



Concept Note

Regional Consultation on Youth, Peace and Security

Voices of youth in Latin America and the Caribbean

Colón (Panamá) 28 May - 1st June 2017

1. Global Background

On 9 December 2015, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) adopted [Resolution 2250](#), the first resolution that specifically addresses the role of young people on matters of peace and security. This ground-breaking resolution on Youth, Peace and Security recognizes **the positive role young people can and do play in conflict prevention, the prevention of violence, and the promotion and consolidation of peace.**

This Resolution captures the legacy and contributions made by, for example, the [Guiding Principles on Young People's Participation in Peacebuilding](#) and the [Amman Youth Declaration](#), and represents, first and foremost, the success of the joint efforts of youth organizations, the UN, civil society actors and governments working together.

One of the next measures stipulated in the Resolution, requests the Secretary-General *"to carry out a progress study on the youth's positive contribution to peace processes and conflict resolution, in order to recommend effective responses at local, national, regional and international levels, and further requests the Secretary-General to make the results of this study available to the Security Council and all Member States of the United Nations."*

The [Progress Study](#) will provide key information regarding youth participation in peace and security issues and highlight their active and positive contribution to maintaining peace in the region.

In keeping with this commitment, regional and national consultations are being conducted worldwide. To date, a [Regional Consultation and High-Level Dialogue for the Arab States](#) was held in Jordan bearing in mind the support offered by these states in order to adopt the Resolution on 9 December 2015. A [National Consultation in Colombia](#) has also taken place, as a key country for the development of the Progress Study, given the present context of the implementation of the peace agreement with the FARC-EP and the active role and involvement of young people in the peace process, peacebuilding and conflict resolution in the country.

In addition, a series of online consultations will be launched shortly on the [Youth4Peace Knowledge Portal](#) in order to broaden the reach of the consultations to the global level.





It is also an important opportunity to encourage young people to play an active role in the implementation of the [2030 Agenda](#) in the region. This road map for achieving peace and sustainable development was adopted unanimously by 193 countries at the UN General Assembly in September 2015. It is today's youth who, in the years remaining until 2030, are taking on the new challenges and commitments that are put forward in the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and their 169 goals. Hence, young people have become key players in contributing to the success of building the **peaceful and inclusive societies necessary for sustainable development**¹.

Latin America and the Caribbean

It is estimated that there are approximately 160 million young people in the region. On analysing their situation, we find they face complex challenges in terms of security, inequality and governance, all of which are essential in order to progress towards **sustainable peace**.

Regarding **security**, violence has had an enormous impact in this region, which is considered the most violent in the world. It is no accident, therefore, that although there is no war currently declared in the region, the rate of homicide is higher than that recorded in periods of war. Violent operations are linked mainly to the drug trade and the eviction of persons from territories valued for their minerals, forests or subsoil wealth. It should not be forgotten that access to, use and ownership of natural resources is a key factor for these economies. Therefore, generating inclusive and democratic dialogue processes that address territorial security would allow the adoption of medium and long-term consensus and identify opportunities that guarantee the sustainable human development of the affected populations.

Global homicide rates are led by countries in this region, especially those in the Northern Triangle, with more than 100,000 homicides a year and very high numbers of violence against women and girls. Poverty, inequality and organized crime are determining factors in explaining this dynamic affecting young men, women and girls.

Bearing in mind that violence affects women and girls differently, the murder of women because of their gender, known as femicide, is reaching alarming levels in the region, and especially affects young women. Of the 25 countries with the highest rates of femicide in the world, 14 are in Latin America and the Caribbean².

On the other hand, hate crimes against young people on the basis of their sex, sexual orientation or gender identity, as well as the threat of forced recruitment have become one of the main causes of displacement within the region.

¹ SDG 16: "Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels".

² Global burden of armed violence 2011, Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development, pg. 119 http://www.genevadeclaration.org/fileadmin/docs/GBAV2/GBAV2011_CH4_rev.pdf.

One of the keys to resolving these challenges will be the development of strategies for the prevention of violence (in all its forms) that directly and indirectly affect youth and the peaceful resolution of conflicts.

Reducing **inequalities** is one of the major priorities of the region, considering that it is the most unequal region in the world. The inequalities that exist in the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean result in the exclusion and marginalization of young people. Although there has been an improvement in economic, education and health indicators, these advances remain far from universal and the intergenerational and intragenerational gaps deepen, resulting in situations of exclusion.

Integration of young people in the work force is, in general, quite precarious, with negative consequences on their social protection. Adolescents and young people find serious limitations to their sexual and reproductive rights. An example of this is the high rates of adolescent pregnancy, early marriages and civil unions, HIV infections or sexual violence, which increase their vulnerability.

In addition, the transition of young people between school and the workforce is complex in the region, resulting in a high percentage of very precarious jobs. In this sense, one of the challenges would be to consolidate the social protection system to boost human capital, reduce the effects of inequality and ensure that no one is left behind.

Democratic, inclusive and effective **governance** is a growing demand in the region, with rights to participation, transparency and access to justice that must be respected and guaranteed by the states. Youth have been proactive in identifying solutions to development challenges and it would therefore be ideal to involve young people in decision-making processes that emphasize equal opportunities, ensuring participation regardless of nationality, migration status, ethnic, racial or cultural origin and/or sexual diversity, gender or any other type of discrimination at the local, national and global levels.

As a result, innovation and critical thinking in all age groups and the capacity to generate transformational change would be encouraged.

2. General Objectives of the Consultation

- Gather the voices of youth involved in peacebuilding on issues of peace and security in Latin America and the Caribbean, in order to support the implementation of Resolution 2250 in the region and as a contribution to the Progress Study in accordance with the mandated established by the Resolution.
- Identify the challenges that youth face regarding peace and security in Latin America and the Caribbean, and generate alternative mechanisms to address them in order to contribute to peace and security.

3. Specific Objectives

- Identify the main issues regarding peace and security that are of interest to the youth and that affect them directly in a regional, national or local context.
- Discuss perspectives, challenges and priorities to support the active participation of men and women, taking into account their diversity, conflict prevention, social cohesion, conflict transformation and local and national peacebuilding.
- Identify recommendations for the Progress Study.
- Share work experiences on youth and peacebuilding at the country level that may be relevant for the region.
- Generate a youth network that promotes the active inclusion of young people in peace and security processes at the local, national and regional levels.

4. Profile of Participants

The selection criteria seek to represent youth in their social, political and cultural diversity, as well as facilitate the access of women and men from different countries. Some of the requirements are listed below:

- Young people between the ages of 18-29.
- Equitable participation of men and women.
- They must be young leaders who are involved in peace and security issues at local, regional, national or global levels.
- Experience in initiatives and areas of work related to some of the following topics:
 - Promotion, awareness-building and defence of human rights.
 - Development cooperation.
 - Humanitarian action.
 - Building and strengthening of peace processes.
 - Social cohesion and social fabric recovery.
 - Local and national governance processes.
 - Activism at the individual or civil society level: advocacy and political impact.
 - Prevention of youth violence: gangs.
 - Reconciliation and access to justice.
 - Citizen security.
 - Gender violence, especially sexual violence.



- Promotion of gender equality.
- Promotion, awareness-building and defence of human rights, with emphasis on sexual and reproductive rights.
- Priority will be given to young people from organizations, movements, initiatives and networks led by young people, who will make up the majority of the participants.
- Every effort should be made to ensure the diversity of participants, including young people from diverse socio-economic/ethnic backgrounds, from rural and urban areas, LGBTI persons, migrants, refugees and stateless persons.

5. Consultation Format

The consultation will take place over a period of 4 days and will address the following topics:

- Youth perspectives on "peace and security".
- Youth-led activities and initiatives for peace and security in Latin America and the Caribbean.
- Opportunities, factors and challenges to the participation of young people in the peace and security agendas.
- Youth recommendations for the Youth, Peace and Security agenda.

In addition, the consultation will offer an opportunity for young people to get to know other peace and security processes currently underway in the region.

This event would not be possible without the collaboration and exchange amongst the following organizations: OAS, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNHCR, UN Peacebuilding Support Office, UN Volunteers and UN Women.





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6. Agenda (draft)

Time	Sunday 28 May	Monday 29 May	Tuesday 30 May	Wednesday 31 May	Thursday 1 st June
8:30 - 09:00	Arrivals	Opening and Welcome ceremony	Opening	Opening	
09:00 - 10:00		Introductions and Group Formation	Youth Initiatives in Peace and Security	Recommendations for the youth, peace and security agenda	Field trip
10:00 - 10:30		Coffee Break		Coffee Break	
10:30 - 12:00		Group training and team work	Identification of opportunities and challenges for youth participation in peace and security	Recommendations for the youth, peace and security agenda	Field trip
12:00 - 13:30		Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
13:30 - 15:00		Perspectives on Peace and Security	Identification of opportunities and challenges for youth participation in peace and security	Youth, peace and security Initiatives	Departure
15:00 - 16:30		UNSCR 2250: Introduction	Youth perspectives on the challenges and priorities for peace and security	Youth, peace and security Initiatives	
16:30 - 17:00		Coffee Break	Coffee Break	Coffee Break	
17:00 - 18:30		Informal Welcome	UNSCR 2250: Relevance within my context	Youth perspectives on the challenges and priorities for peace and security	
18:30 - 19:00			Reflection	Reflection	
19:00	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	