

Forum at the UN on Globalization and Sustainable Development

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New York, USA - A significant event on “Globalization and Sustainable Development: The Role of Government, NGOs and Private Sector” was convened on Oct. 31, 2014 at the Dag Hammarskjold Auditorium at the United Nations in New York. The program was sponsored by the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations and organized by the Global Citizen Forum and UPF. The program represented a collaboration among intergovernmental bodies (UN Alliance of Civilizations and the International Organization for Migration), an NGO (UPF), and the private sector (Global Citizen Forum).

Speakers explored the ways in which government, NGOs and the private sector can cooperate productively toward the achievement of sustainable development in the context of globalization. Special emphasis was given to consideration of the ways in which the private sector and civil society can support the mission of the United Nations and the post-2015 sustainable development goals.

It is evident that the challenges posed by globalization and sustainable development are so far-reaching and complex that the best efforts of governments, international organizations, NGOs, the private sector and other stakeholders are required, recognizing that each has a distinctive but complementary responsibility and role to play.

Globalization and sustainable development are topics of great controversy. Globalization is the process of international integration arising from the interchange of world views, products, ideas and other aspects of culture. Sustainable development aims at integrating economic, environmental and social objectives to seek a more balanced pathway to development. It has been described as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” In August 2014, a UN working group submitted to the UN General Assembly a list of 17 proposed Sustainable Development Goals to take the place of the Millennium Development Goals, whose term was from 2000 to 2015. The debate about defining sustainable development goals continues at the UN.

The involvement of NGOs and private sector in wise, innovative and efficient partnerships with governments and the United Nations can help make our global village sustainable, which is our common responsibility.

Moderated by Ambassador Tariq Al-Ansari, the program’s keynote speakers included H.E. Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, high representative for the UN Alliance of Civilizations; Dr. B.K. Modi, founder-president of the Global Citizen Forum; Dr. Thomas Walsh, president of the Universal Peace Federation; and Ambassador Michele Klein-Solomon, permanent observer of the UN International Organization for Migration.

Speakers for the panel on “Post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals and the Role of Governments, NGOs and Private Sector” were Ambassador Anwarul K. Chowdhury, former under-secretary-general and high representative of the United Nations; Ambassador Noel Sinclair, former deputy chef de cabinet for the president of the 68th Session of the UN General Assembly; Dr. Tageldin Hamad, secretary general of the World Association of NGOs; and Ms. Isha Judd, founder of Isha Educating for Peace.

Finally, the session on “Business, Technology and the Social Sector: Harbingers of a New Civilization” featured Mr. Kelly Wright, anchor for Fox News; Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswati, president of the Divine Shakti Foundation; Dr. Manohar Shinde, president of the Dharma Civilization Foundation; and Mr. Brad Jenkins, Rotary International.