



Resolution on Promoting Youth Participation in EU Development Policies for Africa

*Adopted by the Council of Members/ Extraordinary General
Assembly 2-3 May 2008 (Castelldefels, Catalonia - Spain)*

Recalling that the European Youth Forum works to empower young people to participate actively in the shaping of Europe and the societies in which they live, and in improving the living conditions of young people as European citizens in today's world;

Recalling that development cooperation has been a priority of the European Youth Forum since the establishment of its predecessor, the Youth Forum of the European Communities¹;

Recalling the European Youth Forum principles for global cooperation, included in the Policy Paper "Youth Participation at Global Level", adopted by the General Assembly in Malta in 2002; the Position Paper "Youth Responses to Global Issues: Consultative Practices", adopted at the COMEM in November 2003; the Policy Paper "A Youth Vision for Co-operation and Development: principles and institutional relations", adopted at the General Assembly in November 2004; and the Policy Paper "UN and Global Youth Work Development", adopted at the General Assembly in November 2006;

Reaffirming the aim to promote these principles actively, within the Global Coordination Coordinating Committee (GCCC), through its 1% Solidarity Fund and through the organisation of the International Coordination Meeting of Youth Organisations (ICMYO);

Recalling the commitments made by the Member States of the United Nations regarding the internationally agreed Millennium Development Goals, and their relevance for young people across the world; the relevance of the provisions of the World Programme of Action for Youth in Poverty Eradication, and the importance of youth participation in Poverty Reduction Strategies, as recognised by the UN Youth Resolution 2008, and that the majority of the African population is under 35;

Welcoming the recognition of the specific role played by young people and youth organisations in EU development cooperation policies, formalised under Article 26 of the Cotonou Agreement²;

Recognizing that the lack of protection of Human Rights is a severe threat to development in several countries in the African continent;

¹ A Resolution of 1979 on the future of the Lomé Treaty served as a guideline to begin continuous advocacy work and partnership with Youth Organisations in the ACP Regions. This led to the inclusion of a youth perspective in the Lomé IV Convention and the organisation, in cooperation with the European Commission and the ACP Secretariat, of ACP-Youth cooperation between the 1980s and 1990s

² The Cotonou Agreement sets the framework for the partnership between the European Union and the African, Caribbean and Pacific States and succeeded the Lomé Convention in 2000; it was revised in 2005. Article 26 states that "[C]ooperation shall also support the establishment of a coherent and comprehensive policy for realising the potential of youth so that they are better integrated into society to achieve their full potential." Following revision in 2005, the Agreement includes an important addition which promotes "the active participation of young citizens in public life and [the] fostering [of] student exchanges and [the] interaction of ACP and EU youth organisations".

Emphasising the commitments made by the EU to involve non-state actors, including youth organisations, at different levels of development policies and programmes, particularly with the approval of the European Consensus on Development and the development of the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI);

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The Council of Members of the European Youth Forum (YFJ),

1. **Endorses** the final declaration of the Africa-Europe Youth Summit and commits to play an active role in its implementation;
2. **Calls** on the Member Organisations of the YFJ to play an active role in the implementation of the Africa-Europe Youth Summit Declaration and in the implementation of the EU-Africa Joint Strategy;
3. **Underlines** the role of National Youth Councils in supporting the promotion of independent and representative youth structures at the national level in Africa, as well as the role of International Non-Governmental Youth Organisations in building equal partnerships with their African Members and Partners;
4. **Calls** upon Governments in Africa and Europe to support the youth wings of political parties and movements and protect the rights of their representatives, acknowledging the freedoms of association and of expression, and the value of pluralistic democracies;
5. **Welcomes and actively supports** the revitalisation process of the Pan African Youth Union, supported by the African Union, and reiterates the need to build a democratic, representative, independent and inclusive youth-led platform which fully involves National Youth Platforms and International Non-Governmental Youth Organisations with active members in Africa, as a pre-requisite for the full recognition of the Pan African Youth Union as YFJ unique interlocutor as Regional Youth Platform in the Continent;
6. **Calls** on the European Union to include youth as one of the major stakeholders in the Africa-Europe dialogue, in the context of the implementation of the Joint Africa-Europe Strategy, with the Pan African Youth Union and the European Youth Forum as main interlocutors;
7. **Requests** that governments in Africa ratify and implement the African Youth Charter without further delay;
8. **Encourages YFJ Member Organisations** to work in equal partnerships with youth-led organisations in Africa on concrete capacity building, to support the development of Youth Organisations in the South;

9. **Urges** the EU to provide the necessary financial tools, beginning with a series of ACP Cooperation pilot projects inspired by the Euro-Med Programme, in order to build an ACP Youth Initiative modelled on the Youth in Action Programme, and with the support of the European Development Fund, under the legal basis of the art. 26 of the Cotonou Agreement;
10. **Encourages** cooperation between the YFJ and the European Commission to facilitate the access of youth organisations to the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI);
11. **Calls** on the EU to develop an analytical and strategic framework on youth and development with the YFJ, to be part of the European Development Policies - as a follow up of the European Parliament Study on youth and development policies, and of the co-operation between the Directorate General for Development and the European Youth Forum.

ANNEX

1st AFRICA-EUROPE YOUTH SUMMIT DECLARATION *(short version - for full version see the reference document)*

For a Better Africa-For a Better Europe-For a Better World

Representatives of youth organisations from Africa and Europe, have met from 5 to 7 December 2007 in Lisbon, Portugal at the Africa-Europe Youth Summit, on the eve of the 2nd EU -Africa Summit of Heads of State.

We have gathered here to join together in a partnership for development. We firmly believe that the young generation are positive agents for change in strengthening the partnership and setting forth a progressive agenda of cooperation.

We welcome the 2nd EU -Africa Summit of Heads of State and want to use this rare political momentum to express our commitment to act as valuable resource and answer to the present and future challenges of our societies, firmly convinced that equal chances for participation of all young women and men, is a prerequisite for the development of our two continents and of humankind as a whole. We maintain that young people should participate in the decisions taken today about the resources and priorities of tomorrow.

The Declaration agreed upon at the Youth Summit signifies the hopes, concerns and the reflections of many more than those who have gathered here. It includes the voices of all those who took part in the different moments of encounter and consultation held at the continental, sub-continental and national levels in Africa and in Europe. We truly believe that peace, social progress, economic prosperity and political stability are only possible through the mobilization, participation and acknowledgement of the capacities of young people.

To this end we urge all actors to ensure a society in which young people can reach their full potential and become active partners. Acknowledging that as result of historical, cultural, and political discrimination, girls and young women are still under-represented, underpaid, sexually exploited and face fewer opportunities than boys and young men, and therefore are far from seeing their fundamental Human Rights ensured, we insist on the importance of mainstreaming gender in all the policies and action plans within the Euro-Africa cooperation.

Recalling the relevant provisions in the World Programme of Action for Youth for the Year 2000 and Beyond, in the African Youth Charter, and in the Lisbon Declaration on Youth Policies and Programmes and the Braga Youth Action Plan, we stress that youth empowerment and participation in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the policies that mostly affect young people must be consolidated, particularly in the field of Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) and the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Acknowledging as well that youth organisations have been for many years at the forefront in building equal partnership between Europe and Africa through formal and non-formal education programme in the field of peace, health, AIDS, decent work, active citizenship and participation.

We firmly believe that the participation and co-operation of empowered young men and women from our respective regions is crucial in the policies and action plans included in the EU-Africa Strategy. With this opportunity to come together, we call upon the African and European Youth, our governments and institutions to work together with us to carry out these commitments and make our vision of Euro African Cooperation a reality.

To this end we declare that:

The commitment to achieving the Millennium Development Goals must be bolstered as they provide a framework for development and poverty eradication, especially in Africa. In doing so governments must step up their commitment in achieving at least 0.7% of the Gross National Product of Official Development Aid.

As youth organisations we reiterate our commitment to raising awareness about and contributing to the achievement of the MDGs by 2015, especially HIV/AIDS. And gender equality. Regional integration processes reinforce good governance and democracy in both regions. We urge all government to condemn all forms of regimes that violate the EU Treaties and the AU Constitutive Act.

Human rights are universal and we urge governments to guarantee political rights as well as cultural, social and economical rights for all.

Peace and human security is a pre-requisite for socio-economic development. We call to mind the commitments of our governments to the rule of law, UN principles related to human rights and peace and security, and we restate the contribution of youth organisations to building a culture of peace by promoting dialogue, along with the role young people play in preventative measures, reconciliation processes and in post-conflict rehabilitation.

Globalisation and the current trade and financial regulations and aid Policies have failed to contribute to a more equitable society and sustainable development particularly in the African Continent. We reaffirm our commitment to participatory public policies and programmes aiming at tackling the impact of globalisation. In doing so we urge our governments to live up to their commitments related to fair trade, debt cancellation and aid for trade.

We firmly believe that the protection of the environment can go hand in hand with the development process. We recognize the need to improve international co-operation in implementing environmental-related protocols and agreements. The struggle to cease environmental degradation and stop

the process of global warming is a political priority and all efforts must be made to achieve a post-Kyoto agreement.

The emigration of young skilled Africans represents a brain-drain challenge affecting the whole continent. On the other hand, immigrants face problems of integration and prejudice. We call upon governments to work in partnership with youth organisations to formulate progressive and rights based policies on migrants, refugees and Internally Displaced Persons in order to safeguard any exploitation of migrants and ensure their integration into society as a whole. We urge governments to put in place and fully enforce severe punitive measures against human trafficking associated with clandestine immigration.

The global challenge of assuring decent work for all is immense. We pledge to be involved in a genuine global partnership with governments to ensure the creation of concrete economic and social policy, which allow for young people to acquire decent work. We firmly believe that decent work must be at the heart of the development agenda and respect for core labour standards must be the foundation.

We are convinced that a meaningful EU-Africa Partnership should be based on a strategic project and programme of action for young people to strengthen our partnership for development.

Political Will Is Vital. We therefore call on the Heads of State and Government, the EU, the AU and the Council of Europe to invest on empowering young people, on strengthening the youth structures and on removing the obstacles to mobility i.e. Visas, in order to improve participation and cooperation between African and European youth, thus contributing to the advancement of our continents.