

UNSG MANIFESTO - MARIA HERNANDEZ

Foreword:

The UN is at a critical point of existence. Celebrating its 80th anniversary, it is in peril instead of stability or prosperity. To survive the tests of time, the UN must see actual, targeted reforms that retains its own relevance, as well as that of the multilateral international order. This means the UN must become more well-coordinated internally, actively breaking existing deadlocks in decision. It also has to become more anticipatory, predictive and active in taking action instead of just being passive, reacting to existing world events. I, Maria Hernandez, as a potential candidate for the UNSG, will outline my goals and reforms in the following manifesto.

Overall targets:

- I. Reprogramming and implementing UN reform
- II. Increase preventiveness of the UN
- III. Reframe the UN in public view and uphold multilateralism

Short Term/Immediate Interventions:

1. Addressing the current inadequacy in UN80 Reforms
 - a. *Budget concerns*
 - i. Reducing budget by 20% is an unwise decision, most viable budget cuts are based around 10%
 - ii. Increase collaboration and funding from civil society and the private sector
 - iii. Suggest plans to close loopholes in funding - member dues have to be paid early, not at the end of the year cycle
 - iv. Funding must be predictable for prevention and peacebuilding, not simply for crisis response
 - v. Reliance on Short-term voluntary contributions must be reduced
 - vi. Financial resources must be aligned with long-term peace strategies, not with emergency cycles
 - b. *UN internal standardisation*
 - i. E.g. Confused caused by difference in resolution writing/title formats across all UN agencies
 - ii. Greater standardisation allows for less overlap and cross collaboration
 - iii. New UN structures must be streamlined, fragmentation must be inverted and field-level coordination must be enhanced
 - iv. A culture of collaboration, innovation, and accountability must be streamlined across the whole UN system

- c. *Balancing the three pillars*
 - i. Actual UN reform that is not based on cutting functions, but to reaffirm our pillars - Human rights is currently undervalued in funding, must be protected
 - ii. Increase funding share for human rights sector, utilise new funding sources
- 2. Increasing UN exposure
 - a. *Increased engagement with academia and individuals*
 - i. Creating voluntary advisory/opinion councils to listen more to the people, and to create rapport for the UN in standing their ground against unacceptable requests by certain states
 - b. *Improving the UN's public image*
 - i. More television/social media appearance for other UN agencies such as UNDP, UNEP, not only focused on the UNSC
 - ii. More transparent data and including explanations, letting the general public know more about the UN
 - iii. Increased outreach to high schools and universities, introducing agencies and what they do, gain rapport from the new generation of leaders
 - iv. Providing more opportunities for muted online attendance for UN meetings, for more people to watch and learn about the UN

Long-Term/Grand Reforms

- 1. Re-affirming the UN goals
 - a. *Create and maintain balance between peace and security, development and human rights*
 - b. *Upholding gender equality and rights of LGBTQ+*
- 2. Increased involvement with non-state actors
 - a. *Increase dialogue with religious leaders*
 - b. *Dialogue with businesses*
 - c. *Dialogue with individuals*
 - d. *Cooperations with regional organizations (AU, EU, ASEAN, etc.) must be expanded*
- 3. Re-evaluating the SDGs and creating new goals
 - a. *Recognising the failure of the SDGs*
 - i. Establish new goals with measurable metrics and indicators
 - b. *Shifting headquarters to other regions*
 - i. Asia is currently without a single UN agency HQ: Move certain agencies to Beijing, Shanghai, Tokyo, Hong Kong, Singapore and Bangkok due to their high connectivity as global transit hubs; Reduce HQ presence in Europe and North America, but retain offices
 - c. *Increasing meritocracy of the bureaucracy by*
 - i. Reevaluating employee performance and allocated welfare benefits
 - ii. More strict hiring procedures, eliminating bias and the use of personal connections

- iii. Empower staff by taking in more of their opinions, encouraging them in speaking out whilst remaining neutral in their work
 - iv. The staff's security, well-being, and diversity must be the core institutional priority
 - v. Whilst keeping in mind of structural inequalities that may keep individuals from reaching certain standards
- d. *Veto power amendments for the P5*
- i. Challenging and publicising use of veto powers with regards to conflicts
 - ii. Advocating for restraint on veto powers during major humanitarian/conflict-ending resolutions
- e. *Transparency in UNSG elections*
- i. Add election debates, publicise the election process
 - ii. Including civil society in the decision making
 - iii. Remove straw voting and keep processes transparent
4. Peacebuilding
- a. *Conflict Prevention*
- i. Stronger early warning systems – integrate political and humanitarian/human rights data into real-time analysis of models
 - ii. Collaborate with academia, establishing stronger violence/conflict-based indicators
 - iii. Stronger role of the UN in preventive diplomacy – deployment of mediators earlier and more systematically
 - iv. Priority on addressing the root causes of a conflict – special attention to inequality, exclusion, weak governance, and lack of access to justice
 - v. UN support for high-level mediation and negotiation training must be expanded (building on UNITAR experience)
 - vi. The UN has to enhance its ability to engage in complex, multi-actor conflicts
- b. *Peace Operations:*
- i. Peacekeeping not reactive anymore, but flexible and oriented toward preventive missions
 - ii. Better coordination between DPPA, DPO, and humanitarian organisations to guarantee a unison response
 - iii. More emphasis on locally grounded peace processes – every mission has to be adapted to the context and should not follow standardized procedures
- c. *Condition of peacebuilding: People as its centre*
- i. Peacebuilding must be an inclusive process, where women, youth and marginalized groups can meaningfully participate
 - ii. The protection of civilians in peace building missions have to be prioritized – human rights should be viewed as the foundation for sustainable peace

- iii. Substantial investment has to be directed toward community-level reconciliation and social cohesion initiatives