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(International IDEA)

Statement on the Summit of the Future

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Mr President, Mr. Secretary General, Excellencies,

I stand before you as Secretary-General of International IDEA to speak on the future of our planet and the pact we need to make it viable. For me the future has faces. I have two children, Annalena and Simon, ages fifteen and twelve. The Pact we have forged here is about the world we will bequeath them.

I want them to live in a world where women are not second-class citizens anywhere, where they don't have to wait, on current trends, 46 years to achieve equal representation in parliaments and many more to sit as equal partners in boardrooms. If this Pact does not advance this human right, which is the best opportunity for our future, we're wasting our time.

I want them to live in a world that no longer accepts that 81 people own as much wealth as 50% of humanity combined. If this Pact does not open the door to a fundamental reform of capitalism, to make it fairer, so that our political processes and the possibility of a sustainable future are not captured by the obscenely rich, we're wasting our time.

I want them to live in a world where nations are truly able to collaborate to solve the great problems of our time. If this Pact does not help us to bring international governance structures closer to the realities of power in the world, starting with the UN Security Council, we're wasting our time.

I want them to live in a world that cherishes democracy as one the pinnacles of the human journey. And I use the word democracy deliberately – not governance, not institutions, not all the euphemisms that many governments use to disguise simple truths – that democracy is the only political system that fully respects the UN Covenants on Civil

and Political Rights and Social and Economic Rights, which nearly every country present here has signed up to; that democracy is the best defense against the emergence of the killing fields in Ukraine and the Middle East, in Sudan and Myanmar, and hence protects global peace. If this Pact does not advance democracy, we're wasting our time.

The British writer Aldous Huxley once asked if the world was another planet's hell. I do not know. What I do know is that we have the obligation not to turn it into hell for Annalena and Simon's generation. This Pact may be our best chance to create not heaven on earth, always a dangerous proposition, but a world that is a little more respectful of the dignity of every human being. That's why International IDEA supports this process and will do its part to ensure it succeeds.

Thank you.