



**2024 ECOSOC Youth Forum**  
**"Youth shaping sustainable and innovative solutions:  
 Reinforcing the 2030 Agenda and eradicating poverty in times of crises"**

<b>IDENTIFICATION</b>	
<b>Session title</b>	Urban Youth Leading Climate Action, Community Resilience Initiatives and Sustaining Peace
<b>Session focus</b>	SDG 11, SDG 13, SDG 16, SDG 17, youth engagement, youth empowerment, community resilience, sustaining peace, social cohesion
<b>Session leads</b>	UN-Habitat, UN DESA, UN-Habitat Youth Advisory Board, Accept International
<b>Session organizers</b>	AFS Intercultural Programs, IAAI – Glocha, International Youth Conference
<b>BACKGROUND &amp; KEY ISSUES</b>	
<p>Urbanization is reshaping the global demographic, with two-thirds of the world's population expected to live in cities by 2050. This growing urban population is mainly young, with 60% of the urban population projected to be less than 18 years of age by 2030, the year the SDGs are to be attained. This shift not only marks a significant change but also presents an opportunity to drive sustainable urban initiatives. Leveraging the vigor and potential of the youth is crucial for cities to tackle the challenges of the 21st century.</p> <p>However, data also indicates a lag in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. This is attributed to various factors, including the repercussions of the global pandemic, climate change, armed conflicts, and an overall failure to allocate adequate resources for global and international sustainable development efforts. It is imperative to mobilize support across all societal groups and governance levels to bridge the gap and expedite the realization of the Global Goals, alongside youth.</p> <p>Resilience is crucial in the face of these challenges. Climate change exacerbates existing vulnerabilities not only in urban settings but also in all human settlements, while armed conflicts disrupt communities globally and locally and hinder development efforts. Yet, amidst adversity, communities led by resilient youth demonstrate remarkable adaptability and innovation, serving as beacons of hope for sustainable peace and development.</p> <p>The Summit of the Future will chart the path towards implementing the forthcoming Pact of the Future, in collaboration with youth residing in cities and other human settlements worldwide. It is time to recognize the transformative potential of localities in shaping the global landscape. The sustainable development agenda must be contextualized to local realities, fostering a "localized" approach that integrates global objectives into local settings. Moreover, youth, including youths who have left out such as ones associated with armed groups, must be empowered to leverage the development agenda for personal growth, positive socialization, and the</p>	

advancement of humanity, thereby evolving into "Global Citizens" who bring their local priorities to the global stage.

This plenary session will convene youth, representatives from national and subnational governments, development practitioners, private sector actors, and civil society stakeholders for a dynamic exchange on the role of youth in shaping a sustainable community and peace for all, with a focus on climate change and armed conflicts. The agenda will reflect on the achievements and challenges of localizing the SDGs, the New Urban Agenda, New Agenda for Peace, along with other critical declarations and roadmaps towards sustainable peace with and for youth, culminating in discussions surrounding the preparation of the Pact of the Future.

### OBJECTIVES OF SESSION

The overall goal of the plenary session is to validate the key messages on urban youth's role in leading climate action, community resilience and peace initiatives. The specific objectives of the session are as follows:

- To highlight the importance of integrating youth perspectives in urban planning and sustainable development efforts to address the challenges posed by rapid urbanization, climate change, and armed conflicts.
- To explore innovative approaches and best practices led by youth in building resilience in face of the negative consequences of climate change and promoting peace within communities.
- To facilitate dialogue and collaboration among youth, governments, development practitioners, private sector actors, and civil society stakeholders to strengthen partnerships and identify concrete actions for advancing the implementation of SDGs 11, 13, and 16 at the local level.

### OVERALL FORMAT/STRUCTURE

The plenary session will consist of a keynote address, two interactive panels with embedded Q&A exchanges, and concluding remarks. Each panel features three to four speakers engaging in a "Davos style" semi-conversational format, allowing a maximum of 2 minutes per speaker for presentations. Likewise, the questions and interventions made from the floor cannot exceed 2 minutes. The session commences with a keynote speaker setting the stage.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How can youth participation in inclusive planning and decision-making processes contribute to building resilient communities in the face of challenges such as rapid urbanization, climate change, and armed conflicts?
2. What strategies and interventions have proven effective in empowering youth, including those marginalized or associated with armed groups, to become agents of positive change and contribute to sustainable peace and development in their communities?
3. How can governments and international organizations better support and leverage the role of youth in implementing the [New Urban Agenda](#), New Agenda for Peace, and other critical frameworks adopted by youth such as the [Global DeclarACTION on Youth and Sustainable Urbanization](#), aimed at promoting sustainable urbanization and peacebuilding efforts?

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

**Moderators:**

Mr. Ali Mustafa , AFS Intercultural Programs

**Speakers:**

Mr. Yosuke Nagai, Accept International, Japan

Ms. Milagros Costabel Bionda, Human Rights and Disability Inclusion Activist, Uruguay  
Mr. Miroslav Polzer, IAAI GloCha  
Ms. Sarah Syed, Climate Activist, Canada  
Ms. Alexandra Kulik, Implementing partner of the City of Lublin, Poland

**Special invitee:**

Ms. Leah Namugerwa, Climate Change Activist, Founder Birthday Trees Initiative, Uganda

**Interventions from the floor:**

Mr. H.E. Mustapha Ussif, Minister for Youth and Sports, Ghana

Mr. Krzysztof Tarabura, Poland

Youth Delegates (TBD)

**OVERVIEW OF PREPARATORY EVENT/CONSULTATION**

The UN-Habitat Youth Advisory Board, made up of youth representing 17 countries of the world, developed a urban youth response to the Pact for the Future, building on the Global DeclarACTION on Youth and Sustainable Urbanization. This document focused identified the challenges faced by urban youth, and proposed solutions to empower them and enhance their contributions to achieving SDG11, SDG 13, SDG16, SDG17. Key themes addressed included youth inclusion in urban planning processes, capacity-building initiatives, and the importance of addressing the needs of marginalized youth, including those affected by armed conflicts.

**ADDITIONAL DETAILS, SUGGESTED READING, IF ANY**