

STATEMENT FROM PLANNING MEETING

YOUTH 21: BUILDING AN ARCHITECTURE FOR YOUTH ENGAGEMENT IN THE UN SYSTEM INITIATIVE

PARTICIPANTS

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Apologies received from:

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1. The planning meeting of the **Youth 21: Building An Architecture for Youth Engagement in the UN System** initiative was held in Oslo, Norway from the 30 of November to 2 of December, 2011. The representatives of governments, UN and youth-led organizations attended the meeting.
2. The meeting followed up on the International Year of Youth; the High Level Meeting on Youth; the UN-Habitat Governing Council 23/7 resolution; and the Secretary General's statement that it is imperative that the UN not only focus on the problems associated with youth, but that the UN work together with youth, recognizing the dynamic and innovative nature of youth's initiatives.
3. The meeting explored mechanisms for coordinating, integrating and enhancing youth development in the UN, including the engagement of youth in the UN in response to youth globally asserting greater influence in global governance processes.
4. The participants held in-depth discussions on the urgency of engaging youth in global decision-making. They recognized that youth make up unprecedented proportion of the world population, with the majority living in poor conditions, and that though these youth face seemingly insurmountable economic and social barriers, they overcome them, and seek to achieve improved conditions for themselves, their families and their communities.
5. Recognition was given to both the work of the UN Inter-Agency Network for Youth Development (IANYD), and the inadequacy of that structure to fully realize the participants' shared goals of enhancing meaningful participation by and focus on youth in the UN in accordance with relevant resolutions such as the Braga Youth Action Plan, Agenda 21, the HABITAT Agenda, the Outcome Document of the High Level Meeting on Youth and the World Programme of Action for Youth.
6. The participants recommended, in accordance with Paragraph 25 of the Outcome Document of the High Level Meeting, upgrading and strengthening existing UN structures on youth at the global, regional and national levels through a more coherent, comprehensive and integrated approach to youth development.
7. The recommendation of the planning meeting is to request that the Secretary General to appoint a Special Representative on Youth through a transparent and youth inclusive process and support the Member States in the process of establishing a UN Permanent Forum on Youth.
8. The meeting suggested that UN-Habitat as a member of the UN IANYD, and its permanent chair, UNDESA, to implement the next steps including a multi-stakeholder meeting "**Youth 21: Building for Change Initiative**" in March of 2012 in Nairobi, Kenya.
9. The meeting also suggested organizing a special event of the Secretary General on youth at the opening of the sixty-seventh Session of the General Assembly, 2012. The event will be an opportunity for youth to provide inputs to the general debate of General Assembly.
10. The planning group that met in Oslo will continue to function as the working group for the Youth 21 initiative. It was also suggested that this group considers supporting this process with both substantive and financial resources.