

# **Fifth World Youth Congress**

## **Istanbul Action Plan**

The Istanbul Action Plan (IAP) is the result of the work and consensus of all participants of the Fifth World Youth Congress (WYC), held from July 31<sup>st</sup> to August 13<sup>th</sup> 2010 in this year's European Capital of Culture, Istanbul, Turkey.

Conclusions drawn at round tables, workshops and discussions during the WYC gave birth to the IAP. This document recognizes that, the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, the Declaration of the Mexico World Youth Conference, the United Nations Programme for Action for Youth, all supportive resolutions and other relevant statements need to be actively discussed.

The main body of the Action Plan considers thirteen key focus areas that identify problems facing young people in all countries. The Annexes consider the individual actions that can be taken in seventeen specific regions. In each item the Plan proposes concrete actions that youth civil society can take on global, regional and local level, and actions that Governments and international sub-governmental bodies need to take in order to enable youth to take those actions while at the same time accelerating momentum to guarantee first: the achievement of the MDGs and second: the elimination of poverty in our lifetimes.

In summary, the World Youth Congress in Istanbul taught us:

- Imece: Young people can self-organise to collaborate, have fun and relate to each other across the barriers of language, culture and ethnicity with a complete absence of tension;
- Youth have comparatives in some areas and we must promote that. For example:
  - Youth are 'digital natives' – having grown up with new technology; elders are 'digital immigrants'.
  - Youth are more capable learners – of new languages, skills, technologies.
  - Most young people are happy to live in global communities - blind to differences of colour, ethnicity and culture.
  - Youth nowadays are mobile – eager to travel and experience living in different cultures.
  - However, many young people do not have access to information and new technologies and are thus apathetic and ill-prepared for all challenges that await them in their lifetimes. Our generational challenges of building the post-carbon energy infrastructure, halting and reversing the spread of HIV/AIDS, eliminating poverty, achieving sustainable and equitable use of food and water resources, conserving ecological diversity, etc. are all issues of which we are well aware. However, we are yet to be prepared to take concrete actions with regards to them.

Therefore, the Istanbul Action Plan proposes The Five Main Actions that Governments, intergovernmental organizations and youth civil society need to take together:

1. Implementation of an educational revolution with the idea of teaching us what we need to learn, integrating non-formal project-oriented, skills-oriented education and including us in the dialogue to determine our curriculum.
2. Focus on creating a culture of youth entrepreneurship and ending the youth dependency culture.
3. Placing youth at the heart of the effort to build a green economy and the transition to sustainable lifestyles; enable youth to make the daring investments required to achieve

success.

4. Efforts on part of Governments to see youth as a sector rich on assets for development and resources that Governments can engage with – and harness. Governmental and international support for the establishment of youth organs and bodies as parts of all regional and intergovernmental organisations as young people are willing to find compromising and meaningful solutions that can revolutionize international policy-making.
5. Creation of an UN Youth Agency with dedicated funding that Ministries of Youth, international youth NGOs and National Youth Councils can apply for funding of youth-led initiatives and an implementation of an annual World Youth Report. The Agency must rely on the efforts and potential of youth activists and young people with solid records of achievements in social and commercial enterprise, rather than bureaucrats with no record of action in the field. It must be ensured that young people monitor and evaluate the actions of their Agency to the satisfaction of the donor Governments. The World Youth Report must be brought to the attention of the United Nations General Assembly and the UN Member States at every session of the UN General Assembly so that young people are constantly in the focus of the international community and global decision-makers.

# **ISTANBUL ACTION PLAN**

*adopted by the Fifth World Youth Congress in 2010*

## **I. Preamble:**

We, the young people of the world gathered in Istanbul,

*At the wake of the International Year of Youth,*

*Conscious of the opportunity the World Youth Conference México 2010 provides for Governments to go beyond the Millennium Development Goals and create coherent national and international youth policies and dynamic international cooperation programs,*

*Considering the many advantages that information technologies bring to our generation and the severe disadvantages facing those unable to access them,*

*Affirming that youth are ready to commit their energy and resources to youth-led development projects and programs, and request that our Governments take on the responsibility of empowering and enabling us to do so,*

*Also stressing that young people are able to provide creative and concrete answers to the question of how to improve living conditions within the local sphere, but that we need to find the institutional and material support in order to transform them into sustainable projects,*

have decided to urge our Governments and youth civil society to adopt the Istanbul Action Plan that contains actions that need to be taken within thirteen key areas of relevance to youth around the world as well as specific recommendations for steps that should be applied on a regional level within the seventeen defined annexes of this document.

## **II. Summary of Issues**

### **Policy Management, Monitoring and Evaluation**

The youth at the 5<sup>th</sup> World Youth Congress, Istanbul highlights the following: youth should be involved in the monitoring of local, national and international policies; young people should consider running for positions in political offices; and should lobby for, and support the creation of a UN Agency for Youth. Also taken into account is the urgent need of modernization and change in the currently deployed inflexible conservative system of monitoring and evaluation.

### **Poverty and Exclusion**

With regards to the area of poverty and exclusion, youth recommends the following: young people require assistance in carrying out youth-led projects; opportunities that assist social mobility should be promoted, pervasive instability and civil wars should be eradicated.

### **Education**

The Congress raises the following under education: education must encourage critical awareness of the world among the younger generation; education must reach even hardly accessible areas. This can be achieved through the usage of new technologies. In addition, women and immigrants must not be denied the right to education; investments such as vocational training centres and entrepreneurship education should be strongly supported; youth participation must be sought when

formulating educational policies.

## **Health**

In terms of health, youth points the following: health services need improvement in global aspect; risky implementation of traditional medical practices should be considered illegal; bureaucracy and corruption within healthcare systems should be terminated; a youth-friendly healthcare system has to be encouraged.

## **Employment**

The sole, and extensively discussed, issue under employment is that decisive actions need to be taken on all scales by all actors to promote youth employment and youth entrepreneurship.

## **New Technologies and Innovations**

With regards to new technologies and innovations, the issues brought to attention by the young people are: the digital divide among the youth, particularly the fact that many young people still do not have access to technology; the dependence on innovation from external sources. An emphasis should be placed on cultivating innovation among young people; young innovators and entrepreneurs need to be encouraged and supported, especially in developing countries.

## **Culture**

The single, and most urgent issue addressed within this section is that youth feels globalisation can be a threat to their traditional cultures and identities.

## **Access to Justice and Security**

In terms of justice and security, the youth feels that young people need legal aid centres and programs to assist the reintegration of child soldiers, young people who have engaged in unlawful activities and children at risk into society. The emphasis here should be placed mainly on prevention.

## **Youth Participation**

The youth feels that its participation in decision-making and social processes is still limited. Youth representation in national agencies and official decision-making bodies should be promoted; independent, youth-led decision-making bodies should also be set up. Young delegates should also be included in international sub-governmental and regional bodies.

## **Equality of Genders and Sexualities**

The youth at the Congress feels that gender equality does not encompass the full extent of gender identities, sexual orientations and preferences that exist in addition to the gendered categories of “women” and “men”. Thus, the title is amended to: equality of genders and sexualities (identities, orientations, preferences). The issues raised are the following: the persecution of young people on the basis of gender, gender identity, sexual orientation and sexual preferences needs to end; customs, a global culture of social recognition and non-discrimination against women needs to be established and promoted; the societal recognition of different gender identities and sexual orientations should be enforced; political will needs to be built with regards to holding accountable countries that violate LGBTI rights. There is a necessity for an increase in economic equality and

political representation of women; violence against women and children needs to be eradicated; young people need to be involved in establishing gender equality within all social institutions.

### **Sustainable Development and Climate Change**

Regarding sustainable development and climate change, the youth are raising the following issues: youth need to reduce their consumption of natural resources; awareness among the youth needs to be increased around sustainable development, climate change and structural violence; and corporate social responsibility (CSR) needs to be promoted.

### **International Migration**

In terms of international migration, the following problems are considered: the low levels of social integration of immigrants; the lack of promotion of the integration of immigrants; the basic human rights must be assured for immigrants. Involvement of immigrant youth in unlawful activities and armed conflicts must be discouraged; human- and sex-trafficking must be urgently prevented.

### **Global Cooperation**

Regarding global cooperation, the youth brings the following issues forward for consideration: young people should be properly presented on the highest international level and should participate in the process of international decision-making; world youth's actions, issues and viewpoints ought to be one of the main focuses of the international community. Two of the main conclusions of the Fifth World Youth Congress are that youth urgently needs: A World Youth Report presented every year before the UN General Assembly, and a comprehensive, empowered United Nations Agency on Youth.

Also, it is our belief that governments must create bi- and multilateral policies based on trust, mutual respect and sustainable/equitable resource usage.

### **III. Proposals to youth civil society, Governments and intergovernmental organisations**

#### **1. Policy Management, Monitoring and Evaluation**

##### **Proposals to youth civil society**

- Youth should monitor Government policies to ensure the maximum of collaboration and the minimum of duplication between different Government and UN agencies.
- All youth should seek international experiences to meet their peers from other parts of the World – exchange experience, generate new ideas and network, and collaborate together.
- Encourage, lobby and support the creation of a UN Agency for Youth: make sure that its agenda and Proposals to its operation are satisfactorily youth-led then lobby your Government to support it.
- Lobby for the establishment of more sustainable and flexible methods for monitoring and evaluation on part of both youth organizations and international donors. We, as young people, believe that consideration of our work should go beyond stereotypical reporting and move towards quantitative and qualitative representation of our efforts as a part of a process that emancipates the positions of funding and implementing sides. We recommend the use of innovative techniques such as the ease of standard formats for reporting, appointing local mentors to supervise projects, peer evaluation, governmental evaluation, personal interviews, NGO self-evaluation and stress that evaluation and monitoring means should not be standardized but rather diversified with regards to the individual circumstances of every project.

##### **Proposals to Governments and intergovernmental organisations**

- Establish a separate UN youth agency monitored by youths to support youth-led development projects and networking.
- Establish more sustainable and flexible methods for monitoring and evaluation on part of both youth organizations and international donors. We, as young people, believe that consideration of our work should go beyond stereotypical reporting and move towards quantitative and qualitative representation of our efforts as a part of a process that emancipates the positions of funding and implementing sides. We recommend the use of innovative techniques such as the ease of standard formats for reporting, appointing local mentors to supervise projects, peer evaluation, governmental evaluation, personal interviews, NGO self-evaluation and stress that evaluation and monitoring means should not be standardized but rather diversified with regards to the individual circumstances of every project.
- Encourage and promote e-governments to decrease bureaucratic procedures.

#### **2. Poverty and Exclusion**

*A. In order to provide assistance for young people to carry out youth-led projects*

### **Proposals to youth civil society**

- Engaging and collaborating with private donor organizations to assist young people in their youth-led endeavours through financial assistance, capacity building, etc.
- Encouraging and motivating youth-to-youth collaboration in disseminating the life skills that would enable them to carry out different projects to assist them financially.

### **Proposals to Governments and intergovernmental organisations**

- Formally recognize youth-led projects undertaken by young people living in impoverished conditions through financial assistance e.g. micro-credits.
- Seek market opportunities for youth-made products as a means of providing youth entrepreneurs with stable income.
- Improve living standards by adopting agriculture in a large scale and by incorporating youth in this strategy thus decreasing their dependence on the government.

## *B. In order to promote opportunities to assist social mobility*

### **Proposals to youth civil society**

- Encourage the contribution of youth civil society to assist the youth-led activities through financing youth-led business start-ups and peer-to-peer education.
- Create offices and information centres that provide means for young people to access job opportunities and other programs and assist them with knowledge on how to access them.
- Furthermore, offer mentorship and micro-credits to assist young people in starting and developing businesses.

### **Proposals to Governments and intergovernmental organisations**

- Implement policies that uphold basic human rights regardless of social stratification.
- Create job opportunities in order to elevate the social status of young people through infrastructure and capacity building.

## *C. In order to end pervasive political instability and civil wars*

### **Proposals to youth civil society**

- Ensure governmental accountability through monitoring and evaluation of the electoral process.
- Establish contingency action plans against state of unrest.
- Promote the message of peace, tolerance and acceptance starting from the family.
- Use media properly to convey positive and peace-promoting messages as means of creating a cohesive society.

### **Proposals to Governments and intergovernmental organisations**

- Formulate and enforce long-term state policies regardless of the current political situation to guarantee the perpetual continuity of development.
- Strive to unite people regardless of religious, ethnic, ideological and other differences with the goal of preventing conflicts on any scale.
- Agree upon a Global Conflict Transformation Action Plan that can be implemented immediately in the event of conflict.

### **3. Educational Revolution Driven by Young People**

*A. In order to encourage critical awareness of the world among students:*

#### **Proposals to youth civil society**

- Implement an educational revolution with the idea: “*Teach us what we need to learn, integrate non-formal, project-based, skills-based education, include us in the dialogue to determine our curriculum*”.
- Ensure that subjects of real relevance to their future lives are being taught.
- Defy the idea of studying irrelevant academia and demand genuine education on the issues that matter.
- Encourage self-education as a way to overcome the disadvantages of the traditional educational system.
- Be more creative in the use of new technologies in education. Take advantage of the Internet as well as other innovations to be ahead of older generations.
- Set up peer-to-peer teaching systems so that the passion for learning is maintained among students.
- Lobby Government, and volunteer or tutor students – provide the support for the transition to the new education system.
- Engage educators in dialogue, which concentrates them on a humanist, rather than an instrumentalist, approach to education.

#### **Proposals to Governments and intergovernmental organisations**

- Legislate for project-oriented, skills-oriented educational systems that provide for critical thought and applicable skills, such that provision is made for disciplines which are focused on democratic participation in society, professional success and on the construction of the school structure.

*B. In order for education to reach hardly accessible areas: Use new technologies*

#### **Proposals to youth civil society**

- Introduce car pooling, peer-tutoring/volunteering,
- Take advantage of the cellular revolution: engage youth in cellular chatrooms (mxit – South African example).
- Organise international initiatives to provide recycled cell phones or new state-of-the-art cell phones to students in rural areas to provide remote access to quality education.
- Youth should conduct their own pilot studies and research into why many supposedly illiterate youth in highly disadvantaged rural and urban areas appear to be able to text each other using mobile phones.
- Keep abreast of new developments in cellular technology and recommend teachers software and initiatives that enable peer-to-peer teaching in rural areas – with remote access via mobile phones.
- Set up remedial teaching centres with accommodation to enable youth encountering educational challenges to come in and receive small group and/or one-on-one education.



- Devise our own programmes and applications that will enable us to learn entrepreneurial and business skills remotely via mobile phone.

#### **Proposals to Governments and intergovernmental organisations**

- Get children to school or school to children. Improve the infrastructure.
- Create Mobile Schools; provide pupil transport.
- Conduct pilot programmes & cost-benefit analysis of investments in mobile phone schooling.

#### *C. In order for women and immigrants to not be denied the right to access education*

##### **Proposals to youth civil society**

- Engage all media to launch participation and awareness campaigns to educate families.
- Encourage peer-to-peer/word of mouth awareness-raising.
- Enable NGOs to step in and advise / initiate change, lobby Governments to tackle cultural constraints that result in women being unable to access education.
- Conduct awareness campaigns with both sexes to promote gender equality in such a way that men are not threatened by the education of women.
- Encourage youth to volunteer as educators in programmes that allow effective volunteers to become full-time paid professional educators.

##### **Proposals to Governments and intergovernmental organisations**

- Legislate for equal educational standards for both sexes.
- Make institutional reforms to encourage girls participation in education.
- Interpret all religious texts in ways that promote gender equality in education so that cultural constraints cannot prohibit women's access to education.
- Recognise the right of illegal immigrant children to education.

#### *D. In order to support vocational training centres and entrepreneurship education*

##### **Proposals to youth civil society**

- Begin/initiate informal vocational training centres.

##### **Proposals to Governments and intergovernmental organisations**

- Build more vocational training centres and business incubators.

#### *E. In order to seek youth participation in formulating educational policies*

##### **Proposals to Governments and intergovernmental organisations**

- Engage students in decision-making processes through consultation when drafting education policies, especially curriculum content.
- Use international experience and know-how in the process of modernizing educational systems while respecting local cultural traditions.
- Create policies which protect and respect every religion and system of beliefs, and grant them equal status.

## 4. Health

### A. *In order to improve underperforming health service*

#### **Proposals to youth civil society**

- Raise our voices concerning issues regarding health service in order to capture the attention of policy makers.
- Actively demand that states provide public healthcare services.

#### **Proposals to Governments and intergovernmental organisations**

- Construct and develop more hospitals in rural areas in order to promote healthier environment.
- Provide medical facilities, work force, and important infrastructure to enable the provision of health services.

### B. *In order to eradicate the risky performance of traditional medical practices*

#### **Proposals to youth civil society**

- Encourage collaboration between formal and informal health practitioners in order to share knowledge and experience to guarantee safe medical practices.

#### **Proposals to Governments and intergovernmental organisations**

- Establish structures and support indigenous health practices in order to save lives and avoid health problems.

### C. *In order to create corruption-free and much less bureaucratic healthcare systems*

#### **Proposals to youth civil society**

- Discourage the practice of bribery to access medical services.
- Promote a culture of accountability within healthcare systems.

#### **Proposals to Governments and intergovernmental organisations**

- Ensure equal access to medical services regardless of economic situation and influence, gender, sexuality, race or any other discriminatory basis.

### D. *In order to encourage a youth-friendly healthcare system*

#### **Proposals to youth civil society**

- Promote healthy habits among young people.
- Incorporate sex and health education in secondary education.
- Create our own youth-run professionally-supervised Youth Health Centres, which provide free counselling for youth.
- National Treatment Protocols should be implemented in every country, made available and respected by all medical and paramedical practitioners.

#### **Proposals to Governments and intergovernmental organisations**

- Provide the means to set up and run a network of Youth-friendly Health Centres

- Engage health professionals in raising awareness campaigns against female genital mutilation and other harmful ethnically rooted practices.
- Increase the number of drug rehabilitation centres for youth suffering from drug dependency.

## **5. Employment**

### *A. In order to take radical action and promote youth employment*

#### **Proposals to youth civil society**

- Use one comparative advantage more vigorously in the labour market: that they are inexpensive, mobile, quick learners, more technologically adept etc.
- Learn to become attitudinally keen on becoming job creators, and not simply job seekers.
- Inform ourselves about the needs of the labour market and take action to ensure that education/training meets them. For example: the ILO estimates 300,000 IT engineers will be hired in Sub-Saharan Africa in the next ten years.
- Be prepared to do work experience – internships etc. – to develop the life-skills and become a valuable specialist in your field.

#### **Proposals to Governments and intergovernmental organisations**

- Dedicate funding to youth-led business initiatives, including grant schemes and micro-finance programmes, similar to the Mano River Union Multi-stakeholder Programme for Decent and Productive Work for Youth.
- Improve links between stakeholders within the youth-employment sector.
- Ensure that youth employment programs such as funding facilities, vocational institutions and entrepreneurship training programmes are coordinated to deliver efficiently.
- Create an enabling environment designed to help youth-led informal sector businesses and youth-led revenue generating organisations in becoming lawful businesses.
- Adopt tax concessions for youth-led businesses.
- Waive or drastically decrease business registration fees for youth-led businesses.
- Give youth direct access to development institutions through the provision of information on opportunities that exist and through limiting bureaucratic procedures.
- Offer exemption from employer taxes to companies that hire students directly out of college/university.
- Provide technical assistance to youth-led, small and medium scale enterprises (SME's) in the productive sectors.
- Offer tax incentives for companies that go beyond the quota or average of youth employment set by national or international standards.
- Create information platforms to provide youth with details about job opportunities.
- Establish career centres for youth seeking employment.
- Construct a global network of “Be the Change” Academies or similar institutions that can provide youth who are prepared to become entrepreneurs with basic business training.
- Establish one-on-one business plan clinics, revolving loan funds, mentorship and business incubation facilities that can progress a young people's business

ideas into viable reality.

- Similarly, ensure that all such institutions incorporate a consistent programme of monitoring and evaluation so that the success of different kinds of interventions can be measured and compared over the short- and long-term for both their fiscal success and their learning outcomes.
- Gather ideas for possible job opportunities or business ventures that can be run by young people through essay writing competitions or similar initiatives.
- Provide farmers with agroprocessing and other farm implements in order to increase crop yield. Governments should increase funding for agricultural programmes and incorporate youths into these schemes.
- Partner with development institutions, international organisations and UN bodies such as the ILO to create comprehensive youth-employment programmes that contain both short-term and long-term solutions to youth unemployment.
- Consider a quota system within companies in order to provide employment for youth.
- Establish monitoring systems, which ensure the ethical implementation of internship programs that do not exploit young employees, but teach them vital workplace and life-skills instead.
- Encourage and start immediately the development of internship programs in Governments, international institutions, and NGOs.
- Support, expand and promote programmes like the Prince's Trust (UK), ENTRA 21 (IYF), Y2Y (World Bank), Youth Opportunities Fund (UN-HABITAT) and the Be the Change Academies (PCI) – to support young people to become the job-creators modern economy needs.

## **6. New Technologies and Innovations**

*A. In order to address the digital divide amongst youth: Many of us lack access to technology*

### **Proposals to youth civil society**

- Utilise media to encourage corporations into actively participating in the provision of access to technology to all young people.
- Create web-based organisations to facilitate online communication at the grassroots level in order to connect youth civil society through ICTs.
- Establish working international youth networks that implement similar projects in order to increase the collective positive impact of young people on society and multiply our shared lobbying power.

### **Proposals to Governments and intergovernmental organisations**

- Invest in sustainable and environmentally friendly technology and improve infrastructure at all levels.

*B. In order to address the issue of dependence on innovation from external sources*

### **Proposals to youth civil society**

- Engage youth in awareness campaigns to inform them of all possible impacts (positive or negative) of relying on external innovation sources.
- Promote private youth initiative in the field of innovations through establishing trade unions and interest groups consisting of young people working or studying

in the field.

- Facilitate peer-to-peer education and exchange of best practices within these groups.

#### **Proposals to Governments and intergovernmental organisations**

- Encourage education systems that nurture innovation.
- Initiate innovation and scientific competitions on the high school and collegiate level.
- Cooperate with private business on possibly ensuring employment for talented youth in the area, thus tackling the problem of brain drain that is existent in many societies

C. *In order to create, support and encourage young entrepreneurs; particularly in developing and undeveloped countries*

#### **Proposals to youth civil society**

- Assist youth in all levels of implementation of projects in the field.
- Educate youth in basic business skills (e.g. how to develop business plans) to illustrate the return on investment when seeking financial assistance.

#### **Proposals to Governments and intergovernmental organisations**

- Strengthen the capacity of local institutions to provide business-skills training and mentorship for youth-led businesses.
- Use resources to integrate youth entrepreneurs from agriculture and other productive sectors into the value chain.
- Harness the innovation and energy of youth by encouraging youth-led businesses in the productive sectors of national development strategies.

## **7. Culture**

#### **Proposals to youth civil society**

- Acknowledge the world's cultural diversity as well as our own cultures, while enjoying life in a modern, globalized society.
- Promote projects that involve international cooperation and facilitate cultural exchange while tolerating and respecting different cultures.
- Lobby actively for the establishment of youth centres such as Youth Houses.

#### **Proposals to Governments and intergovernmental organisations**

- Provide resources to youth civil society to preserve its unique culture and traditions.
- Guarantee all people's rights to freedom of thought, expression, conscience and religion.
- Promote the idea of Youth Houses or Youth Homes that deal with a large scale of issues such as counseling on problems concerning youth (gender, sexuality, HIV/AIDS, career orientation) and organize cultural, educational and social activities such as movie screenings, poetry nights, concerts, exhibitions, sport tournaments etc.

## **8. Access to Justice and Security, and Protection of Human Rights**

### **Proposals to youth civil society**

- Assist integration of former child soldiers, children at risk and young people who have engaged in unlawful activities into society.
- Work on prevention of juvenile delinquency, risky behaviour, addictions etc.
- Actively advocate against school violence

### **Proposals to Governments and intergovernmental organisations**

- Create legal aid centres that provide free consultation and assistance to young people.
- Provide funding, professional advice and support to enable youth in setting up integration programs and youth legal aid clinics.
- Guarantee that youth who have engaged in unlawful activities and youth victims have access to psychological support and social programs designed for their benefit.
- Adopt specific legal measures to prevent and address the situation of young people in armed conflict.

## **9. Youth Participation**

*In order to promote youth representation in Government agencies and decision-making bodies. Also in order to establish working youth networks and structures on all levels with real positive impact on society.*

### **Proposals to youth civil society**

- Facilitate and promote national and international youth NGO networks.
- Use networking to organize national large-scale campaigns and projects that ensure positive impact on societies.
- Also use networks to lobby Governments and decision-makers actively and unanimously to ensure participation in decision-making, establishment of youth councils, parliaments, advisory bodies etc.
- Promote volunteering and youth participation on grass-roots level among students and youth through:
  - Information campaigns about the benefits of youth work (participation in decision-making, attainment of necessary skills, contacts, experience etc.);
  - Providing working conditions for youth volunteers to be active in efforts that lead to meaningful social changes;
  - Establishing student councils.
- Support the creation and strengthening of student unions around the world.
- Prepare and set up, in cooperation with national Governments, in accordance with UN recommendations and international experience, representative National Youth Councils, with regards to national, regional and cultural specifics.

- Ensure the principles of democracy, equal representation when deciding, among active youth in the country, the format of every individual National Youth Council.
- Lobby the Government for the establishment of, youth advisors or advisory bodies in all decision-making and decision-implementing bodies related to youth on all levels (with an emphasis on the institutional, regional and local level) that would empower many youth to be part of the political process.

### **Proposals to Governments and intergovernmental organisations**

- Prepare and set up, alongside young people, in accordance with UN recommendations and international experience, representative National Youth Councils, with regards to national, regional and cultural specifics.
- Formally recognise and take into account the inputs of NYCs with accordance to international and UN guidelines.
- Provide capacity to incorporate, with the agreement and participation of young people, youth advisors or advisory bodies in all decision-making and decision-implementing bodies related to youth on all levels (with an emphasis on the institutional, regional and local level).
- Allow youth observers to monitor Government's budgetary and financial policies.
- Create 'quotas' for young people employed in Government agencies and policy-implementing bodies.
- Provide youth with the opportunity to provide feedback on the utilisation of funding dedicated to youth initiatives.
- Guarantee better chances for success of youth projects and thus better sustainability by strict follow up and strong reporting procedures.
- Empower youth to organize international sport events such as the Youth Olympics & Regional Games.

## **10. Equality of genders and sexualities (identities, orientations, preferences)**

A. *In order to end persecution of young people on the basis of their gender, gender identity, sexual orientation and sexual preference*

### **Proposals to youth civil society**

- Establish support structures (e.g. community outreach centres).
- Start peer-to-peer counselling between lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, and intersex (LGBTI) youth to provide support for youth under persecution or in the process of coming to terms with their gender and sexual identity.
- Support and initiate media campaigns to highlight the issues facing LGBTI people and inform about the support structures available to them.

### **Proposals to Governments and intergovernmental organisations**

- Legislate to protect the rights of LGBTI people, and take affirmative action for these groups (including young women).

*B. In order to promote a culture of non-discrimination against women*

**Proposals to youth civil society**

- Lobby in favour of non-discriminatory laws, normative documents and policies.
- Work with youth and engage communities to establish progressive customary laws to protect and promote empowerment of women and gender equality.

**Proposals to Governments and intergovernmental organisations**

- Recognise gender equality and empower women as full-righteous citizens.
- Implement affirmative action for young women in both the private and public sector.
- Promote equal participation of both sexes in representative bodies and employment of women in the state apparatus.

*C. In order to enforce societal recognition of different gender identities and sexual orientations*

**Proposals to youth civil society**

- Monitor and evaluate Governments, hold them accountable, and establish a working relationship in the drawing up and implementation of policies on issues related with LGBTI people.
- Volunteer, tutor and peer-educate young LGBTI men and women on their civil rights.
- Put forward or nominate LGBTI representatives who promote the interests of young people from these groups in concerned institution and in youth representative bodies such as the recommended by this document National Youth Councils.

**Proposals to Governments and intergovernmental organisations**

- Produce a charter that recognises LGBTI people, and that protects their rights as citizens.
- Revise school curricula in such a way that they are inclusive of these groups.
- Introduce international legislation that promotes affirmative action of these groups.
- Introduce LGBTI (youth) issues to the international agenda through discussion on intergovernmental and UN levels.

*D. In order to increase political will to hold stakeholders accountable for violating LGBTI rights*

**Proposals to youth civil society**

- Involve media in campaigns to draw LGBTI youth's attention to the violation of their rights and how they can engage their Governments to enforce legislation.
- Initiate community outreach groups to bring LGBTI youth into a coherent social group instead of remaining isolated individuals at risk of persecution.

**Proposals to Governments and intergovernmental organisations**

- Speak out against countries that are violating the human rights and civil liberties



of LGBTI people.

- Enact and enforce legislation to protect their rights, especially those of LGBTI youth.

*E. In order to increase economic equality and political representation of women*

**Proposals to youth civil society**

- Monitor the implementation of equal pay structures and legislation to ensure gender parity.

**Proposals to Governments and intergovernmental organisations**

- Introduce international affirmative action legislation to encourage equal pay/salary structures for young women.
- Introduce national legislation that promotes affirmative action of young women employment in the state system.
- Create support structures that ensure young women are politically and economically active within communities and families.

*F. Eradicate violence against young women and children.*

**Proposals to youth civil society**

- Establish support structures and safe houses for young women and children.
- Run awareness campaigns that inform young women and children of their legal rights and encourage them to insist on fair treatment through legal processes.
- Encourage young citizens to speak out against violence in their communities and domestic violence.

**Proposals to Governments and intergovernmental organisations**

- Develop legislation that protects the rights of young women and children and supporting national agencies to supervise these rights.

*G. In order to increase involvement of young people in the battle for gender empowerment*

**Proposals to youth civil society**

- Employ the use of social institutions such as churches, schools to advocate for the empowerment of women through skills programs through workshops.
- Advocate gender equality on a family, domestic level.
- Train young teachers to be able to organize gender empowerment programs such as that produced by the young people of Peace Child International.

## **11. Sustainable development and climate change**

*A. In order to reduce youth consumption of world's resources*

**Proposals to youth civil society**

- Inform and raise awareness among young people about sustainable quality and conscious consumption (e.g. clothing made from quality recyclable and organic materials and other environment-friendly, enduring products) and encourage them to invest or initiate similar projects.
- Initiate lobbying for tax reduction on environmentally friendly products and

energy sources.

- Provide support to youth-led development projects that promote decreased and responsible consumption of the world's resources.

### **Proposals to Governments and intergovernmental organisations**

- Initiate sustainable development programmes.
- Make funds available for youth-led development programs which reduce consumption and increase energetic efficiency.

*B. In order to raise awareness among youth about sustainable development, climate change and structural violence*

### **Proposals to youth civil society**

- Initiate sustainable development and climate change information and education campaigns.
- Employ the use of media run by youth and pop culture to raise awareness and initiate change.
- Employ positive language in campaigning that promotes sustainable habits.

### **Proposals to Governments and intergovernmental organisations**

- Encourage youth to become Climate Change Ambassadors (taking as an example the UNICEF programme) and teach their family and friends about how to avoid catastrophic climate change.
- Work to change societal consumption habits and actively support youth projects on that issue.
- Provide youth with information as to how to support small businesses to provide an alternative to international large-business monopoly.
- Decisively endorse lifestyles that promote sustainable development and environmentally friendly habits by using the means of political endorsement, legislation, development of policies and mechanisms for solid waste management, water and sanitation management, alternative energy, technologies.
- Introduce industrial legislation that requires both young entrepreneurs and large businesses to engage in recycling and environmentally-friendly work operations.

*C. In order to promote Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)*

### **Proposals to youth civil society**

- Raise awareness among young consumers.
- Engage in dialogue with youth and collaborate on projects, which encourage CSR and involve sharing of best practices between youth NGOs and corporations.
- Create an environment whereby youth can engage in strict monitoring of corporations and prevent corruption.

### **Proposals to Governments and intergovernmental organisations**

- Provide technical assistance to CSR groups or NGOs.
- Increase financial support for youth who are leading initiatives in this area.

- Stimulate CSR through legislative and financial incentives.
- Implement effective control mechanisms of supply chains through Governmental authorities.

## **12. International Migration**

### *A. In order to increase social acceptance of immigrants*

#### **Proposals to youth civil society**

- Increase community acceptance and engagement with immigrant communities through campaigning, peer-to-peer education etc.

#### **Proposals to Governments and intergovernmental organisations**

- Create protective legislation for immigrants, initiate international agreements such that this legislation is internationally recognised and becomes a global policy.

### *B. In order to promote integration of immigrants*

#### **Proposals to youth civil society**

- Create support structures.
- Interact with immigrants.
- Encourage immigrant participation and integration into society.

#### **Proposals to Governments and intergovernmental organisations**

- Legislate to promote integration of immigrants into society.
- Enter international agreements and develop strategies to protect immigrant children.

### *C. In order to assure basic human rights for immigrants*

#### **Proposals to youth civil society**

- Engage immigrant youth in the process of monitoring and evaluation of Government policies.
- Encourage youth to advocate for basic human rights of immigrants.

#### **Proposals to Governments and intergovernmental organisations**

- Introduce legislation which protects basic human rights of illegal immigrants.
- Provide funds for awareness campaigns to bring public attention to the rights of immigrants.

### *D. In order to prevent immigrant youth from getting involved in unlawful activities and armed conflict*

#### **Proposals to youth civil society**

- Work to determine and assess why immigrant youth engage in unlawful activities.

### **Proposals to Governments and intergovernmental organisations**

- Make Peace Studies part of the education curriculum.

#### *E. In order to prevent human-trafficking*

### **Proposals to youth civil society**

- Bring attention to human-trafficking, especially trafficking of young people.
- Deliver sex education and distribute free condoms and femidoms to prevent unwanted pregnancies, spread of HIV etc.
- Monitor and evaluate the implementation of Government policies related to human trafficking, as well as policies targeting the root causes of this issue.

### **Proposals to Governments and intergovernmental organisations**

- Create strict control and eliminate corruption in customs.
- Target poverty, unemployment and low living standards as main contributors to trafficking.
- Create a public policy to progressively increase employment.
- Create programs that emphasize the support of young entrepreneurship through financing and micro-loans.
- Introduce legislation to make the circulation of misleading information with promises of jobs abroad a criminal offense.
- Ensure culturally sensitive youth-led sex education to target unwanted pregnancies etc.

## **13. Global Cooperation:**

#### *A. In order to ensure adequate international representation of young people, youth participation in the international decision-making process, international cooperation and fair representation of youth activities at the highest international level.*

### **Proposals to youth civil society**

- Lobby actively, on all levels, and demand fair representation at international forums, decision-making bodies, sub-governmental organisations.
- Promote, on all levels, the idea of establishment of a UN Agency on Youth, and regular reporting of youth activities within the United Nations.
- Network on all levels to multiply our lobbying power.

### **Proposals to Governments and intergovernmental organisations**

- Establish, in near future, a separate UN youth agency to support youth-led development projects and networking. The UN Agency on Youth ought to follow the following principles:
  - To rely on young professionals and activists with strong records in social and private enterprise
  - To build cooperation between generations through the principle of co-management
  - To be constantly monitored and evaluated by youth
  - To be seized in all youth-related matters.

- From January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2012 on, establish youth sections to all international forums, summits and meetings, where young people from participating countries present their viewpoints and solutions as often their vision can give birth to consensus and viable solutions.
- Establish youth forums or means of youth participation in regional and intergovernmental organizations (e.g. Arab League, African Union etc.), following UN guidelines and the example of the EYF, UN Youth delegates and the UNESCO Youth Assembly/National Youth Desks.
- Ensure, on a Governmental level, youth representation in all meaningful international decision-making bodies and forums through funding youth representation programs.
- Request that all UN bodies and executive agencies related to youth issues work together with youth around the world to prepare an annual World Youth Report that is to be presented by the UN Focal Point on Youth to the UN Secretariat, the UN General Assembly and all UN member states at every UN General Assembly Session from 2012 onwards.

*B. In order to encourage long-term, global collaborative projects undertaken by young people from around the world to achieve development*

#### **Proposals to youth civil society**

- Youth must get to the heart of major donors, shape UN and individual national policies. The Istanbul Action Plan is a call to all youth to agree priorities for their regions, their nations, their communities to agree priorities for sustainable development over the next two decades.
- Involve in the creation of PRSPs (Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers) and CASs (Country Assistance Strategies).
- Initiate international youth conferences and events where skills and ideas are shared within the context of the International Year of Youth.
- Ensure these events are monitored, evaluated and followed up properly by establishment of groups, networks, projects, and online and published resources.
- Initiate events to celebrate the International Year of Youth, starting on August 12<sup>th</sup>, 2010

#### **Proposals to Governments and intergovernmental organisations**

- Consider bilateral and multilateral partnership opportunities between Governments and take international experience into account when developing and implementing youth policies or programs to achieve development.
- Partner with young people in the celebration of the International Year of Youth proclaimed by the UN.
- In any new Development Agenda, set sustainable development goals for the North as well as the South.
- Provide youth civil society with the resources necessary to organise international youth conferences and events.

- While working on the MDGs, Governments and intergovernmental organizations must and recall the commitments made in the many Global UN Meetings of the 1990s which in many cases went further than the MDGs.

*C. In order for Governments to create multilateral and bilateral policies based on trust, mutual respect and sustainable resource use*

**Proposals to youth civil society**

- Young people's tolerance and will to make compromises and find applicable solutions to complicated problems should serve as a positive example for policymakers and diplomats.

**Proposals to Governments and intergovernmental organisations**

- Seek the advice of youth civil society when drafting foreign policies.

## IV. ADDENDUM

For the purposes of this text, youth is defined as a social group that includes peoples between the ages of 15 and 24, which accords with the definition of youth by the UN.

### Regional Appendices

The Regional Appendices are proposals given by World Youth Congress Delegates within the Regional Meetings and other workshops held during the Congress.

1. North Africa
2. South-East Africa
3. Western Africa
4. Oceania
5. South East Asia
6. Southern Asia
7. Central Asia
8. Middle East
9. Central Europe and Black Sea Region
10. Balkan Region
11. North-west Europe
12. Mediterranean Europe
13. Central Asia and Baltic Region
14. North America
15. Central America-Mexico
16. South America
17. Turkey

Youth of the world  
Istanbul, Turkey  
August 12, 2010