

First Roundtable: A High Level Business Roundtable on UN80 Reform and Business

July 16, 2025

Kindly hosted by Salesforce at its New York City office

Multistakeholder Roundtable



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- How can business be a resource to governments and the UN in the development of the UN80 reform process tracks as they emerge?
- What is the potential to speed up progress and multiply shared benefits from inclusive, improved, distinct and recognized roles for business at the UN related to implementation of 2030 commitments?
- How can strategic reform at the UN more intentionally recognize and involve business as a distinct and capable partner, and which aspects of UN activities hold the most potential for private sector partnership?

DISCUSSION SUMMARY

On Wednesday, July 16, *The USCIB Foundation* hosted a high level business roundtable and consultation with UN Under-Secretary-General (USG) Guy Ryder on the role of business in a revitalized UN system.

UN USG Ryder is coordinating the far-reaching and complex UN reform initiative known as UN80 to respond to continued budget cuts and a credibility crisis for the UN.

This meeting explored how business can better access and support the UN as it seeks to become more effective and resilient as an outcome of UN80 reform.

Meeting participants discussed seeking opportunities to work with the UN to set better courses towards innovation, investment and impact, and in so doing, build trust, problem solve and scale impact.

The discussion reflected that many key issues facing the international community are also bottom line business issues – and after recent meetings, such as AI for Good and the 4th International Conference on Finance for Development, there are many examples of collaboration underway, as well as opportunities to partner towards solutions.

Finally, participants talked about where UN80 reform could bring with it opportunities for renewed, institutionalized partnerships between the UN and the business community.

ROUNDTABLE OBJECTIVES

- Offer suggestions to recently launched UN80 reform discussions relevant to private sector involvement with the objective of strengthening UN effectiveness and resilience.
- Explore how UN reform can better recognize and integrate business as a strategic partner in advancing the 2030 Agenda and supporting implementation of the UN Pact for the Future.

FRAMING THE DISCUSSION: UN80 REFORM GETS UNDERWAY

The UN80 initiative is the United Nations' wide-reaching reform effort, launched by Secretary-General António Guterres in March 2025, marking the 80th anniversary of the UN's founding.

In July of 2025, the UN General Assembly welcomed the Secretary-General's initiative and the process got underway. *The USCIB Foundation* held its first Roundtable in July in order to develop timely and relevant input to the UN and to UN member States.

UN80 is a system-wide initiative and will propose changes impacting the whole UN system — from how mandates are created, to how they are delivered and reviewed.

UN80 intends to build on previous reforms — including the UN development system repositioning, the peace and security reform, and the management reform and take them further. It aims to make the United Nations more responsive and resilient; better equipped to serve the people whose lives depend on it; more accountable to taxpayers who underwrite its work; and more supportive of staff in their critical roles.

USCIB regards the UN and the wider multilateral system as essential to successful business and international cooperation.

The USCIB Foundation has advanced and supported the Business Pact for the Future as an initiative to strengthen business-UN links for mutual benefit. Business can no longer be regarded as an "observer" at UN HQ, or as solely a source of finance – we are invested in the UN's success and that includes the success of its reforms and evolution.

The Business Pact for the Future spotlights the four force-multiplying and practical areas in which business is uniquely capable to scale up implementation working with and through the UN.

TAKEAWAYS

The USCIB Foundation has identified arrangements for recognized access and partnership with business as a key element of the reinvigorated UN that will emerge from UN80, strengthening those already in place and considering new interfaces. This institutional innovation is an opportunity to reflect and enlist all the capacities of business, beyond the financial, in collaboration with multilateral institutions, notably the UN.

There are working successful practical models for business representation, such as the International Chamber of Commerce, and the International Organisation of Employers, and working consultative frameworks that demonstrate the benefit and workability of substantive business engagement. Meeting participants highlighted these existing structures to guide designing more impactful collaboration with business in all its diversity.

NEXT STEPS

The USCIB Foundation will continue the dialogue and provide input to the UN to ensure business strengthens its engagement and overcomes barriers to participation in some UN forums so as to benefit the UN's own effectiveness and impact.