

August 20th, 2024

For the attention of: His Excellency Bob Rae, President of ECOSOC

RE: **An Open Letter on Civil Society Engagement at the High-Level Political Forum**

I am writing to you on behalf of the Global Network of Civil Society Organisations for Disaster Reduction (GNDR), an accredited observer organisation to ECOSOC. GNDR is the largest global network of civil society organisations working on risk reduction, with 1,835 member organisations across 130 countries.

On behalf of our 1,835 civil society members, we write with great concern regarding the organisation of high-level meetings in New York. The short timeframe for registration, speaker selection and logistics is preventing civil society organisations, particularly those from the global south, from being able to attend.

Several of our members were invited to participate and speak at HLPF this year, or had registered to attend, yet received their letters of invitation and confirmation of registration too late to be able to secure a visa to travel. This is not only shrinking the space for civil society to engage in these important forums but costing organisations money, at a time when resources are already stretched.

Civil society has a right to be meaningfully included; however, they are being silenced by the poor organisation and short timeframe of invitation and confirmation of registrations to your forums.

GNDR strongly advocates for the importance of taking an all of society approach in decision making and for the unique role of civil society organisations in connecting global decision makers to local realities. We see the same issue with the upcoming Summit of the Future which is preventing those on the frontline of risk from being meaningfully included.

We urge you to act on this and ensure your team opens registration, sends registration confirmation and speaker invitations with enough time for the complex US visa process to be navigated by all stakeholders from across the globe.

We look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,



Marcos Concepcion Raba, Executive Director, GNDR

On behalf of the GNDR Network

[Global Network of Civil Society Organisations for Disaster Reduction \(GNDR\)](#)

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