

## “From Here On”

### Relation United Nations & Rotary (1945 – 2020)

“**From Here On**”, is the title of the Rotary publication referring to the Charter of the United Nations. This publication was published by Rotary International in 1945, the year Tom Warren was the President of Rotary International (FY 1945-1946). The publication was meant to explain and to help Rotarians understand the purposes and goals of the United Nations.

The **relationship** between the **United Nations** and **Rotary** is longstanding and has existed since the establishment of the United Nations in 1945. Even before the official charter of the United Nations, Rotary was involved. After the Dumbarton Oaks **Conference** (formally the “*Washington Conversations on International Peace and Security Organization*”) in 1943, Rotary International wrote the publication: “**What Can Rotarians Do Following Dumbarton Oaks?**” \*

The intention of this publication was to inform Rotarians about the Dumbarton Oaks conference and to illustrate the resemblance to Rotary's purpose of international understanding. In this international **conference** the establishment of a United Nations was formulated and negotiated among international leaders.

This year we celebrate **75** years partnership between the United Nations and Rotary! After almost 75 years this relationship still exists and has thus proven to be sustainable. For example Rotary has the highest consultative status at the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. Another example is the yearly international Rotary – United Nations day. The partnership between both organizations can be further developed and improved.

Another example of the bond between the United Nations and Rotary is the strong relation and overlapping between the **6 Areas of Focus** of Rotary and the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's)** of the United Nations (the 17 global goals are adapted and agreed upon in 2015 by 193 countries). Rotary considers that the most successful and sustainable Rotary service tends to fall within one of the 6 Areas of Focus. With these focus areas Rotary is dedicated to build international relationships, improve lives, and create a better world to support our peace efforts and end polio forever.

The 6 Areas of Focus are largely reflected in the SDG's, however the themes of these global goals are more comprehensive; important themes and keywords such as **climate**, **environment**, **partnership** and **sustainability** are much more explicit in the SDG's. Having said this, with its projects that fall within the Areas of Focus, Rotary makes a direct contribution in achieving the SDG's. By making the relationship visible and communicating about it, the contribution of Rotary to the SDG's can only increase.

With due regard for the preservation of their own identity, we can consider it our responsibility to contribute to the SDG's by promoting these goals and allowing our projects to be inspired by these goals, this of course while keeping in mind the local circumstances and community needs.

There are various specific **examples** of Rotary programs and projects that demonstrate the contribution and support of the SDG's, such as: eradication of polio, projects related to diabetes, autism, dyslexia and a very actual example: the various actions/ projects related to COVID 19 (related to **SDG 3**). Also projects such as RYLA, Model United Nations, Rotary Scholarships (related to **SDG 4**) and many projects related to the environment (related to **SDG 12, 13, 14 and 15**) are good examples of the excellent contribution of the Rotary projects and programs to the SDG's. The stakeholder collaboration that is being pursued in many Rotary projects fits perfectly within **SDG 17**. Another example is the relation with the Area of Focus Economic and Community Development with **SDG 8** Decent Work and Economic Development. There are many more examples regarding the coherence and the strong relationship between the 6 Areas of Focus and the SDG's.

Our contribution is not limited to the boundaries of Rotary's programs and projects, but we can achieve more, by using our influence and our networks to help create better awareness of the importance of the SDG's, and the close link it has to our 6 areas of focus, whether in our **private**, **business/** professional and **community** life. This last statement is fully in line with **Object # 3** of the Rotary: “the application of the ideal of service in each Rotarian's personal, business, and community life”.

**Private:** We can promote and communicate the SDG's to our family, relatives, youth (Rotaractors and Interactors), cultural-, religious-, sport- and other organizations we are active in.

**Business:** As business professionals we can contribute in at least 3 ways:

- *Firstly* we can **relate** and **align** the SDG's with the **mission and vision** of the company/ organization (and use the SDG's as inspiration in formulating the mission and vision).
- *Secondly* we can examine how our products or services are related to the **SDG's** and how we can **contribute** to the SDG's through the **core business** of our companies
- *Thirdly* we can formulate our **Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) plans** inspired by the SDG's and examine how we can make a **sustainable contribution** to various SDG's **through our CSR policy** (of course based on the local community needs).

We can conclude that as Rotarians we can contribute in several ways to achieving the SDG's, this while at the same time preserving our own identity (as summarized in the code of conduct: Service Above Self, Ethics in Life/ Business, Friendship/ Fellowship).

In 1945 Rotary gave various tips and ideas how to use the publication “**From Here On**” (page 90 and 91) and in what ways we can promote the charter and the work of the United Nations.

“**From Here On**”, 75 years later, we are encouraged to **strengthen the relation further** between the United Nations and the Rotary, this internationally but also on **local and national level**. Some suggestions of this cooperation are:

- Organizing a yearly local and national **United Nations – Rotary Day** (especially in the year 2020 when we celebrate 75 years of United Nations);
- Connecting and aligning the Rotary projects to both the **Areas of Focus** and the **Sustainable Development Goals**;
- Working together with the **local** representative offices of United Nations (and affiliate organizations) in promoting and achieving the SDG's;
- **Educating** and informing our youth (Rotaract/ Interact) regarding the **SDG's**;
- Organizing a local **Model United Nations** together with the local United Nations representatives (and affiliate organizations);
- Promoting and building awareness amongst Rotarians that our contribution to the SDG's is not limited to or **community/ society** life, but we can also contribute through our **private/ personal** and **business/ professional** life.

The period in which the goals must be achieved is set by the United Nations for a period of 15 years (**2015 - 2030**). There are still 10 years left. Together with our stakeholders, let us be proactive and let us strive to achieve these goals and let us help, think along and participate in the formulation of the future goals that will apply after 2030. This may well be through the consultative status of Rotary International at the United Nations and in many other ways.

**“From Here On” ..... by Connecting the World ..... Rotary Opens Opportunities!**

\* See website: [www.rotary.org/en/history-rotary-and-united-nations](http://www.rotary.org/en/history-rotary-and-united-nations)