



## PRESS RELEASE

# Youth leaders gather at UN to call for meaningful engagement in developing solutions for a sustainable and resilient future for all

New York, 16 April 2024 – Over 1000 young leaders from around the world will gather at United Nations headquarters from 16 to 18 April to take part in the 2024 Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Youth Forum. More than 80 countries will participate in this event with over 90 youth delegates representing their governments. This year's forum will leverage the expertise of young people to develop solutions for a fairer, greener, more inclusive and resilient future for all.

"Youth creativity, enthusiasm and bold ideas are essential as we strive to build a more sustainable, equitable and inclusive future where no one is left behind," said ECOSOC President H.E. Ms. Paula Narváez.

With mounting multiple crises, the annual Forum is a key platform where young people share their ideas, engage with Member States and key stakeholders, as well as showcase the actions they are already taken to make the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development a reality for all.

"Youth are experts on their own realities, but we must also acknowledge the fact that young people are experts on other matters too, not only youth development," said UN Under-Secretary-General for economic and social affairs, Mr. Li Junhua. He further commended the contributions that young people make to promoting a better understanding of the SDGs.

### About the Forum

The ECOSOC Youth Forum is convened by the President of ECOSOC and co-organized by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) and the United Nations Youth Office, in collaboration with the United Nations Inter Agency Network on Youth Development (IANYD), the Major Group for Children and Youth (MGCY) and the International Coordination Meeting of Youth Organizations (ICMYO).

This year's Forum will be guided by the overall theme of the 2024 ECOSOC High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) on "*Reinforcing the 2030 Agenda and eradicating poverty in times of multiple*

*crises: the effective delivery of sustainable, resilient and innovative solutions*". Sessions and discussions will focus on the SDGs under review at the 2024 HLPF, namely, no poverty (SDG 1), zero hunger (SDG 2), climate action (SDG 13), peace, justice and strong institutions (SDG 16), and partnerships for the goals (SDG 17). Regional breakout sessions will also offer the opportunity to discuss regional realities and perspectives.

The Forum will also gather young people during the last day to share their recommendations and innovative ideas in preparation of the Summit of the Future, to be held in September 2024. These recommendations will be captured in an informal summary and outcome document that will be presented as inputs at the HLPF and [the UN Summit of the Future](#) taking place during the 79<sup>th</sup> UN General Assembly.

"During a time when our world is facing complex and interconnected challenges, it is young people who continue to serve as a beacon of hope and an important reminder that change is possible even in the most difficult of circumstances," said Felipe Paullier, Assistant Secretary-General for Youth Affairs. "Ahead of the Summit of the Future, young people are holding decision-makers accountable for the commitments they will make, to act in ways that better reflect the communities they serve."

### **World Leaders: It's Time to Let #YouthLead**

Ahead of the ECOSOC Youth Forum, the United Nations Youth Office launched [an advocacy campaign in the form of an open letter](#) from youth and allies to world leaders, with a focus on elevating young people's voices and demands building up to the Summit of the Future. Taking the form of a rallying call from the global community amidst the complex crises currently facing our world, the letter calls on governments to "take immediate action to make global policymaking and decision-making spaces more representative of the communities they serve," including by making "meaningful youth engagement the norm at all levels, backed by dedicated resourcing everywhere around the world."

### **ActNow for Our Common Future**

Leading up to the UN Summit of the Future and leveraging the key audiences and engagement at the Forum for its launch, the UN Department of Global Communications has unveiled the **One Million Actions for Our Common Future ActNow challenge**, including the call to 'speak up' to show decision makers that people worldwide take a stand for a more sustainable future for all. The Forum is a key opportunity to engage youth audiences For more information, visit [here](#).

### **SDG Media Zone**

The Forum will also feature a special SDG Media Zone that will spotlight young leaders and the crucial role that youth play in shaping our common future. Please visit the SDG Media Zone [page](#) to view the program. The session will be available on [UN DESA YouTube channel](#) on 18 April 2024.

### **Key Links**

- ECOSOC Youth Forum [website](#) and [programme and side events](#)

- SDG Media Zone [Session](#)
- ActNow Challenge [website](#)
- UN Youth Delegate Programme [website](#)
- Let #YouthLead [Open Letter](#)

## **Social Media**

Please follow highlights and updates for the ECOSOC Youth Forum using the hashtags #Youth2030, #GlobalGoals, #YouthLead

**X (Twitter):** @unecosoc, @UN4Youth, @undesa, @unyouthaffairs

**Facebook:** @unecosoc, @UN4Youth, @joinundesa @unyouthaffairs,

**Instagram:** @un\_ecosoc, @un4youth, @undesasocial @unyouthaffairs,

## **Media Contacts (interviews are available upon request)**

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