

12 August 2007

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

The purpose of this letter is to support the efforts of young people to promote the participation of youth delegates in their national delegations to the United Nations.

Member States of the United Nations have long recognized that the imagination, energy and ideals of young people are vital for the continuing development of the societies in which they live. In 1995, on the tenth anniversary of International Youth Year, the United Nations formally strengthened its commitment to young people by adopting the World Programme of Action for Youth (A/RES/50/81).

One of the priorities of the Programme of Action is to support the participation of youth in decision-making. In particular, the Programme invites Governments to strengthen the involvement of young people in international forums through the inclusion of youth representatives in their national delegations to the General Assembly (A/RES/50/81, para. 107). The Assembly has renewed this invitation in subsequent resolutions (A/RES/52/83, 54/120, 56/117, 58/133, 59/148) and in 2005, urged Member States to consider being represented by youth representatives (A/RES/60/2, para. 9).

We support youth participation in the work of the United Nations because it leads to more inclusive and effective policy and programmatic responses to the problems facing young people such as unemployment, gender imbalances, armed conflict and HIV/AIDS. Not only do youth delegates enrich the debate and policy dialogue, but they also strengthen channels of communication and cooperation with Governments.

The role of a youth delegate at the United Nations differs from country to country. In past instances, youth delegates have delivered statements in the Third Committee of the General Assembly on issues important to young people. Youth have participated in the general work of their Missions, attending meetings, informal negotiations and providing assistance in monitoring general debates and drafting reports. Some youth delegates have collaborated with their Governments to implement the World Programme of Action for Youth and supported related Government programmes and projects.

We are convinced that youth delegates are a valuable resource for promoting overall development. Their example encourages other young people to participate more fully in their nation's development as concerned citizens.

We hope you can support the participation of young people in your national delegation at the General Assembly in accordance with United Nations General Assembly resolutions. For additional information on how to initiate the process to have youth delegates at the United Nations, please contact us at the United Nations Programme on Youth.

Yours sincerely,



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