Informal Youth Working Group for the Summit of the Future

Submitted on the basis on consultations of over 300 youth from 75 countries, by a collective of United Nations Youth Delegates, youth, and youth-led organizations, networks, movements, and collectives, composed of, inter alia list in annex.

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Chapter IV. Youth and Future Generations

<u>**Meaningful Youth Engagement**</u>

1. **Standards:** Encourage the implementation of international standards for meaningful youth engagement, including those outlined in the Secretary-General's Policy Brief. Implement, in the strongest terms possible, all recommendations from all related resolutions adopted by the UN Security Council and other bodies such as but not limited to the General Assembly and the Human Rights Council, including the Youth2030 Strategy.
2. **Funding and resourcing:** Provide consistent support for youth advisory structures, ensuring their influence, resources, and financing. Allocate sustainable budgets for youth initiatives and ensure inclusive funding opportunities. Revitalize the UN Youth Fund for youth-led research initiatives, ensuring sustained financial support and avoiding dependency on ad-hoc funding.
3. **Youth in decision-making:** Ensure full, inclusive, effective, equitable, and meaningful engagement of youth in policy and decision-making. Urge Member States, United Nations entities and national structures to systematically integrate youth engagement through designated focal points in decision-making processes. Strengthen dedicated boards, councils, and networks by integrating young representatives into policymaking, decision-making, and agenda-setting in a representative and equitable manner.
4. **Education for decision-making:** Equip youth with essential policymaking and diplomatic skills by investing in capacity-building at all levels. Implement mentorship programs for intergenerational and peer learning. Prioritize diverse representation and adopt transformation literacy and decolonial approaches. Enable equitable access for youth to unbiased information especially in regard to education and an access to polling stations. End unpaid internships and expand fellowship programs that provide youth with knowledge and reskilling opportunities.
5. **Youth as advisors:** Establish dedicated youth councils or advisory boards composed of diverse representatives that leverage digital platforms, ensuring inclusivity regardless of geographic

location, to integrate youth perspectives into policymaking, building on the dedicated UN Youth Townhall.

6. **Dismantling barriers:** Dismantle structural and systematic barriers impeding meaningful youth engagement, including power imbalances, tokenization, harassment, and violence, especially for youth in rural areas, conflict zones, or facing humanitarian crises, environmental disasters, areas lacking reliable electricity or internet, insecurity, and youth who are migrants, with disabilities, facing multiple forms of discrimination, non-English speakers, and those out of education. Center these perspectives in policy-making, upholding their fundamental rights, including through easier and more equitable visa access and UN Grounds Passes for youth and youth-led organizations.

7. **UN Youth Delegates**: Urge Member States to expand UN Youth Delegate programmes and to provide long-term funding, ensuring that Youth Delegates have a suitable mandate to represent young people in their countries. Urge the United Nations to collaborate closely with Member States to address needs for regional and gender representation in the youth delegate programmes, providing capacity-building and support for the establishment of new Youth Delegate programmes.

8. **Evaluation:** Measure the effectiveness and impact of meaningful youth engagement in local, national, regional, and global decision-making processes by evaluating the extent to which youth perspectives are integrated into policies, tracking the implementation of youth-driven initiatives, measuring shifts in policy outcomes influenced by youth input, and quantifying the number and quality of opportunities provided to youth.

9. **Transparency at the UN:** Uphold transparency throughout decision-making processes, across the UN system, through expanding civic spaces, therefore ensuring that youth in all their diversity are meaningfully engaged through mechanisms to exercise vertical and horizontal accountability.

Quality Education

1. **Right to education:** Ensure that all children and youth have universal access to inclusive, equitable, safe, gender transformative, and quality education.

2. **Gender-transformative education:** Realize the right to education for women and girls, in all their diversity, especially those facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, eliminating all forms of gender-based violence and/or discriminatory attitudes, based on race, ethnicity, work and descent, sexual orientation and gender identity, or religion held by education personnel and fellow students that may also prevent access to and remaining in school.

3. **Comprehensive Sexuality Education:** Recognize the importance of age-appropriate, comprehensive, and inclusive sexuality education, based on scientific evidence and human rights.

4. **Inclusivity:** Commit to finance and strengthen policies for inclusive, quality, and lifelong education to eliminate all barriers for children and youth with disabilities and neurodiverse persons.

5. **Digital literacy**: Commit to closing the digital divide and removing gaps in secure and inclusive access to and use of technologies, connectivity, and digital literacy. Invest in digital education and inclusive learning models around emerging technologies, while emphasizing the importance of technical and vocational training and lifelong learning opportunities.

6. **Financial literacy:** Increase youth training in financial literacy, including resources, investments, loans, and options as a measured sustainable development practice by increasing the participation rate of youth and in formal and non-formal financial education and training.

Health and Well-being

1. **Mental health:** Implement measures to promote and improve mental health for youth, including young persons with disabilities and young neurodiverse persons, through providing disability inclusive and youth responsive support and treatment, addressing social determinants and other health needs, and fully respecting their human rights. Develop data-centric and crowdsourced mental health legislation that is tailored specifically to youth populations, in order to provide holistic and targeted support.
2. **Gender-transformative health:** Ensure the unimpeded access to sexual and reproductive health and rights services, including menstrual health and hygiene management, abortion services, prenatal and maternal health services, contraception, and other gynecological services. Guarantee autonomy for young women and girls, in all their diversity, to make choices about their bodies and protect themselves from health complications such as maternal mortality, or infectious disease, such as HIV/AIDS, calling for the protection of their human rights to decide on such matters, free from coercion and discrimination.

Youth, Peace, and Security

1. **Youth, Peace, Security:** Ensure the global, regional and national implementation of the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda (WPS) and the Youth, Peace, and Security Agenda (YPS).
2. **Reallocating funds**: Invest in the meaningful engagement of youth in processes relating to protection, prevention, partnerships, disengagement, reintegration, conflict resolution, peacebuilding, and resilience-building. Prioritize peace and humanitarian efforts, particularly for the safety and well-being of all children and youth, elevating their standards of security and prosperity. Counteract ongoing trends of militarisation by stopping the arms-race and funding peace efforts.
3. **YPS and Education:** Foster intergenerational dialogues and partnerships with youth through the provision and funding of educational resources and centers on peacebuilding, including in conflict settings, and creating secure spaces for youth engagement in peace processes. Develop and distribute accessible and inclusive educational resources for all youth and children affected by conflicts.
4. **Human Rights Defenders**: Implement existing international commitments, including international human rights and humanitarian law, strengthen accountability mechanisms, and ensure transparent governance, robust legislative oversight, public scrutiny, and effective legal frameworks to ensure the protection of youth and, inter alia, young activists, environmental advocates, human rights defenders, journalists, and peacebuilders, from violence, harassment, wrongful prosecution, misinformation, or censorship.
5. **Displaced youth and refugees:** Ensure that all children born into situations of displacement are afforded their rights, including access to citizenship, documentation, and registration. Ensure the

prioritization of funding for children born into and growing up in displacement camps and settlements globally, including for the provision of educational and health emergency programs.

Technology and Innovation

1. **Technology for decision-making:** Facilitate online platforms that allow for continuous consultation between youth and decision-makers, including through the use of social media, surveys, and other digital tools to gather input. Increase funding for youth-led research initiatives, including the provision of youth policy fellowships, to inform evidence-based policies with youth-driven data.

2. **Access to technology:** Ensure access for youth to new technologies which can help with climate adaptation and mitigation, such as green economies, space technology, and the use of ethical and responsible Artificial Intelligence.

3. **Emerging technologies:** Establish international regulations of emerging technologies, and encourage the enforcement of such regulations that establish the protections of children and youth. Ensure robust protections that reflect just labor transitions amidst technological transformations.

4. **Online harassment:** Implement robust and user-friendly reporting mechanisms for online harassment and abuse, ensuring that victims can report incidents and access support services. Protect youth, in all their diversity, from, inter alia, cyber violence, psychological violence, and online sexual and gender-based violence.

5. **Privacy protection:** Implement robust privacy regulations to safeguard personal data. Ensure compliance with international standards on data protection for the responsible and respectful handling of information. Establish a global advisory body of youth representatives and relevant stakeholders to ensure the effective implementation of frameworks on human rights in the digital age.

6. **Digital connectivity:** Invest in infrastructure to deliver affordable and quality digital connectivity to eliminate the digital divide, bridge geographical gaps, facilitate education, and provide access to information and opportunities, especially for youth in remote and rural communities. Ensure that technological mechanisms created are rooted in and informed by the realities of the countries and communities which they are meant to serve.

7. **Gender and STEM:** Eliminate the gender-digital divide through, *inter alia*, integrating young women and girls in STEM, encouraging STEM careers, providing them with access to training, and promoting gender equality in the workplace.

Triple Planetary Crisis and Sustainable Development

1. **Interrelated environmental challenges**: Incorporate environmental and climate action into planning across all relevant sectors by developing integrated plans and policies that address the interrelated, interconnected, and intersectional challenges of environmental, social, cultural, and economic aspects, including developing strategies for sustainable development, promoting social inclusion, and preserving cultural heritage, whilst paying due attention to the marginalization of youth.

2. **Right to a healthy environment:** Reaffirm the right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment inherent in the rights of the child.
3. **Sustainable Development Goals:** Develop and enforce policies that mandate the integration of the Sustainable Development Goals into national budget frameworks to ensure that government spending aligns with sustainable development priorities.
4. **Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs):** Strengthen the meaningful engagement of youth in the planning and delivery of VNRs through the dedication of a chapter on youth in the Review and its presentation by and through youth.
5. **Indigenous rights:** Implement policies and initiatives that protect marine and terrestrial ecosystems, acknowledging their critical role in the livelihoods and cultural practices of Indigenous persons and communities. Include language on Indigenous youth, as well as their rights, knowledge, and culture.

Future Generations

1. **Definition:** Clearly distinguish "future generations" from "youth" through the elaboration of an internationally agreed upon definition of future generations in consultation with civil society and youth. Given the unique situation of the youngest generations as the closest spokespeople to future generations, their voices should be given special regards, whilst not given full stewardship.
2. **Long-term accountability**: Establish robust and transparent frameworks for monitoring, evaluating and reporting long-term impacts of policies and decisions on the well-being of future generations, and create legal provisions or international agreements explicitly considering intergenerational equity to hold decision-makers accountable.
3. **Foresight mechanisms:** Enhance and integrate foresight capabilities to ensure that policymakers and decision-makers anticipate potential future developments and consider the long-term implications of their actions, and integrate such practices into decision-making processes, policy development, processes on evolving global dynamics, and crisis responses.
4. **Special Envoy on Future Generations:** Welcome the Secretary General's intention to appoint a Special Envoy on Future Generations, to ensure the implementation of comprehensive and integrated strategies that prioritize intergenerational equity, cultural values and sustainability across environmental, social, cultural, and economic domains, and encourage Member States to appoint special representatives for future generations on regional and national levels.
5. **Feedback systems:** Encourage functioning feedback systems that take into account the long-term impact of major policy decisions on future generations through, inter-alia, a UN-Youth-Test, ensuring that potential long-term consequences are accounted for. Allow for spaces to mutually exchange ideas and concerns to foster understanding and influence decision-making that recognizes the importance of intergenerational knowledge transfer and prioritize the well-being of future generations.
6. **Future Generations Day:** Mandate a new UN Observance Day for Future Generations on 18th August; to establish the term "future generations" culturally and linguistically as part of the UN's official terminology and the global vernacular.