

Cameron Clarke

Masters Student from the MALACS Program, Florida International University

5/31/2023

Request for Ways to Increase Youth Involvement within the Forum

Representatives, community, it is an honor and a privilege to be able to speak in front of you today. Years back, when I was a boy traveling from state to state, between the USA, Canada, and the Caribbean, I would have thought this opportunity to be but a dream deferred. My name is Cameron Fitzgerald Clarke. I am 24 and will be starting my Masters program in the Fall at FIU as a part of the MALACS program, Master of Art in Latin America and Caribbean Studies. The main focus I have in my studies is international relations in regards to the Caribbean, learning different ways and tools to bridge the region to Africa and different regions of the diaspora. I come before you today, in the essence of unity and building bridges within our Pan-African community, to ask for consideration of plans to connect younger generations and up-and-coming Black leaders further to the forum. Whilst there is a decent number of us here, there are more who may not have even heard of this session nor the forum itself. If this forum is to help set and pave the way forward for generations and generations to come, building and improving on the current structures and scaffolding we have in place, it is imperative to involve and take into consideration the future leaders of the forum's cause. Please do not leave us without the necessary tools and knowledge for the elevation and proper commitment to the forum, the United Nations and most importantly, our communities.

I believe this action of further youth involvement within our forum and pan-African community comes from multiple angles. A youth forum as has been discussed in different events is essential. A succinct package that could be shared throughout social media and transferred through different channels, increasing the knowledge and awareness of the work that is currently being done could reach further audiences and let our communities know of the amazing work being found. There are more ways of connection but in the interest of time I want to highlight this one last item that is personal to me. For the representatives and attendees, please take these findings and learnings from the forum with you, back to your respective communities. Tell them of the work that is being done, encourage their involvement and start developing that pipeline for leadership. If not for my mentors, I would not be here in attendance today. I hope you all think about my words today, thank you.