



ICGLR YOUTH FORUM

REPORT OF THE ICGLR YOUTH FORUM DELEGATION TO THE 2018 ECOSOC YOUTH FORUM NEW YORK, USA



29TH - 31ST JANUARY, 2018

INTRODUCTION

1. At the invitation of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) Youth Forum participated in the UN ECOSOC YOUTH Forum from 29th - 31st January, 2018 whose theme was " The role of Youth in building sustainable and resilient urban and rural communities". The delegation was composed of 8 members: Mr. Samuel Kavuma - Uganda; Mr. Kennedy Walusala - Kenya; Ms. Hellen Nomugisha - Rwanda; Mr. Albino Bol - Republic of South Sudan; Ms. Rahma Abdallah and Mr. Paschal Masalu - Tanzania; Mr. Janvier Ndizeye UNFPA Burundi; and Mr. Aniefiok Johnson, UN Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary General for the Great Lakes Region (O/SESG). Participation of the youth representatives in the meeting was supported by Office of the Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region, UNFPA Rwanda and Burundi, and UNCT Tanzania.

BACKGROUND

2. Since 2012, the annual Youth Forum of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) has become a platform through which young people can contribute to policy discussions at the United Nations through their collective ideas, solutions and innovations. The Forum, which has become one of the most institutionalized avenues for youth participation in the official UN processes, allows representatives of youth-led and youth focused organizations and networks, youth advocates and others to engage with Member States, and to explore ways and means of promoting youth development and engagement.
3. The active and meaningful engagement of youth in the design, implementation, follow up and review of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and strategies at the National, Regional and Global levels, has been repeatedly echoed as a top priority and crucial during the previous ECOSOC Youth Forums.

OBJECTIVES OF THE 2018 ECOSOC YOUTH FORUM:

- a) Discuss the policy framework and promote innovative, institutionalised approaches and initiatives for advancing the youth development agenda at National, Regional and Global Levels with a view to promoting solutions to the global challenge of strengthening resilience among youth;
- b) Share knowledge on achieving youth development by promoting the implementation, monitoring, follow up and review of the 2030 Agenda, and the participation of young people in policy-making and implementation;
- c) Identify pathways and means to support youth to surmount challenges they face and meaningfully contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
- d) Provide an avenue for Member States to report on their national progress on the 'SDG Youth Dashboard';
- e) Provide an avenue for identifying and addressing emerging issues;
- f) Showcase initiatives and platforms to advance youth related Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda, including the Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth.

OPENING CEREMONY

4. 2018 ECOSOC Youth Forum was officially opened by H.E. Mrs. Marie Chatardova, President of ECOSOC and H.E. Mr. Miroslav Lajcak, President of the General Assembly. Ms. Amina J. Mohammed, Deputy Secretary General of United Nations represented the UN SG in the official opening. Ms. Jayathma Wickramanayake, United Nations Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth also made her remarks in the Opening Ceremony. The keynote address was made by Ms. Salina Abraham, President, International Forestry Students' Association.

DISCUSSIONS AT THE MEETING

5. The Great Lakes Youth Delegation participated in the meeting convened by the UN Secretary General's Envoy on Youth, International Labour Organization (ILO) and Major Group for Children and Youth (MGCY) on "Youth Consultation on the Future of Work" held on 29th January, 2018, at the UN Headquarters preceding the ECOSOC Youth Forum. The meeting was officially opened by Ms. Jayathma Wickramanayake, United Nations Secretary - General's Envoy on Youth. The discussions focused on the: Work and Society - how transformation in the world of work is affecting the relationship between work, individual and society; Decent jobs for all - how megatrends such as technological and demographic change affecting the creation of decent jobs for all; The Organization of work and production - how to respond to the growing diversity of employment forms; and the Governance of work - norms, institutions and regulations needed for the governance of work in the future.



MEETING WITH MS. JAYATHMA WICKRAMANAYAKE, UNITED NATIONS SECRETARY - GENERAL'S ENVOY ON YOUTH

6. On the sideline of the Youth Consultations on the Future of Work, the Great Lakes Region Youth Delegation met with Ms. Jayathma Wickramanayake, United Nations Secretary - General's Envoy on Youth with members of her Office.



7. The Youth Envoy was extremely grateful to meet our delegation due to the high level peace, security and stability interest in the Great Lakes Region. We briefed her on the prevailing youth situation in the Great Lakes Region, including the outcome of the ICGLR Extra-Ordinary Summit Communique of Heads of State and Government on Youth Unemployment of July 2014 and the subsequent follow up of the Nairobi Youth Declaration with the ICGLR Youth Ministers Communique in Livingstone, Zambia, in June 2017.
8. We also shared with her on our ICGLR Youth Forum operational plan and the Great Lakes Region Strategic Framework and appeal for her support to Pillar 4 on Youth and Adolescents.

9. The Envoy stated that she was committed to support the following: Youth Employment; Gender Equality; Peace and Security Youth Initiatives; and Mobilizing Young people on SDGs.
10. She confirmed that she will be visiting Nairobi, Kenya, from 20th - 22nd March, 2018. A visit which we all welcome to address more specific issues of the youth and development.



ECOSOC YOUTH FORUM PLENARY SESSION

11. The sessions were very interactive with discussions on the: need for ensuring young people's individual resilience as members of society; building resilience in local communities; and how youth could contribute and benefit from the implementation of the six goals at focus during the Forum.
12. The goals on focus for the ECOSOC Youth Forum were:
 - a) Goal 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all;
 - b) Goal 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all;

- c) Goal 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable;
- d) Goal 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns;
- e) Goal 15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainable management of forests, combat desertification and halt and reverse land degradation and biodiversity loss;
- f) Goal 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.

13. There was also a Ministerial Roundtable which featured national reviews of progress on youth development and youth engagement the context of the 2030 Agenda.

14. Young people were encouraged to make individual and group commitments for action to build resilient and inclusive societies and to achieve the SDGs.

15. There was also an SDG media zone where participants at the Forum engaged in conversations about innovative and successful initiatives and interventions aimed at strengthening the involvement of the young people in the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. We were represented by Ms. Hellen Nomugisha, from Rwanda at the SDG media zone.

16. The delegation also attended the Regional breakout session for Africa on the theme: "*The role of African Youth in winning the fight against corruption: A sustainable path to resilient urban and rural communities*". The session was organized by the United Nations Office of the Special Adviser for Africa (UN-OSAA) and UNESCO. The forum discussed challenges and roles regarding youth involvement in fighting corruption at all levels, including concretizing the explicit linkage between fighting corruption and ensuring resilient communities.

17. The deliberations will contribute to the yearlong series of events around the African Union's theme for 2018, "*Winning the Fight Against Corruption: A Sustainable Path to Africa's Transformation*".

18. At the invitation of the Permanent Mission of Germany to the United Nations, the Great Lakes Region Youth Delegation participated in a sideline event on SDG 4 on Quality Education together with UN Youth Delegates of Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands. This was extremely important due to the role the ICGLR Group of friends are playing in the region. The deliberations focused on mainstreaming the SDGs in education systems, equipping young people for the job market of tomorrow and empowering young people leaving no one behind. The delegation thanked the H.E. Mr. Christoph Heusgen and the German Youth Delegates for their invitation

RECOMMENDATIONS:

19. Initiate Youth dialogue on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in ICGLR Member States;
20. Host the United Nations Secretary - General's Envoy on Youth in Nairobi, Kenya, 20th - 22nd March 2018;
21. Share the UN ECOSOC Youth Forum Report to all the Stakeholders and Partners;
22. Follow up on UN ECOSOC High Level Political Forum Meeting in July 2018, UN Headquarters;
23. Follow up with UN Agencies on the outcome of the UN ECOSOC Youth Forum Meeting recommendations in Members' States;
24. Discuss the Recommendation of the UN ECOSOC Youth Forum with the ICGLR Youth Forum;

CLOSING CEREMONY

25. The Closing ceremony was presided over by H.E. Mrs. Marie Chatardova, President of ECOSOC and Mr. Liu Zhenmin, Under Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs. Ms. Jayathma Wickramanayake, United Nations Secretary - General's Envoy on Youth also gave her closing remarks.