



**Meaningful Youth Participation in Policymaking & Decision-Making**  
**Wednesday 16 April, 3-6PM**

IDENTIFICATION	
<b>Session/plenary title</b>	#YouthLead From Local to Global: Meaningful Youth Participation in Policymaking & Decision-Making
<b>Session/plenary focus (SDG, region or topic)</b>	This plenary session will explore how young people and institutions are driving change from the local to the global level, and the conditions that enable their meaningful participation in policymaking and decision-making. It will highlight good practices, challenges, and opportunities to strengthen youth leadership and inclusion across governance processes.
<b>Session/plenary UN co-lead UN 1</b>	UN Youth Office with its Youth Reference Group
<b>Session/plenary youth co-lead 1</b>	Major Group for Children and Youth (MGCY)
<b>Session/plenary youth co-lead 2</b>	The International Coordination Meeting of Youth Organisations (ICMYO)
<b>Session/plenary youth co-organizers</b>	SPI Youth Platform Communities Discriminated on Work and Descent (CDWD) Stakeholder Group Youth
BACKGROUND & KEY ISSUES	
<p>While there is consensus on the power of youth and the ideas and energy they bring into decision-making, the meaningfulness and effectiveness of youth engagement in policymaking and decision-making processes at various levels vary significantly. Several challenges remain for engaging youth meaningfully at global, regional, national, and local levels and include, among others: i) limited opportunities for engagement, ii) ad-hoc and non-formal processes that operate at the fringes of decision-making and policymaking, iii) existing arrangements acting as barriers to inclusivity and diversity, iv) inadequate resources to support youth participation, v) limited access to timely information, vi) insufficient guidance to navigate fragmented and complex decision-making systems and spaces, vii) concerns regarding reprisals, lack of safety nets and protection measures, and viii) lack of feedback on how inputs from youth were used in decision-making.</p> <p>At the same time, we have unparalleled opportunities to address these challenges and bring young people to the heart of policymaking and decision-making. The first set of opportunities is related</p>	

to technology and innovations. An unprecedented range of technologies—digital, AI, and other frontier technologies—and innovations are available today to address persistent challenges and deliver interventions at scale. The second set of opportunities is political. The establishment of the first-ever youth office, the range of resolutions, policies, strategies, action plans, and resources that have been published/ made available in recent years that have a focus on youth (or are relevant to youth) shows an exceptional commitment of the global community to meaningful youth engagement, empowerment, and development.

Meaningful Youth Participation lays the foundation for a revigorated multilateralism that is more inclusive and that can reflect on the aspirations of the younger generations, aligning with the commitments made in the [Pact for the Future](#) to strengthen meaningful youth participation at national and international levels as well as the UN's system-wide Youth Strategy, [Youth2030](#) while drawing upon the [Principles and Barriers of Meaningful Youth Engagement](#).

### OBJECTIVES OF SESSION/PLENARY

The overall aim of this session is to advocate for meaningful youth participation in policymaking and decision-making processes by (i) gathering expert input on the core principles of meaningful youth participation and (ii) compiling and showcasing good practices of youth engagement in policymaking at various levels.

The expected results of the session include a clearer understanding of the principles that underpin meaningful youth participation, as well as the identification of actionable examples and strategies that can be applied in different contexts. Additionally, the session will foster strengthened collaboration among youth organizations, policymakers, and other stakeholders to promote youth engagement in future policy discussions.

### OVERALL FORMAT/STRUCTURE

The proposed session will feature an interactive format, offering interpretation in all six UN official languages. It will include panel discussions and engaging conversations to facilitate intergenerational dialogue to advance meaningful youth participation in policymaking and decision-making processes.

The session will be divided into two main segments:

1. **Core Principles of Meaningful Youth Participation:** Exploring the underlying theory and framework.
2. **Meaningful Youth Participation in Practice:** Showcasing good practices and successful examples from local, national, regional and global levels.

1. Opening (10 min)

2. Segment 1 (70 min, including a max of 30 min interventions from the floor, including from Member States and other stakeholder)
3. Fun interlude (5 min)
4. Segment 2 (70 min, including a max of 30 min interventions from the floor, including from Member States and other stakeholder)
5. Closing (10 min)

### Opening

Time	Min.	Presenter/Speaker	Focus
		Hosts: Two young leaders	
	10	Keynotes: Guy Ryder, Under-Secretary-General for Policy, ASG for Youth Affairs, Felipe Paullier and Youth Leader	

### Segment 1: Core Principles of Meaningful Youth Participation

Time	Min.	Presenter/Speaker	Focus
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### Panel Discussion

	70	Moderator: Sameh Kamel, Organizing Partner of the Major Group for Children and Youth (MGCY)	<p><i>Panel discussion:</i></p> <p>Panelist 1: Abdullah Dipto, Pathchola Foundation, Co-Founder            Panelist 2: San Htake Htar, Founder - 97percent            Panelist 3: Casey Harden, CEO/General Secretary of World YWCA</p> <p><b><u>Guiding questions:</u></b></p> <p>What are the core principles that define meaningful youth participation policymaking?            Which principles are key to move beyond tokenistic engagement to ensure youth voices have real influence?</p> <p><i>Discussants from the floor, including Member States, young people and other stakeholders</i></p>
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### Artistic Interlude

	5	Young Artist: Mechanical engineer, Climate Diplomat and Poet
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### Segment 2: Meaningful Youth Participation in Practice

Time	Min.	Presenter/Speaker	Focus
Panel Discussion			
	70	Moderator : Roux-Che Kahireke, Creator of Reservoir of Hope	<p><i>Setting:</i></p> <p>Panelist 1: Mukhammedier Zakhidzhanov, Member, UN Youth Advisory Board  Panelist 2: Lord Fakafanua, Speaker of the Parliament of Tonga  Panelist 3 : Vanessa Santini Gomes, Global Focal Point - YOUNGO, Children and Youth Constituency of the UNFCCC (TBC)</p> <p><b>Guiding questions:</b></p> <p><b>Showcasing Good Practices of Youth Engagement</b>  Can you share examples of successful youth engagement in policymaking at different levels?  What strategies have been most effective in ensuring that young people's contributions shape decisions?</p> <p><b>Actionable Strategies for Future Engagement</b>  What concrete steps can institutions take to institutionalize youth participation in policy processes? With various governments slashing foreign aid, including critical funding enabling marginalized youth to participate in decision-making processes, how can we fill the funding gap necessary for meaningful youth participation?  What commitments or next steps can we take collectively to advance youth engagement in policymaking?</p> <p><i>Discussants from the floor, including Member States, young people and other stakeholders</i></p>

**Closing**

Time	Min.	Presenter/Speaker	Focus
		Hosts: Two young leaders	
	10	Closing remarks from ASG for Youth Affairs, Felipe Paullier and Youth leader	

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

- 1. Principles of Meaningful Youth Participation**
- What are the core principles that define meaningful youth participation in policymaking?
  - Which principles are key to move beyond tokenistic engagement to ensure youth voices have real influence?

## 2. Showcasing Good Practices of Youth Engagement

- Can you share examples of successful youth engagement in policymaking at different levels?
- What strategies have been most effective in ensuring that young people's contributions shape decisions?

## 3. Actionable Strategies for Future Engagement

- What concrete steps can institutions take to institutionalize youth participation in policy processes? With various governments slashing foreign aid, including critical funding enabling marginalized youth to participate in decision-making processes, how can we fill the funding gap necessary for meaningful youth participation?
- What commitments or next steps can we take collectively to advance youth engagement in policymaking?

### NAMES AND TITLES OF SESSION SPEAKERS AND MODERATOR(S)

#### Segment 1:

Moderator : Sameh Kamel, Organizing Partner of the Major Group for Children and Youth (MGCY)

Panelist 1: Abdullah Dipto, Co-Founder Pathchola Foundation

Panelist 2: San Htake Htar, Founder - 97percent

Panelist 3 : Casey Harden, CEO/General Secretary of World YWCA

#### Segment 2:

Moderator : Roux-Che Kahireke, Creator of Reservoir of Hope

Panelist 1: Mukhammedier Zakhidzhanov, Member, UN Youth Advisory Board

Panelist 2: Lord Fakafanua, Speaker of the Parliament of Tonga

Panelist 3 : Vanessa Santini Gomes, Global Focal Point - YOUNGO, Children and Youth Constituency of the UNFCCC

### OVERVIEW OF PREPARATORY EVENT/CONSULTATION

A number of engagements have already taken place in the lead up to this session, centering on young people's aspirations and experiences of driving forward meaningful youth participation at the global, regional, national and local level. The conversations will draw on the outcome document from the Youth Action Day of the Summit of the Future, as well as recent consultations hosted by youth groups, including MGCY on youth priorities for the Pact Follow-up, and a dedicated discussion at the pre-EYF Youth Blast.

The outcomes from this session will directly inform ongoing work being undertaken by the Pact Taskforce on Meaningful Youth Participation Core Principles as well as feeding into wider youth mobilisation and priority-setting in other key processes including Beijing+30 and the 30th anniversary of the United Nations World Programme of Action for Youth.

There will be a number of avenues for follow-up and engagement after the session, including youth consultations on the Youth Participation Core Principles which are envisioned to take place June-July 2025.