Concept note of Side Event
Remembrance and learning from World War II

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organizers</th>
<th>National Youth Council of Russia</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date and Time</td>
<td>8 April 2019 13.15-14.30</td>
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<td>Venue</td>
<td>Conference Room 9 (tbc), UNHQ</td>
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<td>Target audience</td>
<td>Youth representatives, UN entities, member states, non-governmental organizations, including youth NGOs and NGOs that work in the field of human rights education/education related to preserving historical memory, anyone interested in discussing this topic.</td>
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BACKGROUND

The United Nations was founded in 1945 after World War II in order to maintain international peace and security, foster friendly relations among nations, promote social progress and development, improve living standards and human rights situation. The Preamble of the UN Charter underlines the determination of the peoples of the United Nations “to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war”.

For the last years, we are witnessing an unprecedented and large-scale campaign aimed at politicizing and rewriting the history of World War II for the sake of political agenda. Such immoral actions lead to the rise of xenophobia, aggressive nationalism and various manifestations of intolerance. Ultimately, these undermine the international security architecture and the international system of protection and promotion of human rights. The war had clearly shown what could be the consequences of violence and racial intolerance, genocide and abuse. It is the task of the young generation to preserve the memory of our common history and prevent the repetition of those tragic events.

Remembrance is of great importance for young people, especially outside the classroom, as non-formal education and informal learning play a crucial role in strengthening the historical memory. Youth is the primary target group of remembrance activities because it is important to engage them in fostering dialogue and promoting mutual understanding. Most of the youth organizations were established and are being established with the purpose to overcome hatred and prejudice; international solidarity and intercultural dialogue should replace nationalistic and xenophobic perceptions.

Education in the field of historical memory preservation and related initiatives that engage youth, are organized for and by youth play a crucial role in preserving the memory of the tragic events of the past and promoting the respect for human rights, which is important in order to ensure that the horrors of World War II and crimes against humanity do not occur again.

In the face of rising populism, extreme right-wing movements and violence, it becomes even more important to learn from the past with regard to human rights, including through intercultural dialogue, and promoting peace, where commitments to and respect for human rights are getting a greater significance.

OBJECTIVES:
The event aims to draw attention of youth from different countries to the issue of preserving historical memory and promoting the creation of a shared and deeper understanding of the reasons, consequences and lessons to be learned from World War II, in order to maintain peace and security, as well as to take effective collective measures for the prevention and elimination of threats to peace.
This topic becomes particularly relevant in the light of the upcoming 75th anniversary of the end of World War II in the year 2020. Within the framework of the side event, the participants will have a chance to discuss the opportunity of holding a series of youth activities in different countries on this occasion.

**Topics for discussion:**

- ways to raise awareness regarding the events of World War II;
- challenges related to the issues of remembrance and teaching history, including falsification and manipulation of historical facts;
- exchange of experience in holding youth events aimed at preserving historical memory of World War II;
- opportunities to create an enabling environment for a continuous intergenerational and international youth dialogue on World War II.

**Speakers**

- National Youth Council of Russia,
- Largest youth organizations of Russia,
- Advisory Council on Youth of the Council of Europe (tbd),
- Instituto Global Attitude (tbd),
- European Youth Forum (tbd),
- UN-Habitat Youth and Livelihood Unit and World Urban Youth Councils Network (tbd),
- Pan African Youth Union (tbd), etc.