



# Global Forum on Youth, Peace and Security

## AMMAN YOUTH DECLARATION ON YOUTH, PEACE AND SECURITY

*Adopted in Amman, Jordan on 22 August 2015*

### **Preamble**

We, young people from around the world, gathered here in Amman, Jordan on 21-22 August 2015 at the Global Forum on Youth, Peace and Security, express our commitment to live in a peaceful global society. Today, with more young people than ever globally, it is a demographic imperative to include us in working to achieve stability and security.

We express our gratitude to His Royal Highness Crown Prince Al Hussein Bin Abdullah II for his concerted efforts and leadership, and for the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan for hosting this Global Forum and its commitment to furthering the conversation around youth, peace and security.

With this Declaration, we present a common vision and roadmap towards a strengthened policy framework to support us in transforming conflict, preventing and countering violence and building sustainable peace.

This Declaration was developed by youth and is the outcome of an extensive consultation process with young people from all over the world to ensure an inclusive and integrated approach. In this regard, we;

*Build on* the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and acknowledge that the main responsibility of the Security Council under the Charter is to maintain international peace and security;

*Refer to* the need to recognise and support the role of youth in the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 16 defined by the United Nations in the Post-2015 Development Agenda;

*Recall* the importance of the [Guiding Principles on Young People's Participation in Peacebuilding](#) in creating a foundation that ensures young people's participation and contribution to building peace, including in conflict and post-conflict contexts;

*Recognise* that we, youth, are engaged in shaping lasting peace in our communities as positive contributors to peace, justice and reconciliation;

*Acknowledge* the ongoing work of national and international governments and organisations to engage youth in building peace;

Recognize the vulnerable status of many young people including refugees and internally displaced persons;

Call on governmental and non-governmental organisations, associations and agencies including youth-led civil society to partner with us to ensure the implementation of the following action points:

## 1. Youth Participation and Leadership in Issues of Peace and Security

We, young people, are highly engaged in transforming conflict, countering violence and building peace. Yet, our efforts remain largely invisible, unrecognized, and even undermined due to lack of adequate participatory and inclusive mechanisms and opportunities to partner with decision-making bodies. We implore policy makers to develop meaningful mechanisms for youth participation and leadership in decision and policy-making from the local to national and international levels. We must also foster young people's leadership skills, creating an interdependent virtuous cycle to shift the negative perceptions and discourse on young people to that of partners in building peaceful and sustainable communities.

### Action Points:

- The *United Nations* must establish a **global policy framework** recognising and addressing the specific needs, assets, potential and diverse identities of youth in conflict and post-conflict scenarios by 2017. A United Nations Security Council resolution on Youth, Peace and Security is the most appropriate option to recognise the role of young people and institutionalise their participation at all levels. We call on the United Nations Security Council to adopt a resolution on Youth, Peace and Security.
- *International agencies, national governments and local authorities* urgently need to establish **policy dialogue processes** with young people on issues of peace and security. This engagement must go beyond symbolic consultation.
- *International agencies, national governments and local authorities* must establish mechanisms to meaningfully involve youth in current and future **peace processes, including formal peace negotiations** from the local to the global levels. These mechanisms need to ensure youth are engaged as equal partners and promote youth leadership.
- *International agencies and national governments* need to **provide support to, and partner with, youth-led organisations engaged in building peace** with a focus on capacity development.
- *National governments* must **mainstream context-specific, quality education for peace** that equips young people with the ability to engage constructively in civic structures;
- *Donors* must **allocate long-term, sustainable funding and material support** to youth-led organisations and networks, formal and informal youth groups, and individual youth initiatives. We, youth, must be included in donor's decision making structures to ensure that funding is accessible and appropriate in amount and duration. Donors need to work with youth organisations to assess to what extent current funding structures meet real needs for youth in peacebuilding.

## 2. Youth Preventing Violence and Building Peace

Within international and national contexts, the discourse on violence and violent extremism frames young people as potential perpetrators of violence despite the fact that most young people are not involved in armed conflict or violence. This framing is a harmful reduction of the role young people play in preventing violence and transforming conflicts.

### Action Points:

- *National Governments, local authorities, private sector and civil society organizations, including faith based organizations and faith leaders, must **recognize and support what young people are already doing in preventing violence and violent extremism***. They should build upon the existing capacities, networks and resources of young people in their countries and communities, as well as at the international level.
- *We, young people, must continue to **prevent violence and violent extremism***. *National governments and local authorities should **facilitate an enabling environment** in which youth actors are recognised and provided with adequate support to implement violence prevention activities. This space must be inclusive of youth from different social, political, economic, ethnic and religious backgrounds,*
- *International agencies and national governments must ensure that young people enjoy **full provision of their fundamental human rights**, without exception.*
- *National governments, local authorities and researchers should ensure that **contextual research is conducted in collaboration with young people and youth organizations** to identify the drivers and enablers of violence and extremism in order to design effective responses at local, national and international levels.*

### **3. Gender Equality**

The challenges faced by young people when engaging in building peace, transforming conflicts and countering violence remain highly gender-dependent. In several parts of the world, the political participation of young women in particular is jeopardised. Thus, it is necessary to create mechanisms that not only ensure equality among genders, but also address the hardships that are gender specific.

### Action Points:

- *Local authorities and national governments must ensure that young men and women have **equal opportunities and access to education and employment** and create **mechanisms to tackle gender discrimination** in those environments, recognising that the marginalisation of particular groups such as women is detrimental to building sustainable peace in all societies.*
- *International agencies, national governments and donors must **identify and support youth-led organizations** which address gender inequality and empower young women in peacebuilding and conflict resolution as those are crucial partners in peacebuilding efforts;*
- *International agencies, national governments and local authorities must implement internationally agreed commitments to **promote and protect the rights of girls, prevent gender-based violence and end impunity** for crimes such as child, early and forced marriage, sexual and domestic violence, femicide and female genital mutilation. Gender-based violence hinders the development and meaningful participation of young people in peacebuilding processes. Additionally, sexual and gender based violence is linked to broader issues of insecurity and hampers negotiations in the context of peace agreements and ceasefires.*
- *Local authorities and national governments should establish **temporary special measures, including minimum quotas, for the participation of girls and women in all decision- and policy-making** levels by 2018. Such measures ensure that women's perspectives and*

interests will be represented and they effectively combat the persistent exclusion of women from the political environment;

- *Youth-led peace organisations* must continuously **be gender sensitive** in all their actions and strive to ensure inclusiveness.

#### 4. Young People's Socio-Economic Empowerment

Around the world we, young people, are disproportionately affected by limited access to social and economic opportunities. Limited or inadequate employment opportunities and a lack of educational empowerment can contribute to economic isolation, political disillusionment and social unrest. This hinders social cohesion and our ability to engage in peace processes as it limits our capacity to organize and act. Societies will not enjoy peace without economic development, and they will not enjoy economic development without peace. To be active agents for building peace, we need to be able to see that we have an ongoing stake in society.

##### Action Points:

- *National governments* must **prioritise youth employment opportunities and inclusive labour policies** by adopting a national youth employment action plan, working together with the private sector, and allocating budget to its implementation. The plan must be evidence-based, developed in partnership with young people and recognise the interrelated role of education, employment and training in preventing the marginalisation of young people.
- *National governments* and *local authorities* must collaborate to create social and economic opportunities for young people, **in both rural and urban locations**. They must **invest in building young people's capabilities** and equip them with skills to meet the labour demands through relevant education opportunities designed in a manner which promotes a culture of peace.
- *International organisations, national governments, donors* and the *private sector* need to support **youth-led and youth peacebuilding organisations as partners in youth employment and entrepreneurship programs** as those organisations are uniquely placed to engage marginalised young people.
- *Local authorities* and *national governments* must **fund and develop policies, laws and programs on health**, for the life cycle of all young people. This is a prerequisite for social and economic empowerment of young people.

Highlighted above are some of the key requirements for a policy framework supporting youth participation in peacebuilding. To this end, local authorities, national governments, donors, civil society and other actors, must take urgent measures to support young people as actors in preventing and transforming conflict, countering violent extremism and building peace by implementing the action points in this Declaration.

As young people attending the Global Forum on Youth, Peace and Security we commit to work together with all stakeholders in order to build peace around the world. We commit to monitoring the implementation of this declaration.