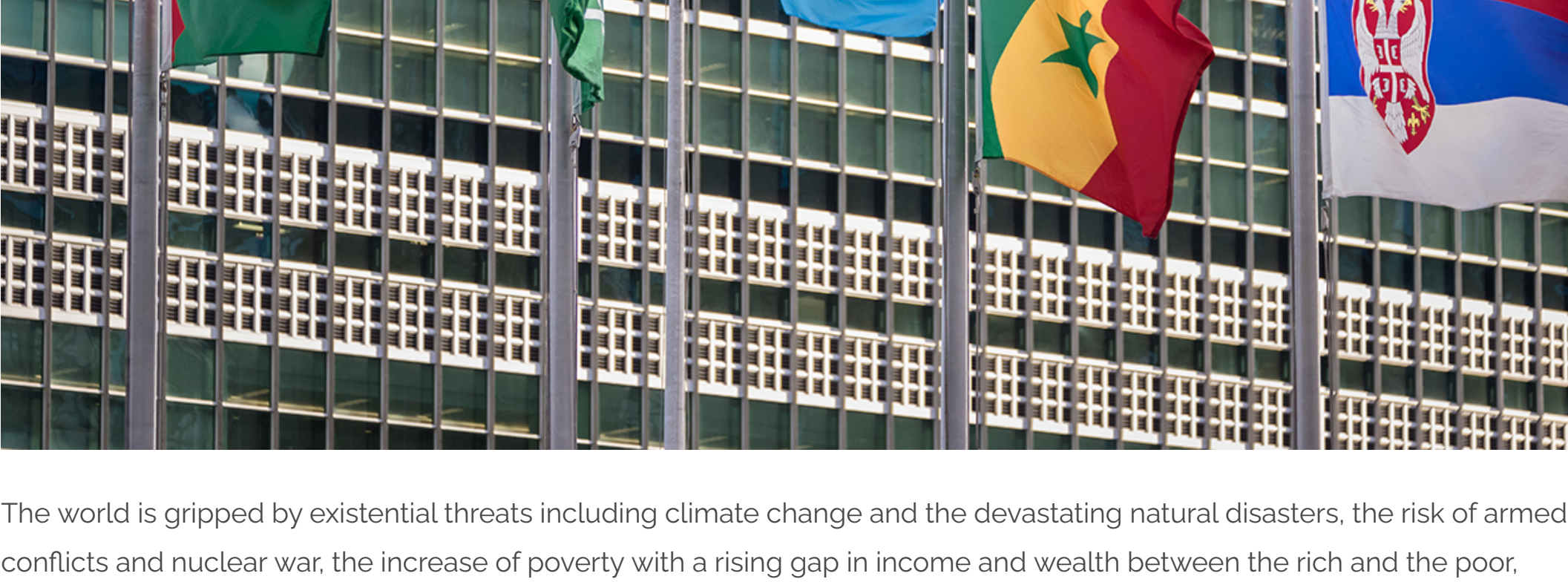




Federating the world to tackle global existential threats

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The world is gripped by existential threats including climate change and the devastating natural disasters, the risk of armed conflicts and nuclear war, the increase of poverty with a rising gap in income and wealth between the rich and the poor, and the risk of global health crises like the COVID-19 pandemic, among others. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development launched at the United Nations (UN) summit in September 2015 pledged to ensure sustained and inclusive economic growth, social inclusion and environmental protection, and to do so in partnership and peace (https://www.un.org/development/desa/jpo/wp-content/uploads/sites/55/2017/02/2030-Agenda-for-Sustainable-Development-KCSD-Primer-new.pdf). However, the recent UN summit on September 18-19, 2023 has evidenced that these great promises remain unfulfilled with permanent complain of the less developed countries. Thus, none of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), outlined in the Agenda will be met by 2030. Furthermore, the analyses of 36 of the 169 detailed targets that accompany the overarching goals show that he world is on track to achieve only two of them, the increasing access to the Internet and to mobile-phone networks. Therefore, none of the five critical dimensions: people, prosperity, planet, partnership and peace, also known as the 5Ps, will be achieved. The summit outright sense of deception and frustration was summarized by Lula da Silva, President of Brazil, when declaring that "There is a lack of political will from those who govern the world, in order to overcome inequality". But, despite the evident failures, the final agreement of the summit made the usual rhetoric declaration of wills and goals by stating "We will act with urgency to realize its vision as a plan of action for people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership, leaving no one behind" (https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/development-agenda/).

Although the UN has played a crucial role in addressing some global challenges including conflict resolution, humanitarian assistance, and development efforts, it has not always function as effectively as desired suffering from stagnation and appearing incapable to solve current welfare and life-threatening problems. In this context, the veto power of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council that can block any substantive resolution or action is a major handicap, while smaller or less influential nations may struggle to have their voices heard. Bureaucracy, funding issues, and the lack of enforcement power are additional shortcomings hindering the ability of the UN to respond effectively to crises. We will have to accept that the UN has reached the end of its political life cycle and urgently needs a fundamental renewal.

The need for urgent and meaningful reform of the UN Security Council Reform has been advocated for some time in order to make it more representative, accountable, democratic, transparent and effective. A prominent proposal was the 2005 Ezulwini consensus for increasing the African representation in the Security Council to provide the continent with two permanent seats with veto power and five non-permanent chosen by the African Union (https://old.centerforunreform.org/sites/default/files/Ezulwini%20Consensus.pdf). However, fulfilling this demand will perpetuate the veto problem and will not solve the issue of fair representation, even within the countries of the African Union.

In another effort to effectively satisfy the UN Security Council mandate, the Uniting for Consensus (UfC) group, that has been advocating a comprehensive and meaningful reform of the Security Council for many years, met in Rome on March 27, 2023 to discussed the Security Council reform (https://www.esteri.it/en/sala_stampa/archivionotizie/comunicati/2023/03/joint-press-release-of-the-uniting-for-consensus-group/#:~:text=Uniting%20for%20Consensus%20is%20a,reform%20of%20the%20Security%20Council). In the meeting the unit reiterated its firm opposition to adding new permanent members avoiding unjustifiable privileged positions within the international community, and advocated for the creation of additional non-permanent seats, both "long-term" and "two-year" seats, to allow more rotation and improved access for all UN Member States, especially from under-represented regions. However, despite the well-intentioned endeavour, the UfC's proposal falls short of a fair participation of all countries. Volodymyr Zelensky, the Ukraine President, in his intervention at the recent UN General Assembly, put his finger on the sore reminding us that ". it is not a dialogue between the so-called "great powers" somewhere behind the closed doors that can guarantee us all the new no-wars-era, but open work of all nations for peace.", thus reinforcing the importance of participation of all world states with transparency and sharing common purpose.

The UN is aware of the critical situation regarding the deficits of its structure and the handling of the world affairs and is actively seeking a solution that could garner the widest possible political acceptance. Accordingly, the General Assembly is maintaining intergovernmental negotiations on the question of equitable representation by increasing the membership of the Security Council (https://www.un.org/en/ga/screform/).

As seen above, none of the proposed initiatives to improve the functioning and efficacy of the UN has been convincing as yet, and there is little hope that the UN with its present structure and function would champion the existing world problems. It is worth noting that Article 109 of the UN Charter states that the Charter itself must be reviewed within ten years of its founding in 1945 by organizing an *ad hoc* conference (San Francisco's Promise). However, such a conference has not yet taken place, so the UN violates its own rules. Another example that the veto power exercised by nation states is tainted by the maintenance of national self-interest is the intergovernmental structure of the European Union with Council members acting at the same time as national leaders, a situation that gives rise to a conflict of interest. Thus, reforming the Security Council by removing the veto power and expanding the number of the permanent members could make the decision-making process more representative and responsive to current global power dynamics; however, this improvement will no be sufficient to ensure trust and cooperation between nations and the elimination of competing interests that are obstacles for the effective direction and leadership on preventing war, climate change, poverty, and other pressing global issues.

This shows us that solving the enormity of the issues that humanity faces cannot be achieved through a organization that allows some countries to have more power and privileges in detriment of the rest and that, in addition, it lacks the strength and capacity to implement the reached agreements. But, if the UN is not structured to address effectively the global challenges, then, what are the alternatives? We believe that the only remaining viable alternative is the founding of a Federation of the Earth that encompasses the established and future federations around the world. Indeed, the creation of a democratic world government was already envisaged by thinkers such as Immanuel Kant, Mahatma Gandhi and Albert Einstein; however, it was not until 1968 when the World Constitutional Convention and the Peoples World Parliament held in Interlaken (Switzerland) and Wolfach (Germany), drafted the Earth Constitution that was subsequently amended in 1977, 1979 and 1991 (http://worldparliament-gov.org/constitution/the-earth-constitution/) to ensure peace, disarmament, justice, equality, dignity, and environmental sustainability for everyone in the world. Once the Earth Constitution has been ratified by world citizens, the Federation of Earth should be created to empower world citizens and countries to drive the necessary changes to ensuring the wellbeing of people on a global scale by dialogue and cooperation among states, and reaching a commitment to sustainable development goals. Indeed, a Federation of Earth will have a crucial role to play in coordinating policies and ensuring that equality is at the centre of all interventions.

The World Constitution and the eventual Federation of Earth represent a great opportunity; however, the construction of a world federation is a mammoth endeavour requiring the set-up of colossal govern structures that would inexorably prevent proper functioning, which may cause frustration and undermine citizens' support. Because of this, a Federation of Earth has to encompass the existing and future regional federations in the world, a structure that will ensure a federal system flowing from the bottom up, and whereby the care for common, transnational interest of the States is entrusted to regional/continental federations and from these to the Earth Federation. Thus, for example, fiscal and healthcare issues can be better attended at the regional Federations while security and environmental issues may be better dealt with at the Federation of Earth.

In this context, the already two hundred years living ideal of a federated Europe to create a democratic, effective, and integrated policy in Europe was realised at the Citizens' Convention, held by the Federal Alliance of European Federalists (FAEF) between October 2021 and April 2022. The Convention drafted a ten-articles European Constitution based on entrusting common interest of the European States to a future Federated States of Europe. A strict separation of the legislative, executive, and legal powers, and a direct citizens' participation were also fundamental (https://www.fae.eu/wp-content/uploads/Final-Constitution.pdf). Of course, the Constitution will need to be approved by European citizens after which the Federated States of Europe will be founded with the aim of replacing the EU. Then, it is expected that the Federated States of Europe will joint other world federations under the Earth Federation.

A federal structure of the world emerges as the best guarantor for global cooperation, building trust, and addressing the underlying causes of conflicts unable to be adequately managed by the UN and by stagnant and inoperative political systems. Citizens must be the driving force of this transcendent initiative for which they can count on the advances in digital and communication technology, that are raising awareness and providing education about crucial issues and also bringing us closer.

Manuel Galiñanes, Mauro Casarotto and Leo Klinkers on behalf of the Federal Alliance of European Federalists (FAEF)

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Has anyone from the FAEF ever stood for election anywhere on this manifesto?

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