegation in COP25 and representing the Missing Majority at COP26 and COP27. Inés is also a Global Shaper (Lima Hub), co-founder of Mully (a podcast on sustainable development including Quechua), a Plastic Action Champion and sits on the Global Plastic Action Partnership Advisory committee.



Elizabeth Cousens,
President and Chief
Executive Officer, UN
Foundation



Elizabeth Cousens assumed the role of President and CEO of the United Nations Foundation in 2020. With over two decades of experience in global policymaking, she has been at the forefront of diplomatic efforts and UN policy innovations.

Ms. Cousens previously served in the U.S. Mission to the UN, including as U.S. Ambassador to the UN Economic and Social Council. She has held leadership positions in various international organizations, focusing on conflict resolution, peacebuilding, and humanitarian dialogue.

Prior to her current role, she was Deputy CEO of the UN Foundation, overseeing policy, advocacy, and communications work.



Guy Ryder,
Under-Secretary-General
for Policy at the United
Nations



United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres announced on 7 October 2022 the appointment of Guy Ryder of the United Kingdom as Under-Secretary-General for Policy in his Executive Office. He will succeed Volker Türk of Austria who has been appointed as United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Mr. Ryder was most recently Director-General of the International Labour Organization (ILO) in Geneva after serving two successive terms since October 2012. He first joined the ILO in 1998 as Director of the Bureau for Workers' Activities and from 1999, served as Director of the Office of the Director-General.

Mr. Ryder started his professional career in 1981 as an assistant at the International Department of the Trades Union Congress in London. From 1985, he held the position of Secretary of the Industry Trade Section of the International Federation of Commercial, Clerical, Professional and Technical Employees (FIET) in Geneva. In 1988, he became Assistant Director and – from 1993 - Director of the Geneva office of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU). In 2002, he was appointed General Secretary of the ICFTU and was elected as the first General Secretary of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) when it was created in 2006. He returned to the ILO in 2010 as Executive Director, responsible for international labor standards and fundamental principles and rights at work.

Mr. Ryder studied Social and Political Sciences at the University of Cambridge and Latin American Studies at the University of Liverpool. He speaks English, French and Spanish.



Kelechi Achinonu

UN Foundation Next
Generation fellow
(Justice)



Kelechi Achinonu is a Nigerian lawyer and justice advocate who has spent her career championing peace and advancing justice through innovation and technology. With over four years of experience, she has been instrumental in enhancing access to justice across West Africa. In her current role as Regional Head for West Africa at The Hague Institute for Innovation of Law (HiiL) Justice Accelerator, Kelechi has supported and led more than 100 startups, driving justice solutions to those who need them most. Additionally, as a Next Generation Fellow for Justice, with the United Nations Foundation, she advocates for a youth-centred approach in political dialogues, ensuring that young voices shape policies on equitable access to justice.



H.E. Dr. Chola Milambo,
Permanent
Representative of Zambia
to the United Nations



Ambassador Milambo is Zambia's Permanent Representative of Zambia to the United Nations in New York. He is an accomplished international public servant with accumulated experience of three decades in macroeconomic management and development finance at both global and national levels. He is co-facilitator for intergovernmental negotiations on the Global Digital Compact (GDC) as well as for the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FFD4).

Prior to his appointment as Permanent Representative, he worked at the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank Group (WBG) in Washington DC, in various positions, including Senior Advisor to the WBG Executive Director for Africa Group 1 Constituency. At the national level, he worked at the Bank of Zambia, Zambia Revenue Authority, as well as the Ministry of Finance.

Dr. Milambo, a Fulbright Scholar, holds a Ph.D. in Economics from Howard University in Washington DC, USA, a Master of Arts in Economics from the University of Nairobi in Kenya, and a Bachelor of Arts in Economics from the University of Zambia.



H.E. Yoka M.G. Brandt,
Permanent
Representative of the
Netherlands to the United
Nations



Yoka M.G. Brandt is the Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to the United Nations in New York, and presented her credentials to the Chief of Protocol of the United Nations Ms. Beatrix Kania on September 2nd, 2020. Ms. Brandt's career includes serving as Deputy Executive Director for Partnerships at UNICEF (2012-2016) and Director-General for International Cooperation at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2008-2012). She held ambassadorial posts in Uganda (2004-2007) and Eritrea (2000-2004).

Her diplomatic career spans over three decades, beginning in 1985 with various positions at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in The Hague and at missions abroad. Ms. Brandt holds a master's degree in geography and development economics from Utrecht University from 1976 to 1983.



Ayisha Siddiqa, The United Nations Secretary-General's Youth Advisory Group on Climate Change



Ayisha Siddiqa is a Pakistani-American human rights and tribal land defender. She co-founded Polluters Out and Fossil Free University, focusing on uplifting marginalized communities' rights while holding polluting companies accountable at the international level.

Ms. Siddiqa currently serves as a research scholar at NYU School of Law, working to bridge the environmental and human rights sector with the youth climate movement.

Her efforts in human rights advocacy and environmental justice have gained international recognition. In 2023, Ms. Siddiqa was named a Time magazine Woman of the Year. Ms. Siddiqa continues to work towards integrating youth perspectives into global environmental and human rights initiatives.



Txai Suruí, Indigenous Young Leader



Txai Suruí, an indigenous activist from the Brazilian Amazon, serves as the coordinator of Kanindé, an ethno-environmental defense association, and the Indigenous Youth Movement of Rondônia. She is also a councilor for WWF Brazil and an adviser to the UN Global Compact. Suruí comes from a prominent family of activists; her father, Chief Almir Suruí, was named "Hero of the Forest" by the United Nations in 2013, and her mother, Ivaneide Suruí, is renowned for her fight against deforestation. Continuing her family's legacy, Txai is actively involved in climate activism and indigenous rights advocacy. She volunteers with Engajamundo, sits on the State Council for the Rights of Children and Adolescents of Rondônia, and is pursuing a law degree. Suruí also contributes as a columnist for Folha de São Paulo.



Dr. Obiageli “Oby” Katryn Ezekwesili

President of Human Capital África and Senior Economic Adviser at África Economic Development Policy Initiative (AEDPI)



Obiageli "Oby" Katryn Ezekwesili is a distinguished economic policy expert and anti-corruption advocate with over three decades of experience in public service and international development. She currently serves as Senior Economic Adviser of the Africa Economic Development Policy Initiative and is a co-founder of Transparency International. Dr. Ezekwesili's career spans roles as Vice President of the World Bank's Africa Region, Nigerian Minister of Education, and Director of the Harvard-Nigeria Economic Strategy Project. A former presidential candidate in Nigeria, she now leads various initiatives including Human Capital África and the School of Politics Policy and Governance. Dr. Ezekwesili holds master's degrees in International Law and Diplomacy, and Public Policy from Harvard University. Recognized globally, she was named one of Time's 100 Most Influential People and has received numerous awards for her contributions to economic policy, transparency, and governance in Africa



The Kabin Studio, Ireland
Youth Group



The Kabin Studio, founded by music producer and rap artist Garry McCarthy (GMCBeats) in 2012, is a pioneering community music and arts hub on Cork City's northside. This innovative space engages young people from diverse backgrounds, fostering confidence, skills, and creativity through rap, singing, songwriting, and digital media.

In 2024, the studio achieved international recognition with "The Spark," a viral hit created by the Kabin Crew, their collective of young artists aged 8-11. The track garnered over 1 billion TikTok streams and 30 million Spotify plays, featuring in prominent publications like the New York Times and Rolling Stone UK.

The Kabin Studio's impact extends beyond viral success, with performances at major festivals including Electric Picnic and Pukkelpop in Belgium. Supported by Cork City Council, Music Generation Cork City, and Tomar Trust, the studio serves over 50 young people through regular workshops, addressing mental health and societal issues while promoting community integration.

