

Ministerial Meeting
Reaffirming Commitment to Youth, Peace and Security Agenda
Concept Note

Security Council Resolution 2250 is the first resolution of the Council fully dedicated to recognizing the important and positive role that young women and men play in the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security.

In order to sustain the momentum for empowering the role of youth and their constructive contribution to peace and security, a Ministerial Meeting will be organized at the United Nations Headquarters (CR3) on September 21, 2017 at 10:00 – 12:00. The Meeting will be co-chaired by Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates of Jordan Mr. Ayman Safadi and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Norway Mr. Børge Brende.

The United Nations Security Council Resolution 2250, which was led by Jordan and adopted unanimously on December 9, 2015, marked a historic turning point in engaging youth much more genuinely and systematically than we have before. The Resolution was adopted in the wake of the Open Debate on “The Role of Youth in Countering Violent Extremism and Building Peace” organized in April 2015 under the presidency of His Royal Highness Crown Prince of Jordan Al-Hussein bin Abdullah II. This Open Debate was also followed by the Global Forum on “Youth, Peace and Security” held in Jordan in August 2015 in partnership with the United Nations and civil society.

The Meeting will be honored by the participation of the Secretary General Mr. António Guterres. The UN Secretary-General’s first call at the beginning of this year “*Let us make 2017 a year for Peace*” highlighted complex global security challenges as well as political, economic and social challenges. This has created a momentum for bringing the crucial agenda of youth forward and explore how we can engage young women and men in playing active and positive roles in their societies to sustain peace, social stability and economic prosperity.

The Meeting will be co-hosted by the “Champions of Youth” Group: Austria, Bangladesh, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Mexico, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Sweden, United States and the European Union.

Forging the future of youth now requires more than ever collaboration with them as equal partners on terms that are more fitting of the current circumstances. Immense efforts; inter alia, events, reports, programs, initiatives and discussions, were exerted to recognize the role, which youth already play, and further empower them as well as enhance their engagement in shaping their lives and future. However, greater efforts and actions are still needed to enhance the role of youth in a way that matches their realities on the ground and global challenges affecting their development. This includes opening up spaces that are currently not accessible to them, and to close the gap between policy, action and implementation.

The current youth generation constitutes the largest percentage in several regions; for example in some countries, such as Jordan, over 70% of the population are below the age of 30. Given this vast number, a greater attention and support should be given to invest in strengthening youth's capacities, to provide quality education and job opportunities, and to build more resilient societies to radicalization and violent extremism through youth engagement and strategic communication efforts as well as to sustain peace.

The recognition of youth as positive actors in their societies is still absent or not highlighted enough. This entails collective global efforts to address the surge in uncertainty amongst youth about their future opportunities and wellbeing, as well as to support, protect and empower youth who are often targets of hateful and violent extremist acts and rhetoric. It is necessary to bolster states and communities capabilities to prevent the spread of hate and violent extremist ideology which is conducive to terrorism. Efforts should also be enhanced to overcome religious, cultural and sectarian differences, lack of trust in youth abilities, marginalization, and social-economic-political exclusion of youth. To achieve this, it is of great value to address the rise in hate incidents and other threats to vulnerable categories, such as young people, through preventing them from happening in the first place, building the culture of peace, and empowering the ideals of tolerance, inclusion and dialogue.

Furthermore, narratives portraying youth as self-absorbed and a source of worry and trouble do not only affect youth as important partners in their societies but they contribute to generating fear and discouragement among youth that will prevent them from exercising a positive role. These narratives should be countered by generating favorable conditions for meaningful engagement of youth being the source of solution and part of the progress of their communities, in particular in core issues that matter most to them such as sustaining peace, peacebuilding, education, health, employment and human rights.

It is true that young people should responsibly undertake their role in shaping their own future and contributing to sustaining peace, development and peacebuilding, which many of them already do. At the same time these young men and woman should be provided with sufficient resources as well as a solid and honest basis for hope to undertake

this role. Governments, regional and international organizations, policy makers, civil society, media, religious leaders and educators are all potential constructive forces for promoting an active participation of youth, for protecting them, and for exploring their strengths and building on them.

The Main Objectives of the Meeting

- **Reaffirming commitment to the implementation of UNSCR 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security.** The Meeting will create a high level platform for Member States and UN agencies to reflect their commitment to achieve the goals and objectives set forth in the resolution at all levels, and to reiterate the importance to establish a build-up process of discussion and follow up. The resolution represents an unprecedented acknowledgement of the urgent need to engage both young men and women in conflict resolution, peacebuilding, reconciliation, and preventing and countering violent extremism.
- **Announcing officially the establishment of the “Champions of Youth” Group.** This Group, which so far includes 22 countries and one regional organization, was established to ensure that political commitment is sustained and enhanced to strengthen the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda. It represents a valued partnership among Member States who are willing to be a dynamic force to promote the active participation of youth in peace and conflict resolution.
- **Affirming support for the Progress Study on Youth, Peace and Security that was mandated by UNSCR 2250.** The Study is a global, independent, evidence-based, forward-thinking and sustainable research process, and will produce an operational report for the international community. The study will provide a long term and forward-looking strategy for the implementation of UNSCR 2250 and guidance for Member States and other actors to strengthen the design of more innovative policies and programmes to foster the positive impact of youth. The development of the Study is supported by a joint PBSO/UNFPA Secretariat. Upon conclusion of the Progress Study, which is expected during the first half of 2018, a report will be presented by the Secretary-General to the Security Council and all Member States of the United Nations. Member States may discuss ways to support the efforts of the UN towards achieving the Progress Study, including through political and/or financial support.

The Ministerial Meeting will be followed by a side event with the theme of “*Youth-led Peacebuilding: Lessons from the Field*”. This event will be held in (CR6) on September 21, 2017 from 15:00 – 18:00, and will be chaired and run by one of the leading non-governmental peacebuilding organizations in Jordan “Generations for Peace”. This event will provide a unique space for showcasing, sharing, and exchanging of best practices in engaging youth, as well as it will identify ways to strengthen youth leadership and resilience.

Looking forward to all Member States active engagement at this significant meeting, and it would be appreciated if delegations could kindly confirm their participation and level of representation at the meeting to Mr. Ahmed Ramadneh (ramadneh@live.com, Tel: 212 832 9553 ext. 235). For any other inquiries on the meeting, please contact Counsellor Sonia Sughayar (sonia.ny14@gmail.com).

Format:

The event will be held in English, and will proceed as follows:

Opening Remarks:

- H.E. Mr. Ayman Safadi, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates of Jordan (*5min*)
- H.E. Mr. António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations (*5min*)
- H.E. Mr. Børge Brende, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Norway (*5min*)

Briefers:

- Ms. Jayathama Wickramanayake, Secretary-General’s Special Envoy on Youth (*3min*)
- Mr. Graeme Simpson, Lead Author of the Progress Study on Youth, Peace and Security (*3min*)

Youth Briefers:

- Ms. Hajer Sharief, Co-founder of “Together We Build it” Association in Libya (*3min*)
- Ms. Milja Suihko, Vice-chair and the International Committee Coordinator of the UN Youth of Finland (*3min*)

Co-hosts:

- Interventions by Co-hosts/ Champions of Youth Group (*2min each*)

Participants:

- Interventions by Member States, heads of UN entities and civil society partners (*1min each*)