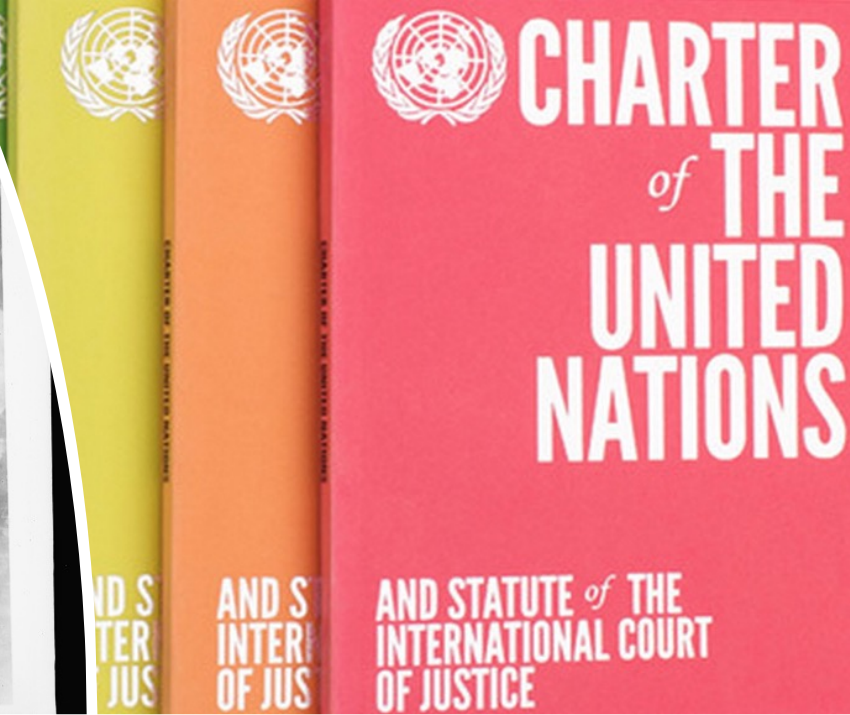
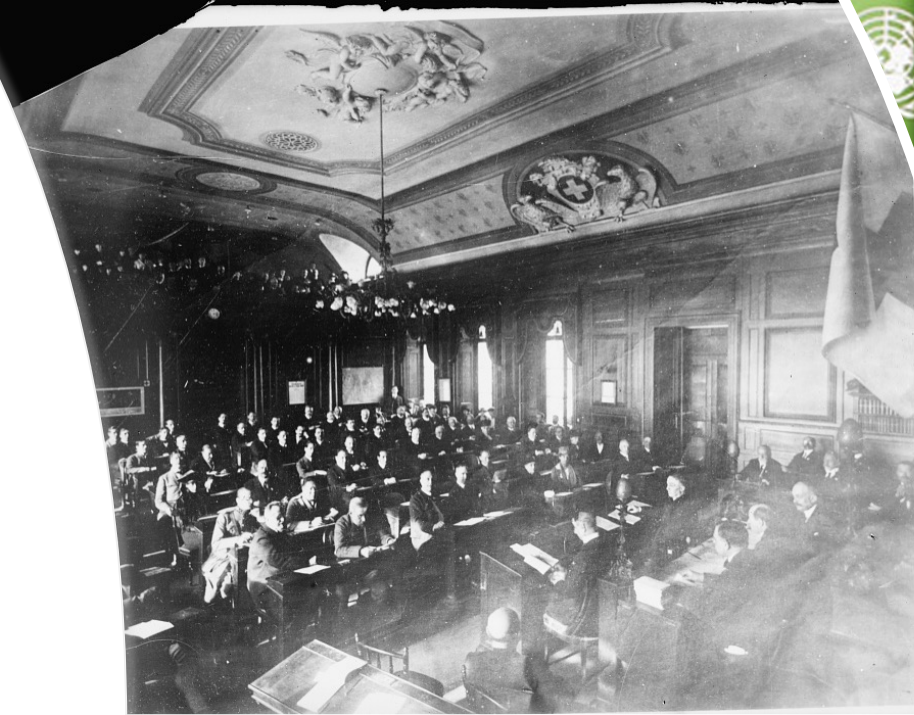


# Civil Society Conferences

Melissa A. Kotulski

WCHR Coalition

October 25, 2023





# Happy International Day, Week, Year!

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- Happy Dialogue as a Guarantee of Peace Year
- Happy Global Media and Information Literacy Week
- Happy Disarmament Week



Photo Credit: Moz St. Pierre

# Civil Society Conferences: Outline of Presentation



History



UN Civil Society Conferences



Other Civil Society Conferences



Civil Society Conferences & the WCHR Coalition



Discussion



## Civil Society Origins...

Perhaps...

## Women's International League for Peace and Freedom in 1915...

&

## The League of Red Cross Societies in Geneva in 1920...

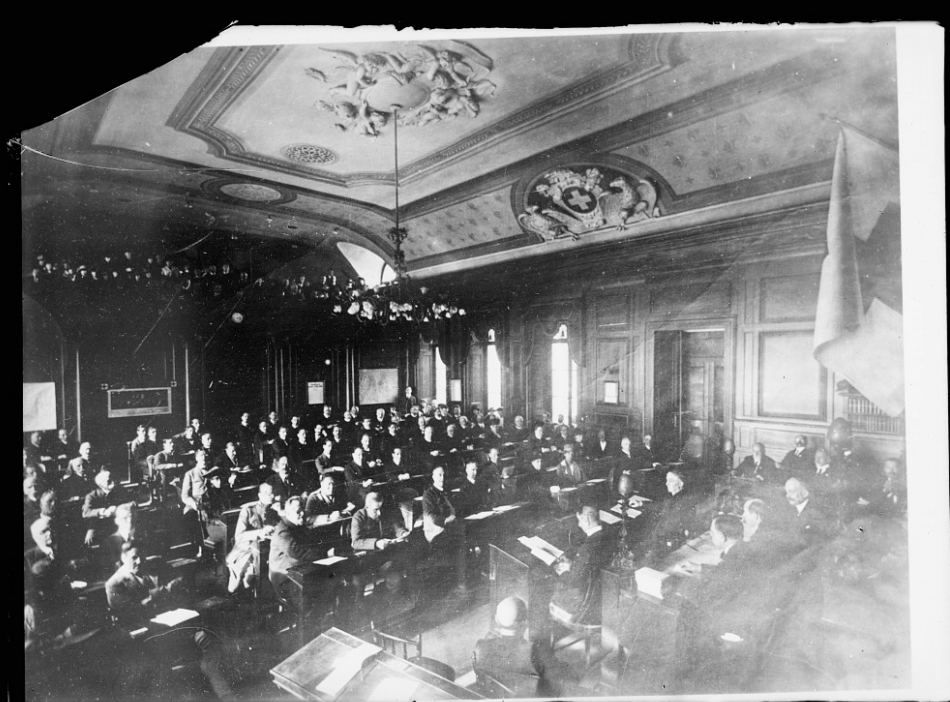


Photo Credits: Library of Congress  
(top photo from 1919—around time of the  
denouncement of Treaty of Versailles)



# History of Civil Society Conferences

- 1945 San Francisco: UN established with representatives of 1200 voluntary organizations:
  - “We the peoples of the United Nations...”
- Article 71 of the UN Charter recognition of civil society and NGOs
  - The Economic and Social Council may make suitable arrangements for consultation with non-governmental organizations which are concerned with matters within its competence. Such arrangements may be made with international organizations and, where appropriate, with national organizations after consultation with the Member of the United Nations concerned.

of THE  
UNITED  
NATIONS

AND S  
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AND S  
AND STATUTE of THE  
INTERNATIONAL COURT



# Background of Civil Society Conferences

## Sustainable Development Goal 17: Partnerships

- The Goal: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development
- The Goal as One of the Bases for Civil Society Conferences



# Civil Society Conferences at the UN: Overview



put a global perspective on a specific issue.



a unique occasion for civil society organizations to network and share best practices at the international level.

- Opening Plenary
- Closing Plenary
- Thematic Sessions
- CSO-led Partnership Workshops
- Exhibits
- Youth Hub and Youth-led Activities
- Networking opportunities
- Side Events

# UN Civil Society Conferences (DPI/NGO Conferences): Action Plan Topics (2009-present)



Salt Lake City Action Plan: Building Inclusive and Sustainable Cities and Communities (68<sup>th</sup>, 2019)



New York City Action Plan I: Together Finding Global Solutions for Global Problems (67<sup>th</sup>, 2018)



Gyeongju Action Plan: Education for Global Citizenship: Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals Together (66<sup>th</sup>, 2016)



New York City Action Plan II: The Role of Civil Society in the Post-2015 Development Agenda (65<sup>th</sup>, 2014)



Bonn Action Action Plan: Sustainable Societies Responsive Citizens (64<sup>th</sup>, 2011)



Melbourne Action Plan: Advance Global Health: Achieve the MDGs (63<sup>rd</sup>, 2010)



Mexico City Action Plan: For Peace and Development Disarm Now! (62<sup>nd</sup>, 2009)



# Salt Lake City Action Plan

## Building Inclusive and Sustainable Cities and Communities

Inclusivity & respect  
for dignity & human  
rights of all

- “sustainable cities and communities must foster opportunities regardless of age; gender; race; nation of origin; sexual orientation; religion; socio-economic status; disability; language; universal, societal, and individual traditions and values; or political opinion.”

Issues addressed

- Global & Civil Governance
- Youth Potential & Significance
- Ethical Use & Development of Technology

# Salt Lake City Action Plan

## Building Inclusive and Sustainable Cities and Communities

Stakeholders were urged to take 13 principal actions, especially related to our purposes:

- enhance inclusivity & respect for dignity of all (human rights)
- sustain safe, peaceful, and just societies, free from war, civil strife, human exploitation, hate speech, and other crimes (especially through conflict resolution)
- establish legal and institutional frameworks to enable positive impact by community and business investments on society

# Salt Lake City Action Plan

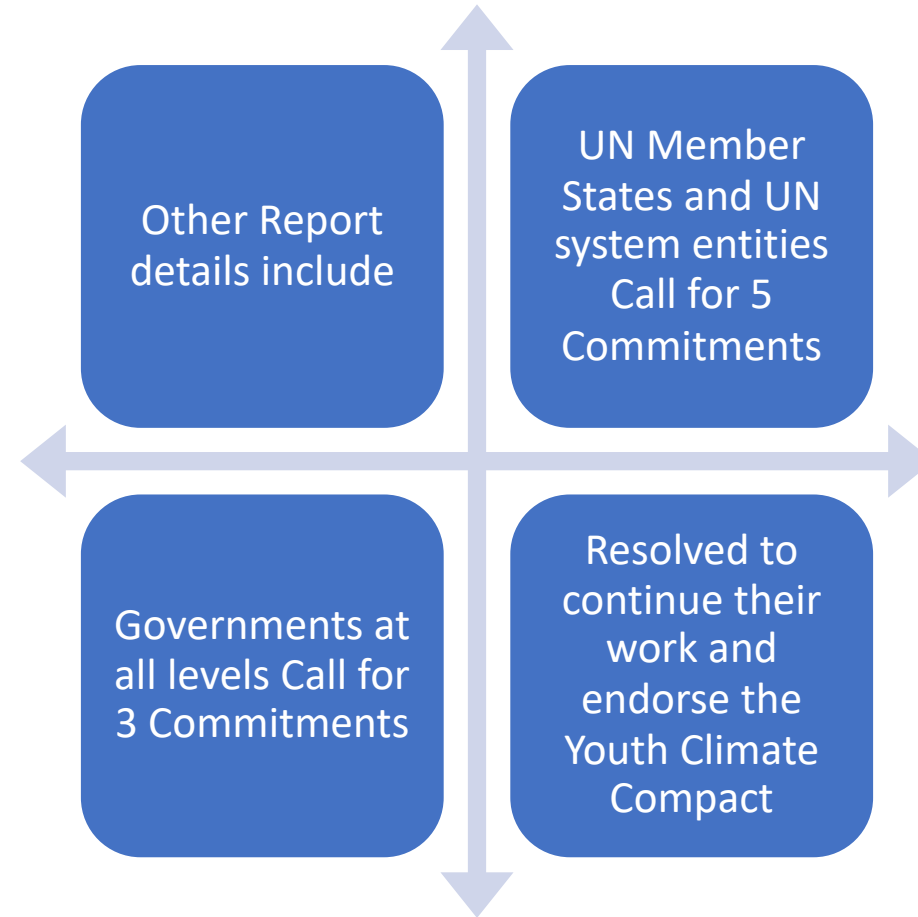
## Building Inclusive and Sustainable Cities and Communities

Attendees offered eight (8) principal commitments, especially related to our purposes:

- Application of conscious inclusivity and respect for human dignity and rights...in our laws, regulations, policies, and practices in a manner that facilitated the inclusion of marginalized, vulnerable, and deprived members of society
- Formation of civil society collaborations, including public-private partnerships, in order to formulate policies, mechanisms, and regulations that foster peaceful, prosperous, inclusive, and sustainable cities and societies.

# Salt Lake City Action Plan

## Building Inclusive and Sustainable Cities and Communities





# Examples of Other Civil Society Conferences



International Campaign to Ban Landmines – one of the most successful civil society campaigns in history



The Coalition for the ICC – had a series of civil society initiatives that led up to the Rome Statute in 1998 (ICC governing law) and beyond



World Health Organization's (WHO) Civil Society Commission's Steering Committee dedicated to fielding advice and recommendations to the WHO's executives



The Conference of the Parties to the Climate Change Treaty has yielded a lot of civil society response, i.e. the Earth Summit.



1997 Nobel Peace Prize Co-Laureate

## Inventive Participation in Civil Society Conferences

- ICAN (prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons) = Participated in Salt Lake City's events with a Peace Boat
- ICBL – continues to contribute to the movement at the United Nations as especially during a special Mine Action Week.

# Civil Society Conferences & the WCHR Coalition



Inventiveness is key to getting people's attention: Organizing a Boat or Float Activity & Establishing an international day, week, or year



Several conferences and meetings may be necessary in order to establish the WCHR



And...?

# Recent WCHR Coalition Activities

- Moz's inventiveness: sponsoring runners in marathons and handing draft Statutes to celebrities and leaders
- Melissa's outreach with local, state, federal and international organizations
- David & Mark's development of a Statute through Design Team meetings
- Mark securing unanimous acceptance by the Chief Justices of the World
- Julia, Manfred, & Martin's development of a Statute
- David's Coalition Building and Convenor status
- And you!



Photo Credit (above and below):  
Moz St. Pierre





# SDG 17 Partnerships to this time?

Montroll, Oettinger, Barquist

People Powered Planet Podcast

International Attestations, LLC

Citizens for Global Solutions

World Service Authority  
& World Citizenship Foundation

Global Justice Intelligence Eyes

Turkey's Human Rights  
Commission

WCHR Pledge Signatories

And others with indirect  
involvement through you! (Case  
Western University, Wethersfield  
Human Rights and Relations  
Coalition, Cinema for Peace,  
European University Institute,  
Code Pink, etc.)

# 69<sup>th</sup> or 70<sup>th</sup> UN Civil Society Conference Planning

Inventive creativity panels

Academic panel

Hand out updated Statute booklets

And...?



# Things you can do now...



Signup for Civil Society announcements: [bit.ly/CSUsignup](https://bit.ly/CSUsignup)



Volunteer to be a participant and/or speaker at one of the events



Establish a Civil Society Steering Committee?



Sign the Individual Pledge and/or the Organizational Pledge to endorse the Coalition and Court



AND...?



# Open Discussion

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