



Youth, Peace & Security in the Europe and
Central Asia Region:
A Consultation and Dialogue
23-25 May 2017, Istanbul, Turkey



Background

In December of 2015, the Security Council adopted the groundbreaking Resolution 2250, on Youth, Peace and Security. For the first time, the UN Security Council recognized the **positive role young people can and do play in conflict prevention, the prevention of violent extremism and peacebuilding**. The Resolution was championed by Jordan, and adopted unanimously.

[United Nations Security Council Resolution \(UNSCR\) 2250 \(2015\)](#) is premised on the fact that governments and the multilateral system have been challenged in effectively accessing, working with and fully including young people in peacebuilding, prevention efforts and decision-making at all levels.

UN SCR 2250 mandates 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 to present the results of the Progress Study to Member States of the United Nations. The Study is being undertaken as an independent, evidence-based and participatory research process, and will produce an operational report proposing a forward-looking agenda for the international community. It will provide the evidence of young women and young men’s engagement on peace and security issues and help overturn the negative stereotypes surrounding youth in conflict by highlighting and promoting young people’s active and positive contributions to sustaining peace.

The Europe and Central Asia Consultation is part of a series of regional consultations for the Progress Study. It will also be an important opportunity to support a strategic dialogue between young people working on peace and security issues, civil society organizations, and regional partners and institutions on UNSCR 2250 to support concrete change on the ground.

Europe and Central Asia Region

The youth¹ in the Europe and Central Asia (ECA) region numbers around 58 million (51% male, 49% female) comprising nearly 30%² of the total population. Recent studies in the region, including in particular the country analyses informing the formulation of new UN Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAF), identified increasing youth challenges including in the areas of employment and enterprise development, which have strong links to migration trends; higher education including vocational education and training to strengthen skills matching with private sector needs; engagement and participation in national and local decision-making including in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programmes that affect them; leadership development and knowledge building; psychosocial and healthy lifestyle support; and networking, among others.

In the last decade, the UN has initiated various action plans and strategies in recognition of the important role that youths play in development processes, and the challenges they face in performing

¹ The *United Nations*, for statistical purposes, defines 'youth', as those persons between the ages of 15 and 24. In the ECA region, each country has country-specific youth definitions, starting from 14 years old up to 31 years old in some cases.

² Source: UN Statistics Division (<http://unstats.un.org>) 2011-2013 data and population from 15-29 years old. Data from Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan are from 2003, and Kazakhstan from 2008.

active and productive roles in societies³. Most recently, the [*Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*](#) noted the need for all countries to “provide youth with nurturing environment for the full realization of their rights and capabilities”, including to address youth vulnerabilities, employment, and access to life-long learning opportunities. SDG16 (*Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels*) in particular provides an over-arching and cross-cutting goal to support, empower and institutionalize the role of the youth, not only for SDG16 but for all the other SDGs.

As in other regions, Europe and Central Asia has recently been shaken by terrorism-related events. In the majority of cases, perpetrators were under 35 years old and driven by violent ideologies. A narrative in the public discourse treating young people—and young men especially—as potential threats or as burdens, followed. The vast majority of young people, however, do not and will not become affiliated with militant groups. Many are actively engaged as activists, organizers, leaders and researchers attempting to find ways to prevent the rise and influence of violence and violent extremism by fostering tolerance and peace within and beyond their immediate environment. Young people’s force for peace must be tapped into for the benefit of their communities, including through implementation of the UNSCR 2250.

Overall goals of the consultation

The meeting aims to consult young people from Europe and Central Asia region on peace and security issues, in order to provide a regional perspective for the successful implementation of UNSCR 2250, to gather inputs for the Progress Study mandated by the Resolution (including the gathering of evidence on innovative peacebuilding in the region), and to create an action plan for the continuation, and promotion, of peacebuilding and social cohesion efforts in the Europe and Central Asia Region, to be developed and further led by participants at the consultation including youth-led organisations, youth activists and NGO/INGO/CSOs and UN agency partners.

This meeting is being convened by UNDP and UNFPA in partnership with the Peacebuilding Support Office.

The workshop will both work to chart a way forward with young peacebuilders in the Europe and Central Asia region, as well as broadcast their voices at the highest level through engagement on the Progress Study. This will be an opportunity to discuss and decide with young peacebuilders the best way forward to address the challenges they face and introduce the proposed roadmap to practitioners and decision-makers, creating a space for fruitful regional dialogue on young people’s positive contributions to peace and security. An e-discussion on the role of young people’s participation in peacebuilding in the Europe and Central Asia region will also be hosted on the global www.youth4peace.info platform,⁴ to inform and complement those efforts.

³ These include: i) the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and beyond (1995); ii) Lisbon Declaration on Youth Policies and Programmes (1998); iii) the UNSG Five-Year Action Agenda which included addressing the needs of the youth; iv) the establishment of the SG Envoy on Youth and the UN Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development; v) the Baku Ten-Point commitment and Call for Action arising from the First Global Forum on Youth Policies; and vi) the UNDP Youth Strategy 2014-2017, among others.

⁴ Launched in 2016, Youth4peace.info is a one-stop shop supporting UNSCR 2250 implementation, available for young peacebuilders, UN system, civil society and all stakeholders (hosting online consultations as well in the context of the Progress Study)

Specific Objectives and Agenda

Days 1 & 2 – A Youth Consultation for and with young peacebuilders, dedicated to the exchange of experiences, programmatic practices and formulation of recommendations

- Identify the main peace and security-related issues that matter to and affect young people in their region, country or local context;
- Discuss gaps, barriers, challenges and priorities to promote and support young women and men's active involvement in conflict prevention, social cohesion, conflict transformation and peacebuilding, sustaining peace in the region/country;
- Collect in-depth information on young people's activities and initiatives to build peace and prevent violence;
- Identify recommendations for the Progress Study and for follow-up at the local/national/regional levels from policy and programming angles.

Day 3 – Moving Forward - utilizing peacebuilding concepts, innovative ideas and training on how to build positive peace

- Establish a common understanding of how peacebuilding and security-related issues are defined in various contexts;
- Build capacity of participants on effective strategies and skills on peacebuilding.
- Discuss how to further work together, and collaborate across countries, to create positive eco-systems for youth engagement in conflict prevention and peacebuilding activities, key lessons learned and the way forward;
- Engage with development partners on youth development and peacebuilding;
- Form a regional youth-peacebuilding network to support the Regional UN Issue-Based Coalition on Adolescents and Youth for knowledge exchange, joint work, advocacy and coordination.

Information related to the consultation will be shared via social media (#youth4peace) and the [Youth4Peace Global Knowledge Portal](#) (global.youth4peace.info).

Participants

Participants will include equal number of young men and young women between 18 to 31 years of age, involved in peacebuilding activities and/or activism and youth-led organizations working on peacebuilding, which is understood in a broad sense such as peace processes, social cohesion, reconciliation, violence reduction, transitional justice, political participation, preventing violent extremism, security sector reform, disarmament demobilization and reintegration, or other relevant humanitarian areas. The organizers will select other panelists, facilitators, INGOs and NGOS, peacebuilding experts, and partners active in the region.

The driving principle for the duration of this event will be to create a safe space for meaningful dialogue with young peacebuilders from Europe and Central Asia region. Given the regional context, participants will be considered and identified through the following modalities:

- Inviting applications from country-level youth organizations involved in peace and security, particularly from among [youth-led peacebuilding organizations](#) identified by the United Network of Young Peacebuilders
- Nominations from UN offices in the region in consultation with national institutions

Please see **Annex A** (Guide for Applications) for further information on the application process.



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Agenda
(draft of 11 April 2017)

| Date/Time | Activity/Session | Remarks |
|---|---|--|
| Day 0: Monday, 22 May | | |
| Daytime | Arrival of participants; check-in; registration | |
| Evening | Introductions and Social Activity | |
| Day 1: Tuesday, 23 May | | |
| 0830 – 0900 | Registration | |
| 0900 – 1030 | Session 1: Setting the Stage: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welcome Remarks, UNDP/UNFPA• Introduction and Ice breaker• Housekeeping Rules• SCR 2250 presentation | |
| 1030 – 1045 | Break | |
| 1045 – 1145 | Session 2: What is peace, security, conflict, and violence? | This session will help set the stage for the scope of the discussions by providing a common understanding of how young men and women perceive these concepts |
| 1145 – 1245 | Session 3: Gender, peace and security | This session will help understand and analyze peace and security challenges from a gender perspective |
| 1245 – 1400 | Lunch | |
| 1400 – 1700 (including coffee break from 1530 – 1545) | Session 4: Sharing of youth-led initiatives to build peace and prevent violence | This will take the form of interactive sharing of initiatives among participants (e.g., knowledge-fair) to include knowledge sharing on available youth platforms, tools, materials at country, regional and global levels |
| 1700 -- 1700 | Evaluation and programming for the following day | Organizers and Facilitators |

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| Evening | Social Activity | Need facilitators for this activity including from among the participants |
| Day 2: Wednesday, 24 May | | |
| 0900 -- 1200 | Session 5: Identifying critical challenges and opportunities for peace and security in the region | This session will identify and analyze peace and security issues from youth perspective by identifying root causes and drivers for change |
| 1200 -- 1300 | Lunch | |
| 1300 – 1600 (including coffee break at 1500) | Session 6: Developing context-specific actionable recommendations on youth, peace and security including creative presentations | This session will allow participants to break into country- and/or thematic-groups to identify context-specific plans of action. Presentations will be through creatives (e.g., role play, visuals, etc.). |
| 1600 | Free time | |
| 1600 -- 1630 | Evaluation and programming for the following day | Organizers and Facilitators |
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| Day 3: Thursday, 25 May | | |
| 0900 -- 10300 | Session 7: Interactive panel discussion with high level experts on youth and security/PVE issues | This session will provide the opportunity for the participants to engage with experts working on these issues |
| 1030 -- 1045 | Break | |
| 1045 -- 1230 | Session 8: Developing a regional roadmap for youth, peace and security: recommendations for the Progress Study | This session aims to put together the recommendations developed in Session 7 into a region-specific roadmap and set of recommendations for the study |
| 1230 -- 1330 | Lunch | |
| -1330 -- 1530 | Session 9: Partnership and Networking | This session will feature interaction with development partners in the country/region who are working on youth issues as part of |

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| | | networking and potential partnerships |
| 1530 -- 1545 | Break | |
| 1545 -- 1630 | <p>Session 10: Closing and Next Steps</p> <p>Closing remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNFPA • UNDP | |
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