



THE PRESIDENT
OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

9 March 2015

Excellency,

I am pleased to inform you that I will convene a High-Level Event of the General Assembly, on 29 May 2015 to commemorate the 20th Anniversary of the World Programme of Action for Youth.

The high-level event will provide an opportunity for Member States and stakeholders to exchange views, in an interactive and participatory manner on the progress achieved over the last 20 years, and on the priorities of the youth in the post-2015 development agenda. A copy of the Concept Note is attached and a provisional programme will be availed in due course.

My office will liaise and coordinate with the Secretary-General's Youth Envoy in preparations for the high-level event.

I have the honour to invite Member States to participate at the highest possible level.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurance of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sam K. Kutesa'.

Sam K. Kutesa

All Permanent Representatives and
Permanent Observers to the United Nations
New York

Concept Note

The high level event of the President of the General Assembly marking the 20th Anniversary of the World Programme of Action for Youth to highlight Youth Priorities in the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

Background

In 1995, Member States of the United Nations adopted the “World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and beyond” (WPAY). In 2005, the United Nations General Assembly marked the 10th anniversary of WPAY, which included a review by Governments of the achievements in the implementation of this landmark document since 1995.

Important progress has been made in promoting youth development since the adoption of WPAY. The document provides the United Nations a crucial policy framework which offers practical guidelines for national action and international support to improve the situation of youth around the world and constitutes the global blueprint for effective national youth policies. The fifteen priority areas¹ identified in the WPAY are closely interdependent and required for the full and effective development of young people.

Successive resolutions and initiatives have further energized the youth development agenda and reaffirmed this commitment to youth by encouraging policies and programmes involving youth, as well as promoting youth participation in social and economic development with 127 countries having adopted a national youth policy as of October 2014, up from 99 in January 2013.

Member States have recognized the importance of this link, including in the 2015 Commission for Social Development Resolution on Programmes and Policies involving Youth in which the Commission “calls upon Member States to give due consideration to youth issues in all appropriate aspects of the post-2015 development agenda”. This statement further underlines the importance of closely consulting with and actively involving youth and youth organizations in the implementation of the upcoming post-2015 development agenda.

A comprehensive communications strategy which was launched in February of 2015 will draw momentum to the Special Session and will include multi-media, digital engagement and traditional media visibility. As part of this

¹ The 15 priority areas include: education; employment; hunger and poverty; health; environment; substance abuse; youth in conflict with the law; leisure-time activities; girls and young women; full and effective participation of youth in the life of society and in decision making; globalization; information and communications technology; HIV/AIDS; armed conflict; and intergenerational issues.

strategy the #YouthNow Campaign, hosted on the website of the President of the General Assembly (<http://www.un.org/pga/youth/>) marks the 20th Anniversary of the World Programme of Action for Youth leading up to a Special Session of the General Assembly.

Objective

The main objective of the Special Session of the General Assembly is to mark the 20th Anniversary of the World Programme of Action on Youth (WPAY) and offer an important opportunity for Member States and other relevant stakeholders to take stock of progress made in its implementation, identify the gaps and challenges ahead while discussing the best way forward for the full, effective and accelerated implementation of this ground-breaking agreement.

The special session will also:

- 1) Seek to encourage Member States and other relevant stakeholders, including youth-led organizations to implement the WPAY by developing forward-looking programmes and policies grounded in its priority areas.
- 2) Pay special attention to the need to strengthen monitoring of the implementation of WPAY, including through the collection, analysis and dissemination of, reliable, comparable and relevant data on a continuous basis.
- 3) Contribute to the deliberations on the ongoing intergovernmental negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda both by examining the potential of youth to contribute to its design, and by focusing on areas relevant to youth development that can be advanced by the post-2015 development agenda, as underscored in the World Programme of Action for Youth.
- 4) Inform the discussions of the High Level Event of the PGA that will focus on the Demographic Dividend and Youth Employment to be held on 1 June 2015. It will build on the momentum created by the previous events organized by UN partners and other relevant stakeholders, including the First Global Forum on Youth Policies, the 2015 ECOSOC Youth Forum as well as national and regional level events.

Format

The Special Session of the General Assembly will be held on 29th May, 2015 in the General Assembly Hall. It will be a one-day event consisting of an opening

Plenary and morning session, two interactive panel discussions and a closing session.

(The detailed programme of events will be availed in due course).

The theme of the first Panel will focus on stocktaking for the past 20 years since the adoption of WPAY.

Some questions to guide the panel discussion are as follows:

1. Acknowledging the continued relevance of the WPAY, what efforts can be made to enhance its role as a viable instrument for further mainstreaming youth issues in the Post-2015 agenda?
2. What is the role of youth and youth-led organizations in WPAY implementation and youth policy development, monitoring and evaluation?
3. What are some examples of successful implementation of the WPAY to date?

The theme of the second panel will focus on the Role of WPAY looking ahead.

Some questions to guide the panel discussion are as follows:

1. To what extent have the priority areas of the WPAY been incorporated into the new post-2015 development agenda?
2. What avenues of cooperation are available between policy-makers and youth-led organizations at both local and international levels in the implementation these policies?
3. How effective are the channels of communication on youth related issues?
4. What partnerships have been crucial and are necessary for the continued effective implementation of the WPAY moving into the Post-2015 agenda?

The Closing session will consist of a brief summary of the day's discussion and closing remarks.

Participation

Member States will be invited to participate at the level of highest official responsible for youth. In addition, Member States are encouraged to consider including youth delegates in their delegations as appropriate. The event will

also include representatives of UN entities, civil society, including youth-led and youth-focused organizations as well as other relevant stakeholders.

Outcome

The outcome will be a President's summary, which will be circulated to all Member States and other relevant stakeholders.