



# United Nations Global Assembly Summit of the Future Report



## Overview

I had the honor of representing Ohana One International Surgical Aid & Education at the United Nations Global Assembly (UNGA) in New York at the United Nations Headquarters from September 19-21. The theme for this September session, the 79th, is Leaving No One Behind: Acting Together for the Advancement of Peace, Sustainable Development and Human Dignity for Present and Future Generations.



*Left Image: Jeanne Bray at the UN Headquarters.*



*Right Image: September 21 Action Day Session, 'From Words to Action: A Networked Approach for Upholding Commitments' from the UN Summit of the Future*

As a member of the G4 Alliance, Ohana was provided information on how to apply to get ECOSOC status in order to attend and participate in the annual meeting of global leaders. Ohana's successful application granted the organization ECOSOC status for the event, and provided passes to the Action Days leading up to UNGA and the Summit of the Future.

ECOSOC stands for Economic and Social Council. ECOSOC's inclusion is essential because it oversees several UN agencies responsible for sustainable development, poverty eradication, and global economic growth. The permanent council ensures that critical development perspectives (ie. International Non-Governmental Organizations zINGO's) are integrated into broader discussions about the future of global governance, climate action, and technological innovation. By participating in the summit, ECOSOC members help shape a future that aligns with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, bringing their expertise and advocacy to the forefront of international collaboration.



*United Nations General Assembly Hall*

Attending UNGA offered a front-row seat to the convergence of nations from every corner of the globe, united by a shared vision for a better future. Seeing representatives from 193 member states gather under one roof, transcending borders, cultures, and political differences, is a powerful reminder of humanity's capacity to work together for the common good. Some of the world's most pressing challenges—climate change, inequality, conflict, and sustainable development were discussed and a recurring theme that repeatedly came up was the **importance of innovation and technology** to expedite the global efforts to reach the 2030 Social Development Goals.

# Ohana Alignment at UNGA – Summit of the Future

Attending the conference allowed me the opportunity to engage and network with several ECOSOC organizations and provided a clear view of how Ohana’s work is contributing to the Social Development Goals (4 – Quality Education, 5 Gender Equality, 10 – Reduced Inequalities, 17 – Partnerships for the Goals).

What stood out was how timely and important Ohana’s work is due to its emphasis on technology as a tool for change. Several action item documents that had been worked on collectively over a several years process, were voted on and passed. The documents were the Pact for the Future and the Global Digital Compact and a Declaration on Future Generations as annexes.

The most relevant and exciting document that pertains to Ohana is the Global Digital Compact because it calls out directly the importance of getting the world connected digitally in order to fast track change in the world’s most vulnerable countries.



*United Nations General Assembly Hall*

Here is the specific section from the Global Digital Compact that relates to the work Ohana is doing:

**ACTION 28 We will seize the opportunities presented by science, technology and innovation for the benefit of people and the planet.**

- a) Foster and promote an open, fair and inclusive environment for scientific and **technological development and cooperation worldwide**, including through actively building trust in science and global collaboration on innovation;
- b) Encourage **talent mobility** and circulation, including through educational programmes, and **support developing countries to retain talent** and prevent a brain drain while providing **suitable educational and working conditions and opportunities** for the workforce.



*Left Image: United Nations Headquarters in New York City.*



*Right Image: Inside UN Headquarters with ECOSOC NGO Founder, Clare Januua of Hands Lifting Hearts (Nigeria).*

## Key Takeaways

- Continue to work with partners and teams to chip away at the connectivity barriers in order to tap into tools that will forge innovation, learning, development and in-country surgical infrastructure
- Continue to work with technology partners to deliver solutions and workarounds for teams and partners with limited and intermittent connectivity
- Strive to make connections and inroads with member state representatives to collaborate and create country-wide programs to use remote technology as a tool for surgical education and development and emphasize and reinforce the global commitment to the Social Development goals and recently approved action documents
- Continue to embrace and explore innovation tools as they rapidly evolve and offer new opportunities to expand and fast track remote surgical education while always keeping security and privacy in the forefront

## In Conclusion

The Agricultural Revolution, The Scientific Revolution, and the Industrial Revolutions paved the way to our current revolution, The Digital Revolution. What stands out about the Digital Revolution is the unprecedented speed at which change is occurring. It is democratizing information and opportunities and allowing even small enterprises the ability to make a huge impact in the world. It is promising to see how well-positioned Ohana One is for the future to make a profound impact in advancing surgical education, ultimately improving countless lives worldwide.

**“Change will not  
happen overnight.  
But it can start today.”**

**ANTÓNIO GUTERRES**  
United Nations Secretary-General  
18 September 2024