



# The Mahogany DECLARATION



# The Mahogany Declaration

World Youth Conference 2017

“Globally Running to 2030, Becoming Sustainably Strong”

We, the delegates of the World Youth Conference 2017, representing forty-five (45) countries of the world, having met in Belize City to consider the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, and in our particular role to advance the 2030 Global Agenda, as leaders, agents of peace and development, enablers, advocates, and informed global citizens, take this opportunity to:

Reaffirm the importance and indispensability of a truly participatory and inclusive approach to the implementation of the SDGs that values the worth and rights of every young person.

Recognise and reaffirm, the importance of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well as other international instruments relating to human rights and international law, and the responsibilities of all States, to respect, protect and promote human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction of any kind as to race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, disability, gender identity, orientation, expression or other status, as intrinsically interrelated and mutually reinforcing to the realisation of the SDGs for all.

Accept unreservedly in this regard, and commit, to our rights and responsibility as young people of the world, as contained in the aforementioned rights framework, and in youth declarations and commitments at national and global levels, to educate, advocate, build our knowledge and networks, participate, and take action with a variety of partners in our respective communities and countries, and across country divides, to ensure the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals is achieved.

Reaffirm the importance of youth assets, traditional knowledge, and technologies in changing mindsets and innovating solutions so that “no one is left behind”.

Call for redoubled efforts of governments, civil society, private sector, faith-based agencies, and development agencies to leverage their supports and investments on a youth-led agenda of education, and transformational behaviour for the achievement of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals as follows:

## 1. **Eradicating Poverty and Promoting Prosperity in a Changing World**

No Poverty, Zero Hunger, Good Health and Wellbeing, Gender Equality, Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure, and Life Below Water.

*Recognizing that the socio-economic situation, access, and participation of people of the world are the main determinants of their wellbeing and positive life outcomes; further recognizing mental health as a tenant of good health and well-being, cognisant that all members of society must have access to healthcare and equitable health outcomes, according to their needs, further cognizant of the need for industry, innovation, and development, while protecting marine assets and resources that are intrinsic to our continued existence and well-being, and mindful that gender rights are human rights, in accordance with the targets set forth by the SDGs, we **recommend** and **commit** to the following:*

- Promote inclusion of physical literacy and wellbeing information and opportunities for all young people in all public institutions.
- Improve education, supports, and services to address youth mental illness.
- Advocate for adequate mental health care and treatment, mindful of the special needs of youth with mental illness associated with substance abuse and other abuse and violence.
- Support the work of NGOs and agencies to ensure nutritional programs, maternal health, sexual and reproductive health, and a comprehensive health service system are available to meet youth and community needs in youth-friendly and mindful ways, with attention to incentives to ensure doctors and health workers provide equitable healthcare access work in low income, high risk, rural or other underserved areas and among under-served and fringe populations.
- Work inclusively with / support traditional healers, midwives and other health care workers who provide essential supports to rural and other communities e.g. in Peru, Panama, Uruguay, Colombia.
- Ensure access to student loans, scholarships, and other supports to increase capacity across countries to conduct medical research, and work on/ innovative and indigenous medicines and practices that promote health and wellbeing, with attention to addressing lifestyle ailments.
- Ensure all youth conferences and meetings promote and practice gender sensitivity and equality.
- Increase availability of youth friendly material and opportunities to enhance substantive gender equality, respect, and full enjoyment of rights as a fundamental aspect of all youth participation opportunities.
- Manage social media and other campaigns on the interconnectedness of youth rights and gender during well-known international days, including initiatives that reduce gender stigmatization, discrimination, and violence.
- Equip youth networks and youth leaders to conduct and manage gender audits to ensure all youth work, youth development, and the work of youth-led agencies are gender-neutral and provide opportunities for young women equal to those of men and ensure the adoption of fair and transparent and remedial measures to achieve genuine gender equality, participation, and representation.

- Create safe spaces in schools, colleges, and other public places for women & girls to discuss issues, especially those relating to violence against women and fund empowerment initiatives, that stem from the discussions.
- Promote more community and school-based projects and actions on the protection of the ocean, especially for small states and islands, targeting the diversity of learning needs, culture, circumstances and perspectives of children, youth and communities in partnership with the private sector, NGOs, and with UN and scientific agencies responsible for the oceans and marine resources.
- Promote good practices and social responsibility towards ocean protection through digital campaigns and apps that involve youth.

## 2. Transformation towards Sustainable and Resilient Societies.

Clean Water and Sanitation, Affordable and Clean Energy, Sustainable Cities and Communities, Responsible Consumption and Production, Life on Land.

*Recognizing the need for food security, land access and tenure for wellbeing and security and cultural heritage, recognizing the need for development, growth and innovation that takes advantage of new technologies and improves lives of all people, and have the potential to improve quality of lives, while mindful of the persistent need to preserve the pace of our growth and production and consumption practices for the common good, in accordance with the targets set forth by the SDGs, we **recommend** and **commit** to the following:*

- Ensure all global, regional, and national youth conferences and meetings work towards 100% green and ethical consumer practices by 2030, including restricting the use of Styrofoam, plastic, and non-recycled paper for official and unofficial components.
- Advocate for and promote intergenerational and cross-border understanding of the historical and cultural value of land to wellbeing, as a means of creating greater sensitivity and respect for sustainable growth, man-made development, and consumption practices.
- Increase education, policies, and programs that establish the rights of all people, in all circumstances to clean water and sanitation, as reaffirmed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
- Promote research and continue funding of innovative methods that guarantee water purity and better sanitation.
- Work with global water partners and other stakeholders on conscious water consumption campaigns that equip and engage as enabling partners for campaigns in schools, communities, and other virtual youth spaces.
- Equip young people to understand and ensure accountability of governments and industry (in the private sector) in the use of systems and technologies that are inimical to cities, communities, and life on land, and in ensuring renewable energy and new technologies achieve their positive targets for all.

- Ensure sustainable and resilient infrastructure development in both rural and urban areas to guarantee free movement and better opportunities for youth.
- Work with private sector(s), governments, and other agencies to produce consumer-friendly information, mindful of culture, sex, age, and other status to achieve sustainably sound consumer and environmental practices from early childhood through youth and adulthood.
- Promote support(s) for research, innovation, and youth enterprises for green technologies and clean energy and for other entrepreneurial opportunities for the youth to find solutions for reducing waste and promoting efficient economies.
- Make education about recycling and clean technologies a part of formal and non-formal learning opportunities.
- Provide education and opportunities, including skills upgrade, financing, and other supports, that ensure that the transition to green economies creates opportunities and promotes well-being for all.
- Increase education, awareness, affordability, and access about products that produce zero-waste, and encourage their consumption.
- Promote the use of more local and sustainable and innovative technologies to ensure people can own homes and community spaces e.g. with clay and other environmentally safe materials.
- Ensure all youth-led agencies, student and other movements are educated about the issues of clean water, affordable and clean energy, sustainable communities, responsible consumption, and life on land and they can work as effective change agents.
- Raise awareness of the importance of the protection of animals on land through digital and other campaigns that involve youth.

### **3. Empowering Youth and Ensuring Inclusiveness and Equality**

Quality Education, Decent Work and Economic Growth, Reduced Inequalities, Peace and Justice

*Recognizing that the rule of law at national and international levels is essential for sustained and inclusive economic growth, sustainable development, and the full realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms to all people in all circumstances, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status, including the right to development, to employment, and to security, safety and peaceful coexistence in communities and countries, and further cognizant of the fundamental importance of quality education as a right and enabler of wellbeing and development in its most holistic form, we recommend and commit to the following:*

- Encourage and support youth participation in democratic processes at national and international levels as a fundamental youth right

- Work with youth networks, the development community, and governments to ensure each country produces SDGs education in a manner that equips each child and citizen to understand, take meaningful action, and ensure wider compliance and rights-based action on the respective targets, mindful of the use of the performing arts, edutainment, sports and other learning methodologies that appeal to different youth and audiences.
- Make Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) more affordable and accessible and ensure more bursaries and cash transfer programs to give every youth an equal chance to get an education and skill, according to their circumstances and needs.
- Take action to keep decent work, employment rights and equitable wages of young people at the forefront of labour rights, employment policies, and collective action.
- Encourage private sector investment in youth development and in marginalized communities to guarantee all youth the right to education, decent work, access to capital and finance for entrepreneurship and wealth generation.
- Advocate for more agencies, including development agencies, to institute paid internship and apprenticeships to provide young persons with the requisite experience to make them more marketable to employers.
- Enhance youth development practice as a platform for non-formal and informal education and for enhancing multiculturalism and respect for diversity.
- Work across youth networks and sectors to research, develop, and share best practices in informal and non-formal education suitable to the needs of diverse youth populations.
- Advocate for the inclusion of more non-traditional curricula and apprenticeship programs into the formal education system.
- Diversify education and learning curricula and methodologies to make education and learning more holistic and respectful of diversity, cultures, beliefs, and spiritual systems.
- Make affordable online learning platforms more accessible to young people everywhere.
- Provide more opportunities to students, especially at-risk and marginalized youth, to pursue tertiary and further education and research in fields that are necessary and relevant to the context of the country.
- Enhance opportunities for measuring addressing and enhancing awareness about learning and developmental disabilities in schools at all stages of the education system, and to build awareness about disabilities in youth spaces to promote respect, acceptance and inclusion of all persons with disabilities in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).
- Advocate for the rights of persons with disabilities as set forth in the CPRD, and ensure that young People with Disabilities (PWDs) receive access to equitable services and opportunities, genuine social, economic, and political participation, and genuine inclusion in youth governance and decision-making at all global levels.

- Enhance recognition and compensation for quality and qualified youth workers and professional youth work.
- Use all media innovatively and engage media partners to build awareness and promote transformational behaviour that contributes to genuine equality.
- Ensure the rights of young people of other status / SOGIE are upheld, and use peer to peer advocacy and outreach to support their equal access to social, economic and political participation.
- Broaden the knowledge base and enhance the technical capacity of youth to effectively advocate and promote positive change on issues of corruption, the rule of law, democratic practices, and accountable governance and rights-based development.
- Educate and equip young people working with communities and other partners to engage meaningfully to bring about change and peaceful solutions in situations of insecurity, violence and conflict
- Ensure investment in innovative and youth-friendly supports and opportunities to equip young persons who have been victims of violence, conflict, corruption or other abuse to transform their lives and their communities.

#### **4. Partnerships for the Goals**

We applaud the action and investment of the International Youth Committee (IYC) in convening the World Youth Conference (WYC) annually, as a genuine, youth-asset based initiative whereby we, as young people can carve a role for ourselves and our peers everywhere in shaping global change and sustainable development.

We further recognise with deep appreciation the role of the Government and people of Belize in creating an inclusive and safe space to achieve global consensus on the “Globally Running to 2030, Becoming Sustainably Strong” agenda, the theme for the WYC 2017.

We commit unreservedly in this ***Mahogany Declaration 2017*** to work individually and collectively to improve the lives and circumstances of youth, people and communities everywhere, to leveraging our boundless talents, skills, and innovation to preserve our societies from the widespread, unprecedented impacts of climate change, which disproportionately burden children, young people and the poorest and most vulnerable everywhere, and we call on all youth leaders, and democratically elected youth councils, clubs, and agencies in all world regions and countries to join us to:

- Make the ***Mahogany Declaration*** available to young people everywhere to encourage learning and action at school, club, community, and other youth-led levels on the SDGs.
- Convene national / regional fora to set a result-based priority agenda on youth action for the Mahogany Declaration/ SDGs, mindful of the resources,

investments and partnership necessary for successful implementation, and bearing in mind:

- The strategic goals / priorities for youth development, inclusion, rights, participation, and representation in respective countries etc.
- The specific needs and concerns of marginalized youth and communities so “No one is left behind”.
- The need for education and awareness on the SDGs appropriate to diverse youth cohorts, making the best use of available technologies.
- Ensure each country trains and deploys youth SDG Ambassadors to work in schools, communities, and other spaces, to educate and inform peers about the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, so it can be understood as a real “life” and well-being issue requiring sustained interest and action within and across generations.
- Work to increase youth capacity to acquire the skills to collect and use reliable data to play a greater role in monitoring and evaluating impacts of youth actions and supports for the achievement of the SDGs, as the basis for measuring youth well-being.
- Redouble education and advocacy efforts for adoption of youth policies and development plans that identify genuine investments in youth as assets for sustainable development.
- Ensure all youth conferences and forums at all levels are integrated, holistic, democratic in nature, and demonstrate the application of the rule of law as an enabler of genuine development.
- Consolidate through regional and global agencies a global plan for the achievement of SDGs, using the commitments of this ***Mahogany Declaration 2017*** as the framework **global youth partnership and action.**

Dated November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2017, Belize City, Belize.

## Countries present at the World Youth Conference 2017

1. Afghanistan
2. Barbados
3. Belize
4. Belarus
5. Brazil
6. Cameroon
7. China
8. Colombia
9. Costa Rica
10. El Salvador
11. Fiji
12. Germany
13. Ghana
14. Grenada
15. Guatemala
16. Haiti
17. India
18. Italy
19. Jamaica
20. Kenya
21. Liberia
22. Malaysia
23. Mexico
24. Nepal
25. NIGERIA
26. Pakistan
27. Panama
28. Peru
29. Philippines
30. Romania
31. Saint Lucia
32. El Salvador
33. Senegal
34. Seychelles
35. Sierra Leone
36. South Africa
37. St. Kitts
38. St. Vincent and the Grenadines
39. Suriname
40. Tanzania
41. Taiwan
42. Trinidad and Tobago
43. United Kingdom
44. USA
45. Venezuela
46. Zimbabwe

