



Does the World Need a Government?

Birkbeck College, University of London

14-15 August 2025



Meeting Programme (DRAFT)

Thursday 14 August

09:00 REGISTRATION and COFFEE (Room G13)

Session #1 09:30 – 12:00 (Room B33)

Chair: Ian Crawford

09:30	Ian Crawford	Introduction to the Meeting
09:35	Professor Sally Wheeler, OBE, Vice Chancellor, Birkbeck, University of London	Welcome to Birkbeck
09:45	Tad Daley	World Government: One of the Great Ideas in the History of Political Philosophy
10:15	Dorothea Christiana	The United Peoples: Bringing People Together Who Rarely Meet – But Should
10:40	Daniele Archibugi	Can the UN Security Council guarantee peace?
11:05	Ishaan Shah	From Fragmentation to Unity: Building the UN We Need Through Inclusive Global Governance
11:30	Aishwarya Machani	A Global Citizens' Assembly

12:00 LUNCH

Session #2 13:30 – 15:35

Chair TBD

13:30	Andreas Bummel	The Draft Second UN Charter and the Role of a Parliamentary Assembly
13:55	John Vlasto	Global Governance of the Earth System
14:20	Maja Groff	Global Unfinished Business and Next Generation Architecture -- A Crossroads
14:45	Mathias Koenig-Archibugi	World Government as an Empirical Question
15:10	Farsan Ghassim (on-line)	Institutional Design and International Public Attitudes Toward Global Governance: A Worldwide Survey Experiment

15:35 COFFEE (Room G13)

Session #3 16:05 – 18:00 (Room B33)

Chair TBD

16:05	Heikki Patomäki	World-making projects, the cunning of reason, and the evolution of world statehood
16:35	Aaron McKeil	Cosmopolitan Imaginaries and International Disorder
17:00	Eva Erman (on-line)	Does Global Democracy Require a World State?
17:25	General Discussion	

18:00 DRINKS RECEPTION (Room G13)

Friday 15 August

09:30 REGISTRATION and COFFEE (Room G13)

Session #4 10:00 – 12:05 (Room B33)

Chair: Ian Crawford

10:00	Luis Cabrera (on-line)	Regional Organizations and World Government
10:25	Josephine Borghi (on-line)	Transnational health challenges as an entry point for cosmopolitanism
10:50	James Bacchus (on-line)	Democracy for a Sustainable World: The Path from the Pnyx
11:15	Nils Gilman	The IAEA as a Model for Planetary Governance
11:40	Stefan Pedersen	Loyalty to Earth: A Precondition for Planetary State Formation

12:05 LUNCH

Session #5 13:30 – 15:35 (Room B33)

Chair TBD

13:30	Tiziana Stella (on-line)	Federal Union as Heuristic Framework: Scalability, Freedom and Constraint before ASI and Beyond Earth
13:55	Gaia Vince	Nomad Century
14:20	Robert Whitfield	Does an AI World need a Government?
14:45	Clément Vidal	Governing the Planetary Transition: Integrating Complexity Science and Evolution into International Relations
15:10	Thomas Moynihan	Are We Accidentally Building A World-Brain?

15:35 COFFEE (Room G13)

Session #6 16:05 – 18:00 (Room B33)

Chair TBD

16:05	Nikola Schmidt	The Responsible Cosmopolitan State in Space Politics
16:30	Ian Crawford	Who Speaks for Humanity? Some political implications of a human future in space
16:55	Francisco Diego	Paradise Planet Earth: A unique cosmic oasis under threat
17:20	General Discussion	

18:00 DRINKS RECEPTION (Room G13)

SPEAKERS and ABSTRACTS

Daniele Archibugi Professor of Innovation, Governance and Public Policy, Birkbeck College London; co-editor of [*Global democracy: normative and empirical perspectives*](#)

Can the UN Security Council guarantee peace?

The most relevant function of the government is to guarantee peace through the centralization of the legitimate use of violence. The UN Charter hoped that the Security Council (UNSC), even without being as ambitious as a world executive, could be a realistic institutional device able to prevent the scourge of war. Unfortunately, the UNSC has not been able to fulfil this ambitious aim, but it has nevertheless played a vital role as a compensation chamber in which different views were debated, converging interests were mediated, some decisions were taken and peacekeepers deployed. A greater coordination in world politics - as in is implicit in the very notion of world government – should somehow assess what has been, and what could be, the role played by the UNSC. There are in fact many proposals aiming to its reform. On the ground of an analysis of the voting patterns of the UNSC, the paper distinguishes between reforms advocating enlargement—adding new members without altering other procedures— and those involving a wider restructuring, also limiting the veto power of the permanent members. Enlargement will not substantially manage to make the UNSC more functional and powerful. A wider restructuring will require not only to include regional organizations, such as the European Union, but also to give to the institution greater enforcing tools.

James Bacchus Distinguished University Professor of Global Affairs at the University of Central Florida, former member of the US House of Representatives and former chairman of the Appellate Body of the WTO; author of [*Democracy for a Sustainable World*](#)

Democracy for a Sustainable World: The Path from the Pnyx

In his new book, *Democracy for a Sustainable World: The Path from the Pnyx*, James Bacchus maintains that the path to global sustainable development is participatory democratic global governance – the only truly effective path to confronting pandemics, military conflict, climate change, biodiversity loss, and potential overall ecological collapse. He explains why global democracy and global sustainable development must be achieved and why they can only be achieved jointly. He recounts the numerous obstacles to participatory democratic global governance and describes how they can be overcome through a combination of the individual wisdom of right representation and the collective wisdom of sortition, starting with linking and scaling innovative local and regional sustainability experiments worldwide. Beginning with a visit to the birthplace of democracy in ancient Athens, a hillside called the Pnyx, he explores how the Athenians practiced democratic participation millennia ago. He draws on the successes and the shortfalls of Athenian democracy to offer specific proposals for meeting today's challenges by constructing participatory democratic global governance at every level of human endeavor for full human flourishing in a sustainable world.

Josephine Borghi Research Group Leader, [International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis](#) and Professor in Health Economics at the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine

Transnational health challenges as an entry point for cosmopolitanism

Health challenges like pandemics, climate change, and those associated with migration transcend national borders, exposing the limitations of existing governance structures which are nationally framed. This talk explores how transnational health risks provide an entry point for advocating for cosmopolitan approaches to global governance. First, we outline the limitations of existing approaches for managing such risks to health, and then outline how cosmopolitan principles can guide the redesign of global health systems and financing mechanisms to more effectively manage common goods for health and advance universal health coverage worldwide.

Andreas Bummel Executive Director, [Democracy without Borders](#); co-author of [A World Parliament: Government and Democracy in the 21st Century](#)

The draft Second UN Charter and the role of a Parliamentary Assembly

This presentation introduces key elements of a draft *Second UN Charter*, presented by an international study group on the occasion of the 2024 UN Summit of the Future. Aimed at reimagining the United Nations for contemporary global challenges, the document seeks to strike a balance between pragmatism and visionary reform. Among its key institutional changes is the proposed creation of a Parliamentary Assembly as a complementary body to the General Assembly.

The presentation will outline the rationale for including a Parliamentary Assembly, describe its proposed mandate and composition, and examine how it is embedded within the institutional framework of the draft, particularly in relation to the General Assembly and the Security Council. This analysis offers insight into how a Parliamentary Assembly could function within the UN system as a result of a UN Charter revision and contribute to a more democratic and representative way of global deliberation and decision-making.

Going beyond the Second Charter, the discussion will also touch on the longer-term vision of a bicameral world parliament as part of a future global constitution.

Luis Cabrera Professor of Political Science, Griffith University, Australia; editor of [*Global Governance, Global Government*](#)

Regional Organizations and World Government

Many past advocates of world federal government envisioned a prominent role not only for nation-states and global governing institutions, but for regional organizations – in some cases before such bodies had even developed. Ely Culbertson's 1943 world federation plan posited 11 regional federations, including ones under trusteeship in Southeast Asia and South Asia. Sanjib Chaudhuri envisioned in his 1950 world constitution a system of 10 regional governing bodies, with equal representation for each in a global parliament. Rajni Kothari's 1974 scheme in the World Order Models Project envisioned a world of 20-25 regional blocs, working with global institutions and designed in part to check the power of dominant states. This presentation examines how far such visions have been borne out. Drawing on field research at four leading regional organizations, I consider their development on salient governance criteria. I work to show that, while, the European Union is an outlier in the depth and breadth of its integration, there is 'more world government' at the regional level than is typically appreciated. The past federative visions have emerged in outline and in a range of substantive governance areas, though challenges remain and much work lies ahead.

Dorothea Christiana Chair of the Executive Board, the United Peoples; author of [*The United Peoples*](#)

The United Peoples: Bringing People Together Who Rarely Meet – But Should

The United Peoples is a result from doctoral research on the United Nations and its relationship with Civil Society. Interviews were conducted with those that held the highest international level of the UN and Civil Society relationship, including former heads of states. The data consistently showed that the relationship between them is desperately needed by both parties, however, inherent flaws create dysfunctions in the relationship. The research was analysed and led to the development of a United Peoples that would complement UN work.

To effectively address the unprecedented problems the world now faces, the United Peoples is genuinely different from the current systems. It is not an organisation nor an institution; rather an ecosystem, ever evolving and growing and shaping to nature, including human nature and its needs. The intention is to bring healing to the people and the planet that sustains them, where participants can dwell face to face and heart to heart to see the dignity and humanity in one another whilst maybe discovering some more of it in themselves.

Ian Crawford Professor of Planetary Science and Astrobiology, Birkbeck College London; editor of [*Expanding Worldviews: Astrobiology, Big History and Cosmic Perspectives*](#)

Who Speaks for Humanity? Some political implications of a human future in space

Future human activities in outer space will require the development of political institutions able legitimately to speak for humanity as a whole in this transnational domain. I identify a range of possibilities, including the formation of a world space agency and a strengthening of the UN system, but I argue that ultimately the logic points in the direction of bringing space exploration within the remit of a federal world government, the creation of which would also be desirable for other reasons. Although, at present, humanity may lack a sufficiently strong sense of global community for the formation of strong global political institutions, I argue that the cosmic perspectives provided by space exploration can help lay the psychological foundations on which such institutions may be built.

Tad Daley Former speechwriter, policy advisor, and coauthor with three members of the U.S. House and two U.S. senators; author of [*APOCALYPSE NEVER: Forging the Path to a Nuclear Weapon-Free World*](#)

World Government: One of the Great Ideas in the History of Political Philosophy

We self-appointed sages, meeting here at Birkbeck College in London in the summer of 2025, all presumably know more than a little bit about the sum and substance of the world government idea.

But the vast majority of people outside our conference meeting room, as soon as the signal changes busily hustling their way across Charing Cross Road, know nothing about it at all. They're not for it. They're not against it. It has never occurred to them that there's any possible alternative way to organize the human race other than the sovereign state system, countries with armies, laws and governments and police inside certain arbitrary and impermanent lines on a map, but diplomats, treaties, and the law of the jungle outside. Moreover, they are ingenuously unaware that ANYONE has ever contemplated any alternatives to that contemporary political reality.

So, my presentation to this erudite assembly will offer a survey on the long history of the world government idea. I will not just share the words of some of the greatest minds in the heritage of humanity, dating at least as far back as Dante in 1313, but I will make a case for their profound relevance to the great challenges of the 21st Century. I will report on the brief but incandescent period in the 1940s, when a genuine social and political movement arose for "One World or None." I will share some anecdotes about my personal relationships with some of the leading protagonists in that movement, great mentors to me, including two who went on to serve as United States senators. And I will argue that portraying world government as one of the great ideas in the history of political philosophy is perhaps the best way, right now, to make it into a serious possibility for the future of humanity.

Franciso Diego Lecturer and Research Fellow in Astronomy at [University College London](#)

Paradise Planet Earth: A unique cosmic oasis under threat

In our Galaxy alone, there are billions of stars with planets around them; so how special is ours? A relatively small solid planet, with three interactive environments: land, ocean and air. A global paradise basically unchanged for most of its lifetime. From the cosmological formation of basic materials, to the accidental development of a complex living environment, this is the story of that unique planet that we call home. Our journey arrives at the origin of single cell life and its effects on the environment,

which would eventually culminate in the (almost miraculous) formation of complex multicellular life. An evolutionary process interrupted by accidental and almost total life extinctions.

Humankind emerged in central Africa, populating all lands by migration, only a few thousand years ago. Settling at higher geographical latitudes gradually modified skin colour, due to the lower intensity of local solar radiation. Migration was followed by exploration, mainly by African settlers from Europe, seeking new maritime trade routes. America was then 'discovered', already populated by African settlers that had arrived via Asia a few thousand years before. The European discovery of the rich natural resources of the global south became a tragedy for the local populations and for the natural environment, which destruction has increased at an accelerated pace in the last few decades.

The original global paradise is no more: invasions, pointless genocidal wars, rainforests destroyed; loss of biodiversity; land, oceans and air severely contaminated with toxic chemicals. This global catastrophe now requires urgent global solutions involving the unified actions of all nations, a Global Collective Government.

May the wisdom of ancestral cultures about the sacredness of Mother Earth help humankind reconnect with its lost humanity.

Eva Erman Professor of Political Science, University of Stockholm; co-author of [*The Practical Turn in Political Theory*](#)

Does Global Democracy Require a World State?

The question of whether global democracy requires a world state has with few exceptions been answered with an unequivocal 'No'. A world state, it is typically argued, is neither feasible nor desirable. Instead, different forms of global governance arrangements have been suggested, involving non-hierarchical and multilayered models with dispersed authority. The overall aim of my presentation is to address the question of whether global democracy requires a world state, adopting a so-called 'function-sensitive' approach. It is shown that such an approach is equipped to resist the predominant binary view of a world state (either accepting it or rejecting it) and offer a more differentiated and nuanced answer to this question. In brief, a basic presumption of a function-sensitive approach is that the content, justification and status of principles of democracy are dependent on the aim they are set out to achieve, what functions they are intended to regulate (e.g., decision-making, implementation, enforcement and evaluation), and the relationship between those functions. More specifically, within a function-sensitive framework, I sketch the contours of an account of global democracy consisting of five regulative principles and argues – utilizing the notion of 'sufficient stateness' – that it would require supranational legislative entities and perhaps supranational judicial entities but not necessarily supranational executive entities.

Farsan Ghassim Junior Research Fellow in Politics, The Queen's College, University of Oxford; co-author of [*Who on Earth Wants a World Government, What Kind, and Why? An International Survey Experiment*](#). With co-authors: Jonas Tallberg (Stockholm University) and Maksim Zubok (University of Oxford)

Institutional design and international public attitudes toward global governance: A worldwide survey experiment

How does the design of international organizations (IOs) affect public attitudes toward them? Building on recent research on the legitimacy of IOs, we offer the most comprehensive study yet on the effects of different institutional designs on public support or opposition toward IOs. We conceptualize IO designs as varying primarily along the dimensions of composition and power, before theorizing why citizens may prefer more intergovernmental or cosmopolitan designs. To explore our hypotheses, we conduct a survey experiment in nine countries across the global South, North, East, and West. Through a conjoint analysis, we identify that international public attitudes toward IOs are most positively affected by cosmopolitan design features relating to representatives who are independent of national governments, openness to non-state actors, majority voting procedures, bindingness of policies, and extensive delegation of authority to the IO. Moreover, these attitudes toward hypothetical IO designs tend to be associated with real-world reform proposals along the same dimension with respect to a variety of IOs – from the establishment of a UN Parliamentary Assembly to voting procedures in the WTO. Our results are remarkably consistent both across countries and within countries. We conclude that the international public prefers IOs with more cosmopolitan designs and that policymakers could generate greater support for global governance through relevant reforms of IOs.

Nils Gilman Chief Operating Officer and Executive Vice President at the Berggruen Institute; co-author of [*Children of a Modest Star*](#)

The IAEA as a Model for ‘Planetary governance’

The current nation-state system cannot adequately manage “planetary” challenges like climate change and pandemics. But instead of trying to build a unitary world federalist government, we propose creating specialized “planetary governance institutions” that focus on specific risks, operating via “segmentary sovereignty” where states delegate narrow authority over specific functional tasks. In this respect, the International Atomic Energy Agency offers an interesting model: initially focused on promoting the development of civilian nuclear energy, the IAEA evolved, particularly after the Cuban Missile Crisis and under the NPT, to address the planetary threat of nuclear proliferation through verification and safeguards. The IAEA embodies several key characteristics of planetary governance institutions: narrow technical scope, expertise, accepted sovereignty limitations (inspections), and evolved authority, demonstrating states can cede specific sovereignty when facing shared existential threats. Similar planetary governance institutions should be built to mitigate climate change and pandemic risk.

Maja Groff Convenor of the Climate Governance Commission; co-author of [*Global Governance and the Emergence of Global Institutions for the 21st Century*](#)

Global Unfinished Business and Next Generation Architecture -- A Crossroads

A whole range of existing international instruments and organizations contain the seeds and foundations for their own growth and even significant transformation -- the building of a more viable and constructive international order has indeed historically been considered a progressive project. This presentation will discuss a range of these seeds and foundations, drawing examples from the many extraordinary visions for future institutions and capacities at the international level, already foreshadowed in current and past texts and processes. It will also address the nature of novel,

convergent challenges currently confronted by the international community, not least unprecedented ecological and Earth system challenges. It will argue that we are indeed at an "inflection point" in history, and new efforts must be consciously and strategically made to weatherproof the international system. Such efforts must be both visionary and practical, and employ high levels of technical and other forms of applied expertise, drawing on best available talent across geographies. Concrete proposals for international governance architecture upgrades will be shared from recent high-level work and processes.

Mathias Koenig-Archibugi Associate Professor of Global Politics, London School of Economics and Political Science; author of [*The Universal Republic: A Realistic Utopia?*](#)

World government as an empirical question

The presentation will discuss the contribution of empirical political science to the study of world government. While fundamental transformations of global governance are often considered unsuitable topics for empirical research, the presentation will argue that the theories, methods and data of contemporary political science can help improve the debates on three key questions: (i) whether a world government is achievable, (ii) whether it would be viable as a democratic polity in the long run, and (iii) and whether it would be desirable given the diversity of the world's population.

Aishwarya Machani Member of the Global Citizens' Assembly Network and Former United Foundations Next Generations Fellow

A Global Citizens' Assembly

This presentation will explore the idea of a deliberative global citizens' assembly and the role it could play in strengthening global governance. Participants will be able to hear about its origins, key concepts, and current efforts to turn this idea into reality. The presentation will build on research from the fields of deliberative democracy and global governance, lessons learnt from democratic innovations across the world, and first-hand experience of advocating for global governance reform.

Aaron McKeil Academic Director for the MSc International Strategy and Diplomacy programme, London School of Economics; author of [*Cosmopolitan Imaginaries and International Disorder*](#)

Cosmopolitan Imaginaries and International Disorder

While the idea of a cosmopolitan order embracing all humankind is ancient, after the Cold War it was widely believed to be an emerging future. A large and for a time influential literature on globalization anticipated the emergence of a cosmopolitan global order, but has been contradicted by the revolt against globalism. This presents a puzzle for International Relations theory: Why have attempts to construct cosmopolitan order struggled to emerge in the modern global world? *Cosmopolitan*

Imaginations and International Disorder argues that advocacy for cosmopolitan order reform in the modern world has struggled to recognize the political identities of states and populations and to legitimize its proposed political hierarchies. As a result, these efforts have been overwhelmed by states shoring up their power and remobilizing exclusionary nationalist identities, especially when struggles are intensified in contexts of international instability and economic turmoil. This argument in sum offers a corrective to influential constructivist theories of cosmopolitan globalization.

Thomas Moynihan Historian of Ideas and Research Affiliate at the [Centre for the Study of Existential Risk](#); author of [X-Risk](#)

Are We Accidentally Building A World-Brain?

Across the past 150 years, various voices have questioned whether — through the increasing coordination and cooperation of humans across the planet's surface — we might be building a sort of "planetary brain", whether we like it or not. This talk explores the history of such claims, tracing them to their roots in pre-Darwinian theories of the trajectories of evolution. Aside from discussing prominent names (de Chardin, Vernadsky), it also uncovers forgotten and discarded voices. It also explores visions which have cast the coalescence of a "world-brain" in both a positive and negative light: as either out salvation from extinction, or the annihilation of human autonomy.

Heikki Patomäki Professor of World Politics, University of Helsinki; author of [World Statehood](#)

World-making projects, the cunning of reason, and the evolution of world statehood

In this paper, I investigate the prospects of global political integration by developing the notion of "worldmaking projects" (WMPs) as historically grounded, forward-oriented collective efforts shaped by the dynamics of agency and structure. Drawing on historical sociology, critical realism, and global political economy, the paper (i) reinterprets world statehood as an evolving potentiality rather than a preordained telos and (ii) analyses different forms of temporality as co-constitutive of WMPs. Through an analysis of past and present trajectories of political organisation and related developments of infrastructures of communication and movement, I examine how specific conjunctures, crises, and transformative projects have opened space for novel institutional forms. The analysis distinguishes among various types of WMPs, including changing forms of liberal, socialist and fascist WMPs in the 20th and 21st centuries, each embodying distinct imaginaries and institutional aspirations. By foregrounding the dialectic between causality and normativity and between open-ended possibility and structural constraint, I advance a non-linear, multi-layered conception of political evolution involving a cosmopolitan social democratic, or democratic-socialist, WMP. Special attention is paid to the contingent nature of transformative moments and the role of reflexive agency in shaping alternative futures. In doing so, the paper avoids the pitfalls of teleological and cynical imaginaries of global governance, instead offering a nuanced account of how the layer of world statehood may evolve further as a situated and contested outcome of worldmaking practices responsive to shared human and planetary concerns.

Stefan Pedersen Research Fellow, University of Sussex; author of [Planetarism: A Paradigmatic Alternative to Internationalism](#)

Loyalty to Earth: A Precondition for Planetary State Formation

Planetary state formation will be an unlikely prospect until popular loyalty to a singular nation-state, i.e. to all nation-states in the plural, is replaced by an overarching and primary loyalty to planet Earth. A positive tipping point in this regard will occur once a majority in all major countries, including most great powers, see the Earth in political terms as their primary home and habitat. Science, particularly Earth system science, already communicates this latter proposition incessantly through its constant highlighting of our own species' inexorable dependence on our planet's habitability. The realization that planetary loyalty is key to engendering a transition to a desirable world order for humanity and the planet was earlier reached by pioneering planetary thinkers such as H. G. Wells and Barbara Ward. But importantly, the dominant cosmopolitan strain in world order debates the last century has been Kant's earlier notion of a federation of states – weakly attempted in the UN and more strongly in the EU – which is an arrangement where national loyalty is preserved and perpetuated. This national-internationalism therefore works *against* the objective of creating a majority of Earthlings. Conversely, planetarism is the comprehensive theoretical alternative – and that crucially points to a new mode of planetary state formation where the constitutive units are no longer states but a planetwide mosaic of lesser geographical areas connected through a universally shared and politically prioritized Earth loyalty. This raises three key questions: 1) How should we interpret the meaning of “loyalty to Earth”? 2) What is stopping humanity from becoming loyal Earthlings at present? 3) How can loyalty to Earth best be institutionalized, i.e. without coercive anti-democratic centralization while preserving cohesion on planetary issues?

Nikola Schmidt Head of Centre for Governance of Emerging Technologies, Institute of International Relations, Prague; editor of [Governing Emerging Space Challenges](#)

The Responsible Cosmopolitan State in Space Politics

This talk presents the concept of the responsible cosmopolitan state as a practical framework for addressing urgent challenges in space politics. It argues that states can embed moral responsibility in their foreign policies through informed, ethically grounded decision-making. Central to this is a redefinition of sovereignty: not as radical political autonomy, which isolates state interests and undermines global cooperation, but as ‘sovereignty-as-autonomy’ – the capacity to act responsibly, with awareness of global consequences. By linking knowledge, capability, and political power to responsibility, the talk outlines how states can govern areas like planetary defence, space mining, orbital debris, and high-power laser deployment in a morally legitimate way. This vision of cosmopolitan responsibility operates within the existing international order, enabling even small states to shape global policy. The four cases discussed illustrate how foreign policy can reject narrow nationalism and instead advance planetary justice and cooperative global governance through responsible state action.

Ishaan Shah Lead Analyst Pact for the Future Implementation, [Coalition for the UN We Need \(C4UN\)](#)

From Fragmentation to Unity: Building the UN We Need Through Inclusive Global Governance

The Coalition for the UN We Need (C4UN) is a global network of civil society organizations committed to strengthening the United Nations through inclusive, forward-looking reform. In the face of planetary-scale threats—from climate change to nuclear risk—this talk explores how stronger global governance institutions through transformative UN reform, potentially including a Parliamentary Assembly or even a federal world government, may be necessary. Drawing on C4UN's history, advocacy, and partnerships, the session will highlight the essential role of civil society in navigating geopolitical headwinds to build accountable, inclusive, and trust-based institutions for a UN fit for the 21st century.

Tiziana Stella Executive Director, [The Streit Council](#)

Federal Union as Heuristic Framework: Scalability, Freedom and Constraint before ASI and Beyond Earth

Abstract to follow

Clément Vidal Philosopher, Free University of Brussels; author of [The Beginning and the End](#)

Governing the Planetary Transition: Integrating Complexity Science and Evolution into International Relations

Pressing planetary challenges across the geosphere, biosphere, and noosphere increasingly exceed the capacity of individual nation-states, demanding new principles for international relations and planetary governance. This work applies insights from evolutionary and complexity sciences to conceptualize and guide this necessary planetary transformation. Drawing on the framework of Major Evolutionary Transitions (METs), we analyze the potential emergence of a 'planetary superorganism' (Vidal 2024) and argue that effective global governance must develop mechanisms to manage cooperation, deter free-riding, and resolve conflicts, analogous to previous METs. Furthermore, integrating principles from complexity science and cybernetics (informed by thinkers like Ashby, Powers, and Beer), we explore the design of adaptive governance systems. This involves defining planetary health via key indicators staying within acceptable ranges (Vidal 2023) and emphasizes the critical role of control mechanisms—such as buffers to absorb shocks and hierarchical, modular structures—that balance centralized coordination with distributed action across local to global scales. Ultimately, this synthesis offers a framework for understanding and fostering governance systems capable of navigating complexity and guiding sustainable adaptation and transformation on our increasingly dynamic and complex planet.

Gaia Vince Award-winning science writer and broadcaster; [author of Nomad Century: How to Survive the Climate Upheaval](#)

Nomad Century

As climate change makes large parts of the world increasingly unliveable this century, hundreds of millions of people will have to move. This migration is already underway and inevitable. It is a migration of people, resources, capital, infrastructure, agriculture, industry... all of human activity. It comes as a consequence of global combustion energy, global poverty, global food and water inequalities, global biodiversity loss, and global insecurity. None of these issues can be solved at the city or nation level. For instance, building new resilient energy infrastructure requires bilateral, regional and global agreements. Planetary scale crises demand planetary scale governance to create a better, more responsive human world that can respond to the more hazardous and destabilised earth systems.

John Vlasto Executive Board Chair, [World Federalist Movement – Institute for Global Policy](#)

Global Governance of the Earth System

This presentation builds on the conclusions of the previous presentation (The Draft Second UN Charter and the Role of a Parliamentary Assembly) by exploring the future of global environmental governance within the framework of a potential global constitution. It begins by envisioning how the Earth System might be managed under such a framework, offering a long-term perspective on integrated and democratic planetary stewardship.

It then turns to the shorter-term proposals set out in the draft Second UN Charter, with a focus on two key institutional innovations: the creation of an Earth System Council and a United Nations Parliamentary Assembly, designed to strengthen the legitimacy, coordination, and accountability of global decision-making.

Bringing the discussion to today, current developments in global environmental governance are reviewed, including proposals for an International Environment Court, strengthening of the climate COP process, and the appointment of a UN Special Envoy for Future Generations.

Taken together, these proposals form a strategic pathway—from practical, achievable steps today to the deeper structural reforms needed to build a just, democratic, and sustainable global order.

Robert Whitfield Chairman, [One World Trust](#)

Does an AI World need a Government?

The greatest threat of all today is arguably that of uncontrolled advanced AI. There are attempts to develop both technical solutions and governance solutions, but the risks are currently growing far faster than the capability to contain them. The first challenge is to address the problems of advanced AI within the current governance. But the issue of enforcement is likely to remain – and be critical for the future of humanity. It is difficult to imagine reliable enforcement short of a governance structure where at the global level there is a World Government capable of protecting the world from the downsides of advanced AI intelligence.