



**Black  
Diplomats  
Academy**

Good afternoon honourable Chair and distinguished delegates of this second session of the Permanent Forum on People of African Descent.

My name is Candies Kotchapaw, the founder and executive director of the registered nonprofit organization called Developing Young Leaders of Tomorrow, Today (DYLOTT) and the director of the Black Diplomats Academy based in Ontario, Canada. The Black Diplomats Academy along with all programs of DYLOTT is focused on the leadership development capacity of children and youth of African Descent nationally and internationally.

Following attendance at the first session of the Permanent Forum in Geneva in 2022, and observing the glaring absence of a substantive focus on youth engaged in thematic discussions during each session of the inaugural forum, the Black Diplomats Academy was inspired and activated to push forward on the proposal to develop a collaborative framework for Black youth engagement and leadership in the policy development and implementation of the priorities of the Forum; giving policies the legs they need to work effectively in our communities.

Standing with the one message, one voice guidance from the International Civil Society Working Group on the development of the Permanent Forum of People of African Descent, we agree that the PFPAD mechanism derives its legitimacy from robust civil society engagement and participation.

Therefore the Academy proposes that a mandatory component in the successful development and implementation of the Secretariat is a youth experience nuanced approach:

- The development and implementation of the Permanent Forum for People of African Descent MUST intentionally include the nuanced disadvantages facing Black children and youth globally; while capitalizing on the unique skills and propensity for creative and innovative problem-solving for social justice.
- Systematically dismantling systemic anti-Black racism across academic, employment, healthcare and all other contributing socio-economic, political and environmental systems that have perpetuated the legacy of colonialism, marginalization and racial poverty.

On May 29, 2023, ahead of the opening of the second session of the Permanent Forum at the United Nations in New York, the Black Diplomats Academy hosted a youth focused virtual side event. With over 80 registrants and 58 active participants, the side event proved fruitful in further highlighting the essential focus areas for youth of African Descent. Panama, Zimbabwe, Canada, USA, Peru and Jamaica were actively engaged in the discussion.

#### Recommendations from youth side event

- Regional representation of youth voices in the policy decision-making process of the Forum.  
[Panama](#)

- Sharing knowledge about the SDGs in order to make effective policies – sensitizing children and youth to subject matter for problem-solving issues happening in their countries and then grow over time to the international stage – [Zimbabwe](#)
- Youth secretariat must mobilize for intergenerational collaboration between young people who are currently being positioned to lead and children who will be positioned to lead. Creating sustainable peer mentorship - [Peru](#)
- Entrepreneurship as a stand-alone priority – looking at the massive transitions in the domestic and international markets – push towards innovation connected to technologies and Artificial Intelligence. [Jamaica](#)
- Policy literacy – understanding how policies work, opportunities to interact with policy-actors and experiential learning - [Canada](#)
- Job creation and community wealth creation – making sure that youth can produce and reproduce sustainable employment. [USA](#)
- Law – youth must be able to leverage the field of law to be able to strategize for the benefit of our communities - [USA](#)
- Local and Regional meetings that bring the PFPAD to youth in their countries, making it easier for locally engaged youth to share on their advocacy and policy implementation process - [Panama](#)
- Redirecting the global economy from a westernized capitalistic view. Creating our own SDG on pan-African economics - [Canada](#)

Priority subject matter expertise of youth who participated in consultation process.

- Climate action and environmental justice
- Activism and humanitarian
- Economic justice
- Legislative advocacy
- Health and mental health
- Legal
- Trade and development
- Technology

Core priorities for youth according to the Sustainable Development Goals currently not on the PFPAD agenda

- Reduced inequalities – SDG 10
- Promoting decent work – SDG 8
- Collaboration with stakeholders – SDG 17
- Improving access to Quality Education – SDG 4
- Justice – SDG 16
- Reducing Poverty – SDG 1

Suggested targets, goals and outcomes of the adopted youth secretariat of the PFPAD

Secretariat targets: Specific focus on increasing the education to employment outcomes for Black young people nationally and internationally. Extend the traditional categorization of youth from age 16-29 - for Black youth to include up to 35 years old – given the understanding of the nuanced anti-Black racism structural barriers in achievement of positive social determinants of health:

- Quality education – investment in infrastructure for Black children and youth to gain technology-based education, matching the demands of the technology and innovation revolution for the digital economy. Mandatory inclusion of entrepreneurship training as a viable source for stable employment.
- Employment outcomes – Facilitate the transition from precarious working conditions in industries prone to economic turbulence by creating partnerships with employers who are providing upskilling training for in demand and non-precarious employment industries.
- Opportunities to shape government policy development and implementation – intentional inclusion and representation in economic and social policy taskforce tables; where children and youth program development and implementation are being drafted and operationalized.

Four key Goals to effectively implement the youth secretariat as co-collaborators with the 10 members of the PFPAD

- Create – create a dedicated fund to enable capacity building for Black-youth focused organizations to address service and advocacy gaps.
- Commit - commit to creating disaggregated data on the social determinants of health for Black children and youth.
- Enforce - enforce the achievement of the UN Decade for People of African Descent’s themes of Recognition, Justice and Development in the achievement of the Strategy targets.
- Incentivize - Incentivize partnerships across government, corporate, academic and community institutions to achieve the modalities of the Permanent Forum for People of African Descent.

Outcomes based on the development of the youth secretariat.

- Youth leadership is embedded throughout the development and implementation of the entire PFPAD process.
- Active engagement and representation from youth leads regionally, nationally and globally.

Timeline for adoption of the youth secretariat:

- Delivery of the Black Diplomacy Global Summit in Toronto, Canada from July 27-30<sup>th</sup> with panel discussions, Black young aspiring diplomats oral presentations of working papers and keynote speeches on achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in Black communities.
- Positioning for reference during United Nations General Assembly topic in September 2023.
- Potential representation and participation in Brazil 2023.
- Further consultation and institutional advocacy for implementation ahead of third session of the PFPAD in Geneva 2024.