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**Phoenix Zones Initiative’s CEO Dr. Hope Ferdowsian Provides Recommendations to the UN High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development**  
Phoenix Zones Initiative Assists with Updating the United Nation’s Sustainable Development Goals in Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

**June 1, 2021 (Albuquerque, NM)** – Phoenix Zones Initiative’s CEO, Dr. Hope Ferdowsian, was selected as an expert to advise on the preparations for the [United Nations High-Level Political Forum \(HLPF\)](#) on Sustainable Development, to be held July 13–15, 2021. The HLPF is the UN’s core platform for follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and its [17 Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#). Dr. Ferdowsian was asked to provide expertise on SDG 3: “Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages.” The Expert Group Meetings were held virtually, May 17–20, 2021. The session on SDG 3 was co-organized by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the World Health Organization (WHO). Dr. Ferdowsian’s recommendations will be available on the UN Department of Economic and Social Development for Sustainable Development website for consideration by UN Member States and other stakeholders.

Dr. Ferdowsian was nominated as an expert on SDG 3 and related targets by the NGO Major Group, which is a key stakeholder that has been integral to the development and adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Since its adoption, Major Groups and other Stakeholders have been working toward its implementation through various initiatives, advocacy efforts, and monitoring of the 2030 Agenda. Major Groups and other Stakeholders are also active in the annual follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda, which culminates in the annual HLPF. As a member of the NGO Major Group, Phoenix Zones Initiative is involved in the review and the evolution of the SDGs. Dr. Ferdowsian has helped draft the NGO Major Group’s Position Paper, which addresses how governments should implement the SDGs and related targets, and the role civil society can play in achieving the SDGs, particularly in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Globally, progress has been made toward achieving SDG 3 and other Sustainable Development Goals,” says Dr. Ferdowsian. “However, a number of trends, including those related to the COVID-19 pandemic, threaten further progress. Addressing the interlinkages between the Goals and other intergovernmental processes—including the connections between the rights, health, and wellbeing of people, animals, and the planet—is key to ensuring that the 2030 Agenda can be met.”

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Having spent decades traveling the world to work with and on behalf of vulnerable people and animals, Dr. Ferdowsian has seen firsthand those who have endured trauma, war, abuse, and displacement. She knows the significance and impact of what incorporating a Just One Health approach into the Sustainable Development Goals would have in addressing these disparities at a global level. The Just One Health approach centers on the connections between people, animals, and the planet.

“It has been an honor to inform an effective path for achievement of the 2030 Agenda, including the need for a sustainable, inclusive, and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic,” says Dr. Ferdowsian. “Participation in the expert group meetings has also allowed me to formally address other experts and high-level officials and to discuss the overall global impact of incorporating a Just One Health approach in preparation for the High-Level Political Forum.”

Dr. Ferdowsian adds that the incorporation of a Just One Health approach into the implementation of the SDGs will serve as a formal push against the status quo and will hold more nations accountable to the evidence-based connections between the health of people, animals, plants, and the environment.

### **About Phoenix Zones Initiative**

Phoenix Zones Initiative is a global nonprofit organization on a mission to advance the interconnected rights, health, and wellbeing of people, animals, and the planet through a [Just One Health](#) approach. Led by physicians and a diverse team, Phoenix Zones Initiative focuses on widespread ethical and structural change. Phoenix Zones Initiative advances legal, economic, and public policy to uplift the most vulnerable and marginalized, including children and animals, and the organization provides resources so others can do the same. Follow Phoenix Zones Initiative on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), [YouTube](#), and the [Phoenix Zones Initiative](#) website.

### **About NGO Major Group**

The [NGO Major Group](#) is tasked with facilitating the participation and enhancing the engagement of non-governmental organizations in the processes directly and indirectly related to the High-Level Political Forum. When possible, the NGO Major Group works to organize positions on behalf of its members to be delivered in various United Nations spaces. Because of the diversity of voices and perspectives within this group, the NGO Major Group is organized around thematic clusters which act as hubs of expertise on numerous issues and/or Sustainable Development Goals.

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Media Note: Dr. Ferdowsian is available for phone or Zoom interviews.