



**ECOSOC  
YOUTH  
FORUM**

**#YOUTH2030**

## 8<sup>th</sup> Economic and Social Council Youth Forum

### ONLINE REPORTING

### LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

8 April 2019

Trusteeship Council Chamber, 1.45-3.45 p.m.  
United Nations Headquarters, New York

IDENTIFICATION	
<b>Session focus</b>	Latin America and Caribbean Session (which was comprised of two distinct sessions, each focusing on one of the two sub-regions)
<b>Session lead</b>	Heidi Ullmann, UNECLAC
<b>Session rapporteur</b>	Shaquille Knowles, Chairperson Caribbean Regional Youth Council, and Rosario del Pilar Díaz Garavito, Founder & Executive Director - The Millennials Movement
<b>Session moderator</b>	Shaquille Knowles, Chairperson Caribbean Regional Youth Council, and Max Trejo, Secretary General, International Youth Organization for Ibero-America
<b>Session note-taker 1</b>	Shaquille Knowles, Chairperson Caribbean Regional Youth Council, and Rosario del Pilar Díaz Garavito, Founder & Executive Director - The Millennials Movement
<b>Session note-taker 2</b>	Arian Junor, UN Youth Representative NAFSA,
CURRENT LANDSCAPE	
<b>What is the current landscape for this region or SDG, including issues, opportunities, recent trends, gaps, challenges?</b>	

The young people from the Latin-American region recognize the need of intersectoral cooperation between governments, private sector, academia and young people, guaranteeing access to education and employment for the youth. Moreover, they acknowledge that young people should be launching entrepreneurship initiatives not by necessity but by choice, linking entrepreneurship and social security and including technical training for entrepreneurship within university courses.

The participants underline the necessity to educate young people with sustainable approaches about innovation, entrepreneurship and human rights, as well make them active players in their achievement and in influencing public policies in this area. Moreover, participants recognize the need to strengthen the youth leadership programmers and volunteering activities for education and training. In addition, it is remarked that new technologies are also generating gaps in the labor markets, increasing in some cases the precarization of youth labor opportunities.

Therefore, the participants underline there is an increasing need to invest in technological infrastructure and education to face a new labor market within the 4th industrial revolution. In the same way, the participants stress that there is an urgent need to take action to reduce inequalities and violence in the region, being these environments in part catalysers of youth criminality.

It is also emphasized that there is the necessity to recognize the right for a healthy environment with concrete actions. Mobilizing a regional agenda to face climate change, developing public policies about climate change that represent youths interest in the intergenerational and energetic transition.

With respect to the specific issues they face, youth in the Caribbean recognize the need for the region's education to be adapted to be more based on the Caribbean context; with the introduction and normalizing non-formal education. Also, the education system only caters to producing lawyers, doctors, accountants and other conventional professionals as opposed to producing entrepreneurs, technical servicemen/servicewomen and innovators. Also, the education system should create second chance programmes for youth who may have face challenges to return to their studies.

In addition, too many young people are convinced that they have to be ruthless and underhanded to thrive in their socio-economic realities. Violence, including self-inflicted violence is a major problem in the Caribbean and have been normalized. Also, there's a lack of mentorship, which is a barrier to youth participation. Tokenism and nepotism from government officials or heads of influential organizations is a challenge to youth participation. In addition, there needs to be modern technology to build stronger and more resilient infrastructure. Also, there needs to be opportunities for green entrepreneurship and jobs. Also there needs to be stronger environmental education programmes.

## YOUTH SOLUTIONS AND ACTIONS

**(What are youth doing to address the current situation and leverage opportunities? And what are some of the most transformative solutions?)**

Participants in the Latin America session agreed on the need to support entrepreneurship from different angles in order to create an ecosystem suitable for young people to undertake entrepreneurship projects. Participants went on to say there's a disconnect between what youth are taught and what they will actually need to progress beyond second and tertiary level and skills to start a business. Furthermore, it was affirmed that there is a need to implement a second chance programme for students who may have experienced a disruption in their studies.

The participants encouraged positioning young people in the center of agendas, so that they are taken into account when making decisions and can participate in this process. It was highlighted to be of crucial importance for young people to influence the generation of public policies that affect them, as well as strengthen the National Youth Councils and promote the intergenerational dialogue. Young people should be indispensable players for SDG compliance and support and to carry out sustainability practices.

Topics such as educating young people to meet the characteristics needed to be leaders, were also discussed. It is important for the young population to have the opportunity to interact with their governments, as well as from their own networks and spaces, giving them greater visibility. In the same line, a greater participation of women is essential for the reduction of the gender gap.

With regards to the topic of climate change, it was stressed that it is necessary to give it a regional approach and consider young people as partners in addressing it. Also, they vehemently recommended for the use of modern technology to build stronger and more resilient infrastructure. It is crucial to create partnerships between the public and private sectors for generating green jobs, as well as develop new public policies on climate change to encompass this problem and enable correct energetic transition, remarking the importance of the Escazu Agreement ratification.

The young people of the Caribbean recognize the need to revise and update the education system in the Caribbean. Where the system should serve to educate and train its pupils to become producers of job opportunities in the Caribbean. As such, there's a call for the system's curriculum and services to educate and train young people in areas of entrepreneurship, information and communications technology, soft skills and other technical & innovative areas.

We must seek to create spaces that enables young people to actively participate in key decision-making processes – especially as it pertains to national budgets and development planning. Where spaces may exist in the region – there's a need to strengthen their structure and capability where young people from diverse backgrounds are included and are actively contributing to the work responsible for reducing inter-generational poverty, language barriers, gender inequality, crime

and violence and other socioeconomic issues that affect the development of young in the Caribbean.

It's a must that we empower young people – so whereas a collective young people can actively work together towards achieving our rights via our collective strength to seek for the implementation of policies and programmes to achieve the SDG and Agenda 2030. Of those policies and programmes – initiatives with the objective to safeguard our region from climate change while providing economic opportunities for young people where they can develop and employ critical innovation and technology that protects the beauty and serenity of our region for future generations of young people.

### **LOOKING TO THE HORIZON**

**What can the UN and youth do together to make sure young people's contributions have a deeper and wider impact, and that they are be better served and engaged by member states?**

In conclusion, it is essential to comply with and support the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals from the integral approach, educating young people on this topic, informing them on the sustainability practices carried out by different institutions and making them the main actors of sustainable development.

Having said this, there is an increasing necessity to create global partnerships between all sectors and players in the achievement of the 2030 Agenda, giving a crucial role to young people in all the processes driven from the United Nations and its agencies, on global, regional and local levels.

Finally, young people should be recognized as key drivers in the successful implementation of the Agenda 2030. In doing so, we must ensure that young people are actively participating in development processes at all levels within the UN, CARICOM, in our countries and in our communities.

### **ANY OTHER RELEVANT ELEMENTS**

**(Any other crucial points that may be outside the above 3 questions)**

During the Latin America session, three instruments we mentioned as useful legal frameworks:

- The Ibero-American Convention on the Rights of Young People and its Additional Protocol, that aim at educating young people about their rights and motivating them to take action to defend them, signed by the Ibero-American States in the city of Badajoz, Spain, in 2005, and in force since 1st March, 2008, with seven States Parties and ten signatories.

- Youth 2030 UN strategy.
- Escazú Agreement.

The ECOSOC Youth Forum's Latin America and the Caribbean breakout session was nurtured by the preparatory virtual debate for LAC, which counted with the participation of young people from the region, where they discussed opportunities, recent trends and challenges for different SDGs identified.