

# 2022 Global Forum

**Welcome to the 2022 PILnet Global Forum**, and welcome to Ireland! After two years of holding the Forum virtually we are excited to welcome you back in person. This year is also a special moment for us as we are celebrating quarter of a century of PILnet and 15 years of annual Forum convenings. Held first in 2007 in Budapest, the PILnet Global Forum has grown into a gathering of 300+ participants who actively engage in thought-provoking discussions and push all of our thinking forward so that we can collectively grapple with the world's biggest challenges.

These are testing times for everyone, with climate emergencies, shrinking civic space, record levels of forced displacement globally, and a war of aggression in Europe started by Russia, a permanent member of the UN Security Council. With so many crises there is a real risk that progress can be derailed, or postponed. The sense of urgency is real, and the planetary overshoot day is creeping earlier and earlier each year. The pandemic over the last two years has also further illustrated rising global and local inequality. Despite these challenges, the legal community has tirelessly responded to these testing times by working with and supporting civil society and we, at PILnet, are inspired by the work that has been done.

Hints of a major transformation are visible, but the direction and the outcome are not decided. As the pendulum swings, we have agency to contribute to and shape how the future will look like. How can we build equitable partnerships and redress the power imbalances that exist in this world? How can we ensure that the voices of affected communities are taken into account and they are able to meaningfully participate? What can we do better to respond to crisis situations such as Ukraine and Afghanistan? How can big law firms really contribute to tackling the climate crisis? How are ESG macro trends reshaping the business world and how can they be turned into a real opportunity for everyone to feel as a stakeholder, rather than seen as a threat? How is the transition from shareholder capitalism, which prioritizes profits, to stakeholder capitalism,

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which also includes a focus on environmental and social values, taking place in different jurisdictions around the world? Is there a move from having to make a business case for pro bono, to an expectation of having to make a pro bono case for business as part of the social license to operate?

These are some of the questions we will discuss over the next two days during our Global Forum and hope to keep discussing beyond this event. Bringing lawyers, activists, and thinkers together is where we believe great ideas to advance the public interest begin and those ideas are brought to life through commitment to justice and perseverance. We will discuss many great examples of how lawyers and civil society activists around the world have taken on these challenges. We are looking forward to dynamic conversations that will inspire all of us moving forward.

Sincerely,

**Julia Mayerhofer and Andrej Nosko**  
**PILnet Interim Co-Executive Directors**