

ID:	Is anonymous?	Is organisation?
328	Yes	No

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Global catastrophic risks mitigated	Risk multipliers managed	Implementation timeframe
Climate change	Conflict or political violence	Short
Eco-system collapse	Institutions that lack inclusivity or accountability	
Pandemics and anti-microbial resistance	Poverty and inequality	
Weapons of Mass Destruction		
The threat from new and emerging technology		
Unknown risks		

UNGA 7th Committee: The Future Committee

The 7th Committee of the GA would be asked to assess resolutions based on long-term impact, just as the 5th Committee looks at the budgetary consequences, and have its own agenda. Resolutions not found to be sustainable for the future would need to be modified accordingly.

DETAILS

As you are likely aware, the General Assembly currently divides its work into six committees in order to allow for concurrent work on a variety of issues. All resolutions with budgetary implications then go to the fifth committee (out of those six) to ensure that it fits within the budget of the UN. A fantastic resolution in the third committee may never be implemented if the fifth committee rejects it. This proposal is essentially advancing the idea of a seventh committee which would serve the same purpose as the fifth, but ensuring coherence between the short term goals of a resolution and the long term needs of humanity. Moreover, the committee would take up certain issues of future impact that do not have other venues for discussion.

This proposal serves to thread the needle between the UN Parliamentary Assembly (which may lack buy-in from many countries as introducing a whole new chamber to keep the GA in check may be a non-starter for many) and the important calls for a Commission on Youth (sic) which, while an excellent idea, may be toothless in the current UN arrangement.

WIDER IMPLICATIONS

Alleviating poverty and inequality

Any Committee that looks at GA resolutions through a lens of future generations will necessarily be looking to alleviate poverty and reduce inequality. Moreover, as these matters are and continue to be risks for future generations, the 7th Committee would be tasked with looking into them.

Enhancing inclusivity and accountability in national and global governance

Because this proposal is based on a working model in Wales, aspirationally it could also serve to be a working model for other national governments. In this sense, any committee ensuring 'future proofing' of the outcomes of governmental processes would have the effect of enhancing inclusivity and accountability at both the national and

global level.

Reducing conflict and political violence

To the degree that conflict and political violence are concerns for the future (which, unfortunately, is now very high), the 7th Committee will work to ensure that resolutions take these matters into consideration.

THEORY OF CHANGE

Implementation strategy

Such a proposal is workable as evidenced by its existence in Wales, for example. As a starting point for advocacy, there is no government which can claim not to be concerned with the future. Moreover, no UN Charter modification is necessary to create this Committee. A small groundswell could easily cause the Member States to act. Finally, this Committee would meet the needs of a litany of pressing concerns as it addresses the future impact of a host of challenges. As such, civil society could easily unify behind the effort, as would a number of Member States. Of course, any new institution at the UN would face some headwinds, but there is likely a way to cast this which could easily win the support of many.

Political will exists to realise this proposal

There are a number of Member States who would likely be willing to sign on to such an idea, though this hasn't yet been raised with them per se. Norway, for example, which has a seed bank in place in case of global catastrophe, and the small island states who see their future as dependent on our response to climate change would likely support this effort most vociferously.

What if political will does not exist yet

If adopted by Together First as something which is feasible, I suspect there are enough extant coalitions around the world which would see merit to the idea immediately. From UN policy wonks to the average youth joining the Fridays for Future marches, this is the kind of proposal which, if well articulated, meets the dual criteria of being both attractive to the global population and tenable to Member States.

MITIGATING RISKS

Mitigating climate change

The 7th Committee would look at all resolutions arising out of the GA to ensure that, taken to their extension, they would not do further harm to the climate. In cases where the resolution does not meet the standards, reparative

measures would be required or it would not pass. Moreover, the Committee would have its own agenda and would certainly be seized of this matter as an issue of concern for the future.

Mitigating pandemics and anti-microbial resistance

The 7th Committee would look at all resolutions arising out of the GA to ensure that, taken to their extension, they would not risk acceleration of pandemic uptake or other health crisis. In cases where the resolution does not meet the standards, reparative measures would be required or it would not pass. Moreover, the Committee would have its own agenda and would certainly be seized of this matter as an issue of concern for the future.

Mitigating weapons of mass destruction

The 7th Committee would look at all resolutions arising out of the GA to ensure that, taken to their extension, they would at least not increase WMDs and, hopefully, would look to decrease them. In cases where the resolution does not meet the standards, reparative measures would be required or it would not pass. Moreover, the Committee would have its own agenda and would certainly be seized of this matter as an issue of concern for the future.

Mitigating eco-system collapse

The 7th Committee would look at all resolutions arising out of the GA to ensure that, taken to their extension, they would not do further harm to the ecosystem. In cases where the resolution does not meet the standards, reparative measures would be required or it would not pass. Moreover, the Committee would have its own agenda and would certainly be seized of this matter as an issue of concern for the future.

Mitigating the threat from new and emerging technology

The Committee would have its own agenda and would certainly be seized of this matter as an issue of concern for the future. Moreover, the 7th Committee would look at all resolutions arising out of the GA to ensure that, taken to their extension, they would not raise the risk of the threats of new and emerging technologies. In cases where the resolution does not meet the standards, reparative measures would be required or it would not pass.

Mitigating unknown risks

Especially in terms of the emergence of risks, the 7th Committee would both assess other GA resolutions for future implications and retain its own agenda which would certainly be seized of this issue.