**52nd session of the Human Rights Council**

**Annual high-level panel discussion on human rights mainstreaming**

***Theme: A reflection on five years of the United Nations Youth Strategy (Youth 2030): mapping a blueprint for the next steps***

*Concept note (as of 22 February 2023)*

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| **Date and venue:** | **Monday, 27 February 2023, 4 to 6 p.m.**  **Room XX, Palais des Nations, Geneva and online platform (Zoom)**  *(will be broadcast live and archived at* [*https://media.un.org/en/webtv*](https://media.un.org/en/webtv)*)* |
| **Objectives:** | The annual high-level panel discussion will gather high-level representatives of United Nations agencies and funds, Member and observer States and other stakeholders, including youth.  The panel discussion will focus on challenges to and progress made in the implementation of the United Nations Youth Strategy, in line with the 2021 report of the Secretary-General entitled “Our Common Agenda”. It will set out next steps for strengthened implementation of the Youth Strategy and of the commitments related to youth in the Secretary-General’s Call to Action for Human Rights and in Our Common Agenda, and for the mainstreaming of youth across the three pillars of the United Nations: human rights, peace and security, and development. In particular, it will consider how to work in partnership with young people in this regard and how to meaningfully engage youth in the work of the United Nations. Speakers and panellists will share their views, good practices and challenges. |
| **Chair:** | **H.E. Mr. Václav Bálek**, President of the Human Rights Council |
| **Opening statements:** | **Mr. Volker Türk**, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights  **Ms. Jayathma Wickramanayake**, Envoy of the Secretary-General on Youth *(video message)* |
| **Panellists:** | * **Ms. Diene Keita**,Deputy Executive Director (Programme) of the United Nations Population Fund * **Mr. Gilbert F. Houngbo**, Director-General of the International Labour Organization *(video message)* and **Mr. Sangheon Lee**, Director of the Employment Policy Department at the International Labour Organization *(concluding remarks)* * **Ms. Ana Luiza Thompson-Flores***,*Director of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Liaison Office in Geneva * **Ms. Christine Salloum**, Representative of the International Coordination Meeting of Youth Organizations within the High-level Steering Committee of the United Nations Youth Strategy |
| **Outcomes:** | The panel discussion will contribute to the following outcomes:   * Increased understanding of the issues relevant to the human rights of young people and mainstreaming of youth rights in the United Nations system; * Renewed commitment to promote and implement a youth rights-based approach across the United Nations system in partnership with youth; * Recognition of the crucial role that young people play in responding to economic, political and social crises, advocating for human rights, and effectuating social change; * Presentation, through concrete examples, of the role of young people in the work of the United Nations, especially in the promotion and protection of human rights; * Recognition of the value of investing in and empowering youth, including through human rights education, which equips them with the skills and knowledge to advance human rights; * Increased awareness of the institutional frameworks related to youth, including but not limited to, the Youth Strategy, the Secretary-General’s Call to Action for Human Rights, and Our Common Agenda. * Improved understanding of the challenges faced by young people to access and engage with multilateral fora, including with the Human Rights Council and its mechanisms; * Identifying measures to encourage active engagement by young people in the work and membership of United Nations processes and mechanisms, including the Human Rights Council; and * Strengthened coordination and collaboration between United Nations entities in the area of youth, including to ensure that young people receive appropriate and dedicated technical assistance and capacity-building. |
| **Mandate:** | In paragraph 42 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 16/21, the Human Rights Council decided to hold an annual panel discussion to interact with heads of governing bodies and secretariats of United Nations agencies and funds within their respective mandates on specific human rights themes with the objective of promoting the mainstreaming of human rights throughout the United Nations system.  At its organizational session, held on 9 December 2022, the Human Rights Council decided that the theme of the 2023 panel discussion will be *“A reflection on five years of the United Nations Youth Strategy (Youth 2030): mapping a blueprint for the next steps.”* |
| **Format:** | The panel discussion will be limited to two hours. The opening statements and initial presentations by the panellists will be followed by a two-part interactive discussion and by conclusions from the panellists. A maximum of one hour will be set aside for the podium, including the opening statements, panellists’ presentations, their responses to questions and concluding remarks. The remaining hour will be reserved for two segments of interventions from the floor, with each segment consisting of interventions from 12 States or observers, 1 national human rights institution and 2 non-governmental organizations. Each speaker will have two minutes to raise issues and to ask panellists questions. Panellists will respond to questions and comments during the remaining time available.  The list of speakers for the discussion will be established through the online inscription system and, as per practice, statements by high-level dignitaries and groups of States will be moved to the beginning of the list. Delegates unable to take the floor due to time constraints will be able to upload their statements on the online system to be posted on the HRC Extranet. Interpretation will be provided in the six United Nations official languages (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish). |
| **Background:** | In September 2018, the Secretary-General of the United Nations signalled the importance of working with and for youth when he launched the Youth Strategy, entitled “Youth 2030: working with and for young people.” Youth 2030 is the umbrella framework for the United Nations’ work on youth across the three pillars of human rights, peace and security, and development. It is built on the established principles of meaningful engagement and emphasizes working both for and with youth as critical foundations of change.  The Youth Strategy aims to scale up global, regional and national actions to meet young people’s needs, realize their human rights and increase their agency. To do so, it focuses on four United Nations system-wide actions in order to deliver on five key priority areas:   * Youth engagement, participation and advocacy * Informed and healthy foundations * Economic empowerment through decent work * Youth and human rights * Peacebuilding and resilience-building   The United Nations, through the Youth Strategy, aims to strengthen youth engagement and participation in global agenda and frameworks relevant to them. Crucially, the strategy seeks to increase the engagement of the United Nations with young people and ensure that their views, experiences, ideas and solutions inform youth issues, and to ensure a coordinated, coherent and well-rounded approach to youth issues in the work of the United Nations.  The ownership of the Youth Strategy is equally shared by all members of the United Nations system at the global, regional and national levels. As we approach the fifth anniversary of its adoption, the global implementation of Youth 2030 continues to gain momentum, with 51 United Nations entities and 130 United Nations country teams advancing the Youth Strategy. Under the strategic guidance of the High-level Steering Committee, the technical leadership of the Joint Working Group, and coordination by the Youth 2030 Secretariat, foundations for system-wide implementation have been established. This includes scorecards for performance measurement and accountability, institutionalized routine reporting of the United Nations system on the implementation of the strategy, knowledge products supporting implementation, as well as two Youth 2030 progress reports, outlining progress, gaps and recommendations for implementation.  Reporting across the system emphasizes the work of United Nations entities and country teams for and with youth and highlights key issues, challenges and gaps. However, while significant improvement in working with youth and for youth is evident across the United Nations system, gaps remain and implementation varies between countries and regions and United Nations entities. As such, comprehensive, coherent and consistent approach to youth is not yet fully realized.  In recent years, the United Nations has increased its focus and work on youth issues, recognizing the systemic challenges and barriers that young people face in enjoying their human rights and the need to empower them. This prioritization of youth issues has led to the emergence of institutional initiatives and frameworks focused on youth and the publication of a range of policy guidance by United Nations entities on how to address the challenges emerging from the COVID-19 pandemic for youth. The Secretary-General’s 2020 Call to Action for Human Rights highlights the transformative nature of human rights in tackling crises and global challenges and identifies the importance of partnering with youth in combating such challenges. Launched in 2020, “Our Common Agenda,” which included engagement with young people in its preparation, identified human rights as a catalyst for change, and included a priority of listening to and working with youth and future generations. It has placed working with and for youth at the centre of the work of the United Nations in the years to come and contains concrete commitments on youth mainstreaming, including the development of a ”youth in politics” index and the establishment of a United Nations Youth Office.  As the United Nations steps up efforts to mainstream youth ahead of 2030, there is an urgent need to ensure that policies, processes and platforms for meaningful youth engagement are in place across the system. Unlocking the potential available within the United Nations system and the wider international community in order to include young people in the work of the United Nations, including the Human Rights Council, both advances the respect, protection and fulfilment of young people’s human rights and enhances the mainstreaming of youth rights and youth issues more generally across the United Nations system. |
| **Background documents:** | * [Letter from the President of the Human Rights Council](https://hrcmeetings.ohchr.org/PresidencyBureau/BureauRegionalGroupsCorrespondence/Correspondence/Letter%20from%20the%20President%20of%20the%20Human%20Rights%20Council%20announcing%20proposed%20theme%20for%202023%20high-level%20panel%20on%20human%20rights%20mainstreaming%20(PDF).pdf) announcing proposed theme for 2023 high-level panel on human rights mainstreaming (2022) * [Human Rights resolution 32/1](http://undocs.org/A/HRC/RES/32/1) of 30 June 2016 on youth and human rights * [Human Rights resolution 35/14](http://undocs.org/A/HRC/RES/35/14) of 22 June 2017 on youth and human rights * [Human Rights resolution 41/13](http://undocs.org/A/HRC/RES/41/13) of 11 July 2019 on youth and human rights * [Human Rights resolution 48/12](http://undocs.org/A/HRC/RES/48/12) of 8 October 2021 on human rights implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on young people * [Human Rights resolution 51/17](http://undocs.org/A/HRC/RES/51/17) of 6 October 2022 on youth and human rights * Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the human rights implications of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic on young people ([A/HRC/51/19](https://undocs.org/Home/Mobile?FinalSymbol=A%2FHRC%2F51%2F19&Language=E&DeviceType=Desktop&LangRequested=False), 2022) * Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on intersessional seminar on the challenges and opportunities of young people in the field of human rights ([A/HRC/49/32](https://undocs.org/Home/Mobile?FinalSymbol=A%2FHRC%2F49%2F32&Language=E&DeviceType=Desktop&LangRequested=False), 2021) * Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth, Youth & COVID-19: Impacts on Jobs, Education, Rights and Mental Well-Being (2020) <https://www.decentjobsforyouth.org/campaign/COVID19-survey> * The United Nations Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development, Statement on COVID-19 and Youth (2020) <https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/tools-and-resources/inter-agency-statement-youth-and-covid-19> * Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on youth and human rights ([A/HRC/39/](https://undocs.org/Home/Mobile?FinalSymbol=A%2FHRC%2F39%2F33&Language=E&DeviceType=Desktop&LangRequested=False)33, 2018) * Report of the Secretary-General, Our Common Agenda ([A/75/982](http://undocs.org/A/75/982), 2021) <https://www.un.org/en/common-agenda> * Secretary-General’s Call to Action for Human Rights (2020) <https://www.un.org/en/content/action-for-human-rights/index.shtml> * Youth2030, Progress Report 2022, <https://www.unyouth2030.com/progressreport22> * Youth2030, Progress Report 2021, <https://www.unyouth2030.com/progressreport21> * Youth2030: Working with and for young people - United Nations Strategy on Youth (2018) <https://www.un.org/youthenvoy/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/18-00080_UN-Youth-Strategy_Web.pdf> * OHCHR web page on youth <https://www.ohchr.org/en/youth> |