TOGETHER FIRST
A global system that works for all

ID:	Is anonymous?	Is organisation?
137	No	Yes

Is form complete:	Organisation name:
Yes	CIVICUS

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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**	
Weapons of Mass Destruction	**Poverty and inequality**	
The threat from new and emerging technology		

A Dedicated Civil Society Focal Point at UN

Civil society is an indispensable partner to the UN. The role of Civil Society Organisations in supporting the three pillars of the UN and in ensuring innovative solutions to complex challenges, inclusive decision making, responsive service delivery and effective participation and accountability is well documented. Nevertheless, key gaps remain in the realization of effective UN - Civil Society Partnerships. A dedicated Civil Society Focal Point at the UN can help address these gaps and support UN departments in benefitting from civil society expertise while encouraging them to be champions of civil society and public participation

DETAILS

https://together1st.org/blog/a_seat_at_the_table_for_civil_society

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WIDER IMPLICATIONS

Alleviating poverty and inequality

A dedicated Civil Society Focal Point can help create enabling environments for civil society organisations and activists engaged in promoting inclusive economic policies, exposing corruption, gender justice and labour rights.

Enhancing inclusivity and accountability in national and global governance

Civil Society Organisations and activists play a key role in advancing the rights of excluded groups and in ensuring accountability of decision makers. A dedicated focal point to support the work of such organisations and activists can have a cascading impact.

Reducing conflict and political violence

Civil Society organisations and activists support actions that promote peace and justice which can help reduce conflict and reduce political violence.

THEORY OF CHANGE

Implementation strategy

A senior staff position at Undersecretary General level can be designated to act as a Civil Society Focal Point and champion at the UN. This proposal builds upon similar calls in Erskine Childers and Brian Urquhart's 1994 study "Renewing the United Nations System" and has formed the basis of subsequent calls from CIVICUS, UNA-UK and others.

Institutionally, there should not be any obstacles to the appointment as Civil Society as the UN has a long history of drawing on civil society expertise and commitment through the partnerships. The financial costs of appointing a focal point and setting up their office would not be very high. What is however required is political will and support of governments that are committed to the notion of civil society and public participation.

Political will exists to realise this proposal

Senior UN officials have publicly and privately expressed their support for Civil Society. Presumably, within the UN the idea would have traction. While civic space conditions and civil society operating environments remain constrained in many parts of the globe, there are several states that remain committed to civil society and public participation who could extend political and financial support for the proposed post.

What if political will does not exist yet

Some states are opposed to independent and empowered Civil Society. They may seek to use their political influence to block the creation of a Civil Society Focal Point. However, strong support from within the UN and from democratic states can help overcome potential obstacles.

MITIGATING RISKS

Mitigating climate change

By supporting and championing the work of civil society organisations engaged in mitigation strategies against climate change this proposal can have a cascading and positive impact.

Mitigating weapons of mass destruction

By supporting and championing the work of civil society organisations engaged in peace and disarmament work this proposal can have a cascading and positive impact.

Mitigating eco-system collapse

By supporting and championing the work of civil society organisations engaged in protecting fragile eco-systems and committed to environmental sustainability this proposal can have a cascading and positive impact.

Mitigating the threat from new and emerging technology

By supporting and championing the work of civil society organisations engaged in protecting and promoting internationally agreed human rights standards this proposal can have a cascading and positive impact.