

*ECOSOC Contribution to the  
75th Anniversary Commemoration of the United Nations*

**Multilateralism after COVID 19:  
what kind of UN do we need at the 75th anniversary?**

*17 July 2020 from 9:45 – 11:30 am.*

*Statement by Ms. Julia Sanchez  
Chair of the Board of Directors of CIVICUS*

*Question by the Moderator: From the perspective of civil society organizations, what would an “ideal United Nations” look like and how could we get there?*

Thank you Excellencies, Secretary General, friends and champions of the UN:

- The UN Charter begins with the words ‘We the Peoples...’. In this 75<sup>th</sup> year our emphasis should be on making the UN more ‘people centric’
- In the post-COVID world, opportunistic multilateralism is just not good enough. Holistic and inclusive multilateralism at the UN is a vital component of a people centric approach whereby international norms in relation to fair trade, sustainable development and human rights are given equal precedence to other global priorities. Multilateralism is also vital to our joint response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the quest for a ‘people’s vaccine’ and to ‘build back better’.
- Civil Society plays a key role in making people’s voices count and in ensuring no one is left behind. Enabling environments for Civil Society, where civic freedoms are respected, are crucial to realising the promise of the UN Charter. We look to the UN to protect and promote the rights of Civil Society to maximise our contributions to peace, security and development.
- In relation to the above and to promote and bolster people’s participation in this 75<sup>th</sup> year, civil society coalitions and organisations around the world are calling for three concrete measures that I want to highlight today: (i) the creation of a [high level champion](#) or envoy to empower, support and convene Civil Society inside the UN, (ii) a [UN World Citizen’s Initiative](#) that will provide a vehicle for people to come together and submit proposals for placement on the agenda of the UN General Assembly and the UN Security Council, and (iii) the creation of a [UN Parliamentary Assembly](#) or citizens’ panels to directly represent people’s voices at the UN.

Our vulnerabilities as a global system stand exposed by COVID-19. Multilateralism lost its focus on ‘we the people’ along the way. On this 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary, it is now time to make the UN more-people centred.

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