

Budapest Memorandum

signed by the participants of the Conference of Model Institutions for a Sustainable Future

held in Budapest, 24-26 April 2014

We, the representatives of independent offices or parliamentary bodies serving to safeguard the needs of future generations and named by the UN Secretary-General in its Report entitled 'Intergenerational Solidarity and the Needs of Future Generations' as possible models to institutionalize concern for future generations, together with the representatives of further initiatives and non-governmental organizations pursuing the same goal, as well as members of the academia deeply committed to the protection of the needs of future generations bearing in mind the principle of intergenerational equity,

Drawing valuable inspirations from the presentations of the conference and recognizing the historical responsibility of present generations towards those yet to come in terms of safeguarding the natural environment, the natural resources and the climate together with our cultural heritage in order to ensure our successors' freedom and capability to make their own choices,

Acknowledging the special responsibility entrusted to the model institutions for promoting the protection of living conditions for our descendants with a special regard to the unprecedented magnitude and the irreversible nature of the damage now being done,

Sharing a common conviction on the pivotal importance of strengthening and embedding forward-looking long-term approaches in the current social model and policy-making and governance in order to ensure the effective realization of sustainable development from an environmental, social and economic aspect in line with the core principles such as prevention and precaution,

With the ultimate goal of fostering intergenerational solidarity and equity – in accordance with the letter and the spirit of the Stockholm Declaration, the Rio Declaration and the outcome document adopted at Rio+20 entitled 'The Future We Want' – as well as strengthening the sense of responsibility towards future generations,

Noting the utmost importance of the varying and well-established experience and expertise of non-governmental organizations active in this field as well as the academic knowledge elaborated with respect to the underlying theoretical and scientific principles that underpin the guardianship of the needs of future generations,

Bearing in mind that gender equality and active participation of children are of vital importance for realizing sustainable development and for promoting the needs of future generations as well as eradicating poverty and social injustice,

Convinced that intergenerational equity cannot be achieved without intragenerational equity,

Recalling ‘The Future We Want’ outcome document and recognizing that each country faces specific challenges to achieve sustainable development and the special situation of the vulnerable groups and developing countries should be respected in this regard,

Stressing the importance of the participation of indigenous peoples in the achievement of sustainable development,

Convinced that the establishment of institutions promoting the needs of future generations at all levels including national, regional as well as the global level would fundamentally foster environmental consciousness and sustainable development and would raise awareness of the long-term consequences of our present-day actions,

Acknowledging that no nation or region can tackle alone the global environmental challenges and that thus, sustainable development and the guardianship of the needs of generations to come can be best achieved through international cooperation with due respect to cultural and judicial diversity,

Supporting, in line with the findings of ‘The Future We Want’ resolution, and the UN Secretary-General report, ‘Intergenerational solidarity and the needs of future generations’, the call for a promotion of the basic interests of future generations under the auspices of the UN,

Approving the proposal for a target in the system of Sustainable Development Goals aiming at establishing innovative and powerful institutions both at the UN and the national level for the protection of the needs of future generations, and by also upholding the principles of full transparency, accountability and participation,

Taking note of the recommendations on national and subnational governance reforms towards implementing the post-2015 development agenda elaborated by the Sustainable Development Transition Forum that was recently hosted by the UN Office for Sustainable Development,

Having considered the need for a regular and comprehensive professional network for sharing relevant experiences and best practices relating to the various aspects of this field,

With the goal of establishing a global partnership among the nationally established bodies for guarding the needs of future generations,

1. We strongly support the spread of institutional solutions for safeguarding and promoting the needs of future generations as well as the fostering of sustainable development on the national, subnational and the UN level. For this reason we are also committed to actively encourage and help Governments and Parliaments to begin effective reforms in governance and decision-making that would help them to better address present-day realities and future challenges. We are also committed to help prospective institutions in initiating and enabling capacities as a guardian for the needs of future generations.
2. We strongly support the UN Secretary-General’s proposal to establish a High Commissioner for Future Generations at the UN level and call upon Member States to

appoint such a representative, mandating its role and tasks, in order to ensure a long term policy coherence to safeguard the needs of future generations.

3. We endorse the proposed Sustainable Development Goal target to establish innovative and powerful institutions, both at the national and the UN level, for the protection of the basic interests of future generations. Under the scope of this target we recommend facilitating global partnership among the nationally established bodies and encouraging their cooperation as well as providing – upon request – assistance to governments to implement this target.

4. We consider it an unprecedented opportunity and a unique chance to establish a network among the present participants for regular contact the exchange of information, experience and best practice on existing and novel solutions both from a theoretical and a practical point of view. In order to secure the continuation of the present cooperation, the participants welcome the offer of the Hungarian Ombudsman's Office to gather and circulate information among the members to explore the further ways and means towards the network's further operation.

Budapest, 26 April 2014