

World Youth Conference 2010
Mexico
Concept Note

I. Place and Date

The World Youth Conference (WYC 2010) will be held in Mexico City from August 24 to 27, 2010.

II. Background. In 2010, Mexico will celebrate the two hundredth anniversary of its independence and the hundredth anniversary of the Revolution that established the bases of modern Mexico. It will be a year of celebrations but also of reflection on the country's past, present and future. Within this context, Mexico acknowledges its youth as one of its main creative and productive forces, whose ideals and aspirations underpin the consolidation of Mexico as a prosperous, fair, equitable and democratic nation.

Mexico realizes that the development of the world nations depend largely on the opportunities provided for the youth, and in the building of their skills, in order for them to use them in a timely, appropriate fashion.

Today's generations of young people are the most numerous in history. They are both the most educated and those that enjoy the best levels of health. They are also generations which, once they reach adulthood, will have fewer children under their care than their predecessors which, with the right policies, could boost economic growth, by increasing the proportion of economic growth and of the working population, reducing the rate of demographic dependence and increasing household savings. All nations, regardless of their level of wealth, should take advantage of this opportunity before it is lost by the ageing of society. Otherwise, the goals of development and poverty reduction could be seriously hampered.

Five years before the deadline set by the international community to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Mexico is organizing the World Youth Conference 2010 (WYC 2010) as a forum for discussion and reflection on the role of youth in achieving the MDGs and the new development agenda that will be set in 2015. Viewing the MDGs with a youth approach is essential not only for achieving the goals aimed for 2015 but also for ensuring that efforts are long lasting and progressive in the long term.

III. Objectives

The Conference will be a meeting point for representatives of governments and civil society organizations designed to **identify priorities of action for youth to be dealt with on the international development agenda beyond the Millennium Goals.** This forum will strengthen cooperation links between countries and stakeholders involved with youth policies.

In keeping with this aim, the Conference seeks to achieve the following objectives:

1. Achieve a declaration by consensus by governments identifying key actions for youth and development policies to be presented at the 65 United Nations General Assembly.
2. Promote the establishment of a mechanism that will provide specific follow-up for the youth agenda in the United Nations System.
3. Encourage dialogue between civil society organizations and governments on youth and development policies to better understand the priorities and needs of world youth.
4. Share experiences and knowledge of youth and development diagnoses, policies, strategies and programs.

IV. Characteristics

Preconferences

Prior to the WYC 2010, a series of **regional preconferences** are to be held to record the experience of the world's major regions and facilitate the establishment of consensus and recommendations during WYC 2010. Representatives of organized civil society will participate in the official delegations. The programs, dates and venues of the preconferences will be defined at the Conference's International Committee, to be established shortly, on the basis of the conceptual framework of the Millennium Development Goals, with particular emphasis on youth. The WYC 2010 Declaration Project will be reviewed at each of the preconferences with a view to achieving consensus.

Participants

WYC 2010 will be a meeting point for representatives of governments, civil organizations, academic institutions, public and private foundations, international organizations and the general public.

Axes and Contents of the Conference

WYC 2010 will have two main pillars: the Government Forum and the Social Forum.

All United Nations member states, non-governmental organizations accredited to ECOSOC and representatives of international organizations will be invited to the Government Forum, meaning that approximately 1000 attendees are expected. The Government Forum will result in a Declaration with recommendations for governments on measures and policies to be taken regarding youth and development, aiming to 2015 and beyond.

The Social Forum will be a space for the Worldwide Meeting of Civil Society Organizations and the Global Village. The NGOs Meeting, expected to be attended by representatives from 300 organizations, will produce a document of recommendations that will be submitted to the Government Forum for its consideration.

The Global Village is the area where the various participants of WYC 2010 will meet, including representatives of governments, civil society, academic institutions, the media, public and private foundations and international organizations. It is a place that will be open to the public, where an information fair will be installed (with approximately 350 modules with national and international participants) as well as an area of exhibitions and special events (theater, cinema, music and others). Approximately 5,000 persons are expected to attend the Global Village.

V. Organization

The conference is a Mexican Government initiative, organized by the Foreign Relations Secretariat, the Public Education Secretariat and the Mexican Youth Institute, with the support of the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Development Fund for Women and the United Nations Development Program.

International Committee.

The International Committee will be made up of governments from countries particularly interested in joining the WYC 2010 initiative, which will be responsible for organizing the corresponding regional pre-conferences and the approval and joint sponsorship of the Declaration Project to be agreed on at the WYC 2010 Government Forum.

In addition to representatives from these countries, the Conference's International Committee will also include the participation of two representatives from the Organizing Committee for the *International Coordination Meeting of Youth Organizations* (ICMYO), a forum comprising youth organizations at the regional and global level that follows up the processes of public youth policy in the world's countries. The Coordinating Committee of the Global Meeting of Non-Government Organizations will be responsible for the promotion and organization of the participation of civil society organizations in WYC 2010 and the organization of the Global Village.

National Committee

A National Committee will be made up of representatives of Mexico's federal government offices that have close links with development and youth issues. The University of Zacatecas (UAZ) will also participate in this committee. The National Committee will be responsible for providing the necessary technical, material and financial support to ensure the efficient running of WYC 2010.

General Secretariat

WYC 2010 will also have a General Secretariat, responsible for the organization and coordination of activities related to: planning, follow-up, program design, national and international inter-institutional links, mobilization of resources and dissemination and communication. The General Secretariat will be led by the Mexican Youth Institute, with the support of UAZ.

YOUTH IN THE INTERNATIONAL AGENDA

In 1985, the United Nations Organization declared the International Youth Year. In 1995, the United Nations reinforced this commitment through the adoption of the *World Programme of Action for Youth in the Year 2000 and Beyond* in which it established a framework of guidelines, policies and national and international practices for the integral development of the youth population. In the General Assembly five priority topics were added and included in the Program Supplement (globalization, Information and Communications Technology, AIDS, military conflicts and intergenerational topics). Before and after the program's proclamation, various conferences, forums and meetings have taken place, most of which were regional, undertaken by governments and civil society, such as:

a) Conferences and meetings organized by government institutions:

- 1st Conference of European Ministers responsible for Youth "Participation of young people in society". Strasbourg, France, 1985.
- I Ibero-American Conference of Ministers and Responsible for Youth. Madrid, Spain, 1987.
- 2nd Conference of European Ministers responsible for Youth "Strategies for European youth policies in the approach to the year 2000". Oslo, Norway, 1987.
- II Ibero-American Conference of Ministers and Responsible for Youth. Buenos Aires, Argentina, 1988.
- III Ibero-American Conference of Ministers and Responsible for Youth. San José, Costa Rica, 1989.
- 3rd Conference of European Ministers responsible for Youth "Youth mobility in Europe". Lisbon, Portugal, 1990.
- V Ibero-American Conference of Ministers and Responsible for Youth. Santiago de Chile, 1991.
- IV Ibero-American Conference of Ministers and Responsible for Youth. Quito, Ecuador, 1990.
- 4th Conference of European Ministers responsible for Youth "Young people in Greater Europe". Vienna, Austria 1993.
- VII Ibero-American Conference of Ministers and Responsible for Youth. Uruguay, 1994.
- Informal meeting of European ministers responsible for youth "Appraisal of and prospects for youth work at the Council of Europe". Luxembourg, 1995
- VIII Ibero-American Conference of Ministers and Responsible for Youth. Buenos Aires, Argentina, 1996.
- World Conference of Ministers Responsible for Youth. Lisbon, Portugal, 1998.
- IX Ibero-American Conference of Ministers and Responsible for Youth. Lisbon, Portugal, 1998.
- 5th Conference of European Ministers responsible for Youth "Young people: active citizens in a future Europe. Human Rights-Participation-Solidarity". Bucharest, Romania, 1998.
- X Ibero-American Conference of Ministers and Responsible for Youth. Panama City, Panama, 2000.
- 6th Conference of European Ministers Responsible for Youth "Youth constructing Europe". Thessaloniki, Greece 2002.
- XI Ibero-American Conference of Ministers and Responsible for Youth. Salamanca, Spain, 2002.
- XII Ibero-American Conference of Ministers and Responsible for Youth. Guadalajara, Mexico, 2004.
- 7th Conference of European Ministers responsible for Youth "Human dignity and social cohesion: youth policy responses to violence". Budapest, Hungary, 2005.
- Declaration by member states of the European Union on racism and intolerance in youth.

2005.

- XIII Ibero-American Conference of Ministers and Responsible for Youth. La Havana. Cuba, 2006.
- Approval of the Supplement of the World Programme of Action for youth to the year 2000 and beyond. February 5th, 2008.
- Ibero-American Meeting of Ministers and Responsible for Youth. San Salvador, El Salvador, 2008.
- 8th Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for Youth “The future of the Council of Europe youth policy: AGENDA 2020”. Kiev, Ukraine, 2008.
- XIV Ibero-American Conference of Ministers and Responsible for Youth. Santiago de Chile, 2009.

b) Conferences and forums organized by civil society:

- 1st World Youth Forum. Vienna, Austria, 1991.
- 2nd World Youth Forum. Vienna, Austria, 1996.
- 3rd World Youth Forum. Braga, Portugal, 1998.
- 4th World Youth Forum. Dakar, Senegal, 2001.
- Fourteenth Asian-Pacific Youth Conference 2008
- European Youth Conference “Youth for Democracy and Tolerance” Berlin, Germany. 2001
- European Conference "European Youth in Action for Diversity and Tolerance" Berlin Germany, 2005.
- Sixth Asian Youth Forum 2008
- 15th Asia Pacific Youth Conference, Taipei, Taiwan, 2009.
- World Conference of Youth Entrepreneurship 2009
- Fourth International Conference of Youth Leadership (scheduled for 2010)

c) Conferences by civil society, governments and academics, in which no declarations were signed, such as the following:

- Southern Africa Sub-Regional Conference on Youth Employment. “The youth employment challenge in Southern Africa: policy responses and programmes targeting young women and men at the national level”. Harare, Zimbabwe, 2005.
- International Conference on Investing in young’s people health and development: research that improves policies and programs. Abuja, Nigeria, 2008

YOUTH AND MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

1. Eradicate poverty and hunger. Poverty affects over half the world's youth in crucial sectors such as their health, education, housing and security. On the other hand, youth must be seen and understood as an agent in the fight to eradicate poverty and marginalization and to become integrated into the policies designed to achieve this.

2.- Achieve primary and universal teaching. Although the current generation of young people is the most highly educated in history, the difference between countries still persists. In most countries, the literacy rate is over 70%. Conversely, there are very few parts of the world with indices of less than 50%. Youth should be part of the solution to this problem.

3.- Promote gender equality and women's autonomy. Gender equality is, above all, a human right. It is essential to improve women's living conditions through education, employment and health.

4.- Reduce child mortality. Approximately 29,000 children under the age of five –21 per minute- die every day, particularly from preventable causes.

The youth population can help reduce child mortality by serving as health service providers in their communities, promoting prevention and sensitization campaigns and providing information on health measures.

5. Improve maternal health. A woman dies in childbirth every minute, thereby jeopardizing the survival of the newborn baby.

Young people of either sex tend to begin their active sex lives with little knowledge of the subject. This has meant that every year, 14 million teenagers ages 15 to 19 give birth. In developing countries, approximately half of all female teenagers become mothers before they are 18.

6. Fight HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases. Half of the new HIV infections worldwide occur in young people ages 15 to 24. Given that the risk of being infected with HIV is directly linked to individual behavior, it is essential for young people to receive information, preventive tools and health services, including undergoing voluntary testing and counseling to reduce the risk of infection.

7. Guarantee environmental sustainability. Integrating the principles of sustainable development into national policies is crucial to the implementation and successful promotion of environmental sustainability. In other words, the other seven MDGs and national and regional development must adhere to the concepts of sustainable development, since without ecosystems, there would be no life on earth.

8. Encourage a global partnership for development. The goal is to increase employment opportunities for the youth population given the world's current employment crisis.