



PRESIDENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY



CONCEPT NOTE

PGA's Informal Dialogue with UN Youth Delegates to the 61st Session of the Commission for Social Development:

*“A Youth-centric Discussion on Sustainable Transformations
for Environment, Education and Employment”*

6 February 2023, Dag Hammarskjöld Library | 13:15-14:45

Young people are among the groups most affected by inequalities and challenges of access to education, health services and decent work. However, they are not merely victims or spectators, but indispensable actors to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, developing and implementing transformative solutions.

As part of his effort and commitment to galvanize meaningful youth engagement within the United Nations, the President of the seventy-seventh session of the General Assembly will convene an informal dialogue with Youth Delegates to the 61st Session of the Commission for Social Development. This event follows the first informal dialogue with Youth Delegates to the General Assembly, held in October 2022. **It will take place fully in-person at the second floor of the Dag Hammarskjöld Library of the United Nations Headquarters in New York, on Monday, 6 February 2023 from 13:15 to 14:45.**

Background

Climate change, pandemics, and armed conflicts are unfortunate examples of current interlocking crises. Humans suffer from these crises, and yet play an inextricable role in their creation, bearing responsibility for current and future generations. This new chapter of world history is amalgamating demands on environmental, social, economic and digital aspects of development.

As the President of the seventy-seventh session of the General Assembly asserted in his vision statement, “We need urgent yet consistent action guided by shared goals, a transformation through scientific, technological and economic development and international cooperation.” This informal dialogue aims to bring the General Assembly closer to *how* to achieve that transformation by incorporating a youth-centric perspective

Pursuant to various resolutions adopted by the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, and other subsidiary bodies, the United Nations and its Member States acknowledged many times the key role of youth as a driver for peace, sustainable development and human rights. This year, more than ever, the United Nations mechanisms are

aligning to ensure youth engagement to address current issues. Those specifically related to the field of social development call for a comprehensive vision, requiring urgent consideration in the context of global challenges.

As crucial and active contributors to peaceful, just and inclusive societies, young people are facing inadequate investments in human capital. The consequence is high unemployment rates and their derived effects. According to an International Labor Organization (ILO) report, the global number of unemployed youths is around 73 million in 2022. Although there is a narrow improvement compared to 2021 (75 million), the number in 2022 was still six million above the pre-pandemic level of 2019.

Harnessing the abilities of young people to contribute to global solutions requires an enabling and innovative environment. Youth employment is strongly linked to access to education, health, and digital technology. While it is acknowledged that access is crucial for youth empowerment, aspects such as the transition from school to work, digital skills, and civic engagement should be addressed *by youth, for youth*.

In this context, recognizing the importance of spaces established for meaningful and inclusive youth participation, this discussion aims to be more substantive than on previous occasions. Rather than repeating calls for a seat at the table, the informal dialogue is an opportunity to *bring solutions to the table*, in line with CSocD61's priority theme: "Creating full and productive employment and decent work for all as a way of overcoming inequalities to accelerate the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development"

Objectives

The President of the General Assembly is keen on emphasizing the decision-shaper role of all stakeholders, while reaffirming that Member States are the decision-makers. Perspectives, experiences and initiatives owned and led by youth are heterogeneous by nature. As such, they are unique contributions not only to the ongoing processes during the current session of the General Assembly, but also to creating new pathways for sustainable transformations. To that end, this informal event is a space for Youth Delegates, chosen by their respective governments to participate in multilateral discussions, to share their ideas and actionable recommendations, building on to the previous dialogue between the President of the General Assembly and Youth Delegates to the General Assembly.

The meeting will aim to:

- Strengthen the **full, equal and meaningful participation of youth** in the work of the General Assembly;
- Deepen **complementarities** between the work of **ECOSOC functional commissions** and the **General Assembly**;
- Discuss ways to ensure the visibility of **youth's priorities** regarding **environment, education and employment**;
- Exchange views on **concrete proposals** of young people with regards to the **deliberations on the ongoing intergovernmental processes** of the General Assembly;
- Explore avenues of incorporating **data and science** in the policy and decision-making processes towards sustainable transformations from the perspectives of youth;

- Discuss proven best practices to promote **youth education, capacity building and decent employment**, particularly for youth in the most marginalized situations.

Guiding questions

- The General Assembly is in the process of negotiating a *Declaration on Future Generations*. In your view, what are the responsibilities of current generations towards future generations as they relate to environment, education and employment?
- Your generation has lived through its first pandemic with COVID-19. The General Assembly will hold a High-level meeting on pandemic preparedness and response this year. What is the role of youth in preparing for future pandemics?
- What concrete proposals do you have as youth delegates as the international community prepares the “building blocks” of the SDG Summit in 2023 and the Summit of the Future in 2024? How will these help to meet your expectations?
- The UN will hold the first Water Conference since 1977. In your view, how is your generation placed to address the crises of drought, flooding, and water pollution? What can youth delegates do to promote greater awareness on this critical topic?

Participation

Accredited Youth Delegates from the Permanent and Observer Missions who are present in New York for the 61st Session of the Commission for Social Development of ECOSOC.

Format

This will be an informal, in-person discussion, with opening remarks by the President of the General Assembly followed by an interactive dialogue with Youth Delegates. There is no preestablished list of speakers. There will be no assigned seating in the Dag Hammarskjöld Library and Youth Delegates will be invited to introduce themselves when taking the floor. A light lunch will be served. A group photo will follow the discussion.

The Permanent Missions are kindly requested to register the participation of their Youth Delegate(s) and direct any queries by email to Ms. Zeynep Çelikel (zeynep.celikel@un.org), Adviser at the Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs Team of the Office of President of the General Assembly, no later than 10:00 am on 3 February 2023.