

Opening Remarks

25 Feb. 2026

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The graphic is a circular design with a dark blue upper half and a light blue lower half. At the top, it features logos for APSD (Asian Pacific Society for Sustainable Development), ADA (Asia Development Association), and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) icons, with the text 'ACTION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT' and 'GLOBAL SUMMIT WATCH'. Below the logos, the text 'ASIA FUTURES FORUM' is written in a white box. Underneath, 'Webinar Series' is written in white. The main text in the dark blue section reads: 'Opening Session: Overall Assessment of the State of Implementation of the Pact for the Future and UN80'. Below this, a calendar icon is followed by 'Date: February 25th, 2026', and a clock icon is followed by 'Time: 18:00 to 20:00 BKK Time - GMT+7'. At the bottom of the dark blue section, the registration link 'https://tinyurl.com/AFF-Opening' is provided. The light blue section features a large blue arrow pointing right, with the text 'PACT FOR THE FUTURE' partially visible on the left side.

APSD
ASIAN PACIFIC SOCIETY FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

ADA
ASIA DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

ACTION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

GLOBAL SUMMIT WATCH

ASIA FUTURES FORUM

Webinar Series

Opening Session: Overall Assessment of the State of Implementation of the Pact for the Future and UN80

Date: February 25th, 2026

Time: 18:00 to 20:00 BKK Time - GMT+7

Registration: <https://tinyurl.com/AFF-Opening>

PACT FOR THE FUTURE

ASIA FUTURES FORUM

The Asia Futures Forum (AFF) is a collaborative initiative led by the Asia Civil Society Partnership for Sustainable Development/SDGs **(APSD)**, the Asia Development Alliance **(ADA)**, and the Global Call to Action Against Poverty **(GCAP)**, in partnership with **the Coalition for the UN We Need (C4UN)** with the aims to address the challenges and opportunities emerging from the **2024 UN Summit of the Future (SOTF)** and its follow-up process.

The AFF was launched in **November 2023** with the primary objective of facilitating meaningful civic engagement by civil society organizations (CSOs) in the 2024 UN Summit of the Future and its follow-up processes, by bringing people's voices and concerns grounded in the lived realities of Asia into global discussions.

ASIA FUTURES FORUM

In 2026, a series of online and in-person meetings will be organized, beginning with the first Webinar today on 25 February during the UN APFSD, followed by additional ones in **March to May 2026**. The outcomes of these webinars will be consolidated and presented as a collective statement to the **Global Futures Forum in June 2026**.

The Pact for the Future of the SOTF

5 Major Pillars

- 1. Sustainable Development and Financing**
(Action No 1-12)
- 2. International Peace and Security**
(Action No 13-26)
- 3. Science, Technology, Innovation, and Digital Cooperation**
(Action No 27 - 33) with the Annex I “Global Digital Compact”
- 4. Youth and Future Generations**
(Action No 34-37) with the Annex II <Declaration on Future Generations>
- 5. Transforming Global Governance**
(Action No 38-56)

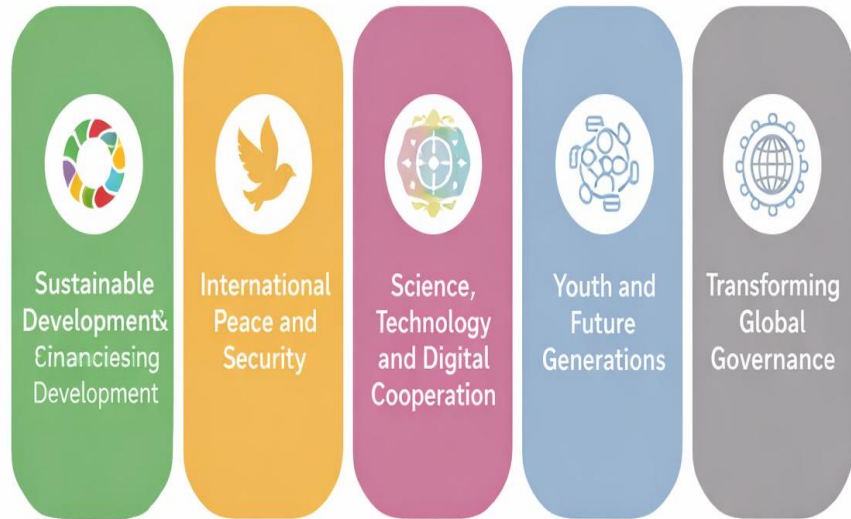
2024

-

2025

A Pact for the Future

CHAPEAU OF THE PACT FOR THE FUTURE



Human rights and gender equality will feature across the Pact

Annexed to the Pact: A Global Digital Compact and a Declaration on Future Generations

BRAIN BOOSTERS #18 01-07-2025

Did You Know?

UN80 Initiative

- The UN Charter was signed on June 26, 1945 by representatives of the 50 countries attending the United Nations Conference on International Organization in San Francisco. This year marks the 80th anniversary of the signing of the United Nations Charter.
- In March this year, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres announced a new initiative aimed at improving efficiencies at the 80-year-old world organisation.
- It seeks not only to improve efficiency, but also to reassert the value of multilateralism at a time when trust is low and needs are high. It aims to reinforce the UN's capacity to respond to today's global challenges.

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Road to the Summit of the Future



2015

*2030
Agenda*



2020

*UN75
Declaration*



2021

*Our
Common
Agenda*

SDG SUMMIT
2023



2023

*SDG
Summit*



2022-2024

*Summit of
the Future*



2024

*Pact for the
Future*

Historical Context 2015-2024-2026-2030

	2015-2019	2020-2023	2024-2025	2026	2027-2030
UN Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2030 Agenda / SDGs (2015) TPNW (2017) Youth Strategy 2030 (2018) 1st SDGs Summit (2019) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UN75 (2020) TES (2022) 2nd SDGs Summit (2023) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UN SOTF (2024) UN FfD4 (Seville, July 2025) UN WSSD2 (Doha, Nov. 2025) UN80 (2025) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3rd SDGs Summit (2027) Review Conference of the SOTF (2028) NPT (Nuclear Weapons) (2028) Summit on Post-2030 (2030)
USA	Trump I (2017 Jan. – 2021 Jan.) -- Biden (2021 Jan. ~ 2025 Jan.) -- Trump II (2025 Jan. ~ 2029 Jan.)				
Global Events	<p>Public Health COVID19 (2020 Mar.-2023 May)</p> <p>Technology Artificial Intelligence (AI) ChatGPT (2022 Nov. 30 ~)</p> <p>Geopolitical Conflicts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> War in Ukraine (2022 Feb. 24 ~) War in Gaza (2023 Oct. 7 ~) Armed Conflicts between India and Pakistan (2025 May 7-10) Armed Conflicts between Cambodia and Thailand (2025 May & Dec.) Military tensions between China and Japan over Taiwan (2025 Nov. ~) 				

Perceived Differences on Issues of the SOTF & UN80

Issue	Convergence	Divergence
SDGs	Broad support across all	Implementation burden varies
Digital Governance	Agreement on importance	Sovereignty vs open model divide
Security Council Reform	All recognize need	Sharp division on scope & speed
Human Rights	Formally acknowledged	Degree of emphasis differs greatly
Global South Representation	Increasingly central	Interpretation differs (India vs China nuance)

- **SOTF** = relatively high convergence space.
Focus on SDGs, digital future, climate → easier consensus.
- **UN80** = higher political sensitivity.
Security Council reform & power redistribution → sharper divergence.
 - **India & Japan** = reform drivers.
 - **China** = cautious gatekeeper.
 - **ROK** = bridge actor.
 - **ASEAN** = stability-oriented coalition.

Comparison of the Positions on SOTF and UN80 among China, Japan, S. Korea, India and ASEAN

Dimension	China	Japan	Republic of Korea (South)	India	ASEAN
Type of Engagement	Strategic reform supporter	Institutional reform advocate	Normative middle power bridge	Reform-driven structural challenger	Pragmatic consensus-builder
Geopolitical Framing	Multipolar order; Global South alignment	Liberal international order defense	Strategic balancing (US alliance + multilateralism)	Strategic autonomy; Global South leadership	ASEAN centrality; hedging strategy
Overall Posture on SOTF	Supports multilateral reform but stresses sovereignty & development	Strong supporter of rule-based order & SDG acceleration	Norm-based middle power; links democracy & digital governance	Global South voice; equity & reform emphasis	Pragmatic; SDG & climate implementation focus
Pact for the Future	Aligns with development & Global South language	Actively supportive; institutional strengthening	Supportive; emphasis on digital & AI governance	Supports but pushes structural reform	General support; avoids divisive language
Global Digital Compact	Cyber sovereignty; state-centered governance	Open, interoperable, secure digital order	AI ethics, digital inclusion, innovation diplomacy	Digital public infrastructure; development framing	Digital capacity-building & inclusion
Security Council Reform (UN80 context)	Supports greater developing-country representation; cautious on P5 change	Strong candidate for expanded permanent seat	Supports reform in principle; cautious positioning	Strongest advocate for permanent seat (G4)	No unified stance; generally cautious
View on UN Institutional Reform (UN80)	Incremental reform; protect stability	Institutional strengthening & accountability	Efficiency + transparency; middle-ground	Structural transformation & representation	Gradual & consensus-based reform
Development Finance / FfD linkage	South-South cooperation; development banks	Quality infrastructure; ODA leadership	ODA expansion; bridging North-South	Debt justice; climate finance	Climate adaptation & SDG financing priority

Challenges to CSOs in Asia

Challenge	Specific Issues
1. Democratic Space & Participation Deficit	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Shrinking civic space• Limited institutional access to UN processes• Youth marginalization in governance
2. Geopolitical Polarization & Multilateral Legitimacy Crisis	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• US–China rivalry and regional tensions• Legitimacy crisis of multilateralism• Risk of bloc-based governance fragmentation
3. Implementation & Accountability Gap	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• State-centric implementation of the Pact for the Future• Gap between global commitments and national policy• Weak monitoring of P4F commitments
4. Development–Rights & Justice Tensions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Development-first narratives overshadowing human rights• Inequality, debt, climate justice tensions in Asia
5. Digital & Technological Governance Risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Digital authoritarianism• AI governance gaps• Weak accountability in emerging technologies

Strategic Tasks of CSOs in Asia

Challenge	Strategic Tasks for Asian Civil Society
1. Democratic Space & Participation Deficit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build regional civic space protection mechanisms • Expand ECOSOC accreditation and structured UN engagement • Institutionalize youth advisory mechanisms at national and UN levels • Advocate permanent civil society consultative platforms within UN reform (UN80)
2. Geopolitical Polarization & Multilateral Legitimacy Crisis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote principle-based, non-aligned civil society coalitions • Advance Track II/III peace diplomacy initiatives • Advocate democratization of global governance (Security Council reform, stronger ECOSO C) • Develop regional consensus positions before UNGA sessions
3. Implementation & Accountability Gap	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop civil society monitoring reports and scorecards • Align P4F commitments with national development strategies • Establish Asia regional monitoring platform linked to UN High-Level Week • Engage parliaments and local governments in follow-up
4. Development–Rights & Justice Tensions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA) to SDGs and climate finance • Advance development justice framework in post-2030 agenda debates • Integrate debt, inequality, and social protection into UN80 reform discussions
5. Digital & Technological Governance Risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate human rights-based digital governance under SOTF Digital Compact follow-up • Establish Asian AI & Digital Rights observatories • Promote transparency, algorithmic accountability, and global South voice in tech governance

SEED



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