



UNITED NATIONS COMMITTEE

Promoting Youth's Participation in Civil Society and Fostering Future Generations

In substance, youth have the right to maintenance and education. Youths are potentially free and their lives directly embody nothing save the sanctity of freedom and the prospects of effective engagement in civil society. The young ought to be equipped with the foundations of an ethical life; a life of self-subsistence and the freedom of cultivating personality with a road paved to establishing individualism. Hence, the United Nations committee of the New York City Bar is in alignment with the principles set forth in the draft resolution on the scope of *The Summit of the Future* whence the General Assembly, reaffirming the Charter of the United Nations, recalling its resolution 76/307 on the modalities of the Summit of the Future, in which it decided that said Summit will adopt a concise, action-oriented outcome document entitled "*A Pact for the Future*" comprising of a chapeau, five chapters and in particular highlighting (iv) *Chapter 4: Youth and Future Generations*: (xv) promoting the meaningful, inclusive and effective engagement of youth, youth led and youth-focused organizations in the work of the United Nations; (xvi) Thinking and Acting in the interests of Future Generations, including through the elaboration of a Declaration on Future Generations, to be inter-governmentally negotiated during the seventy-eighth session of the General Assembly and which would be annexed to the Pact of the Future if inter-governmentally agreed.

The gangrene of the ethical order is to rob youth of participation premised on an immaturity of psyche, a lack of substantially ripe decision-making skills leading to the hindrance of potently engaging in the intellectual public policy sphere with inherent worth, as the young step into the shoes of the challenging adult world. Civil Society entails, above all, the actuality of the universal principles of freedom of thought therein contained—the protection of the developing youthful spirit. The inculcation of youth participation, and consequently the promoting and fostering of trust in decision-making processes may be expanded and strengthened through dedicated national youth consultative bodies, a global standard for meaningful youth engagement, a framework to track progress, providing for vital avenues for youth participation in UN decision-making processes, and establishing a standing UN Youth Townhall. Youth empowerment is highly relevant in terms of increasing the involvement of young people in the decision-making processes and participatory processes with respect to the SDGs. This signifies providing open nurturing and safeguarded spaces for the sharing of ideas and supporting youth to the most robust and versatile extent possible in becoming active participants in civil society.

In relation to young people, the SDGs play a crucial role as a cross-cutting and interdisciplinary area of focus. The participation of young people is essential for sustainable empowerment and should be based upon the current realities facing young people in terms of their differing life-styles, varying from nation state to nation state and ought not to be premised upon the views and desires of adults. Youth

About the Association

The mission of the New York City Bar Association, which was founded in 1870 and has over 23,000 members, is to equip and mobilize a diverse legal profession to practice with excellence, promote reform of the law, and uphold the rule of law and access to justice in support of a fair society and the public interest in our community, our nation, and throughout the world.

empowerment signals taking young people seriously, providing opportunities for development and granting them space to take responsibility for themselves, their actions, for others and for society as a whole, as well as equipping youth with the tools to learn with and from one another. Bona fide, true participation of young people in the political decision-making processes can only be achieved if adequate opportunities for participation are established. Education is an indispensable prerequisite for said participatory establishment. Interdisciplinary learning and transformative educational concepts—for example, in the areas of education for sustainable development, citizenship education, global learning and global citizenship education, media literacy, gender sensitivity and gender equality—are pivotal in enabling young people to critically reflect on and actively engage in civil society.

In essence, younger generations should be offered a place for representation in the decision-making processes at the United Nations Level but that place may certainly be expanded to the national level. This is a genuinely positive concept but only if accompanied with a strategy of education which ensures that youth representation will not result in unrealistic and irresponsible wishful thinking and stale aspirations. The education program should ensure that the thus-empowered youth is cognizant of their ideas, carefully planning and structuring their participation in the decision-making processes as well as taking into account what the social, economic and ecologic consequences of particular actions might entail and that the formation of opinion is cultivated and informed by the fundamental UN values. It also appears necessary to ensure that education includes not only the basics of science, but also societal issues, such as gender, ethnic and racial equality, for instance.

The United Nations Committee of the New York City Bar Association stands in solidarity and support of promoting youth as enablers of the future, enhancing the domestication and localization of achieving the sustainable development goals (SDGs) by 2030. The New York City Bar, as a legal organization, continues its mission to support youth awareness and education on SDGs, fortifying the role which youth play by continuing to nurture youths around the world to develop their own ways of contributing to sustainable development at the local, national and regional levels. The New York City Bar remains committed to enhancing information, sharing and awareness raising among youth on the SDGs through youth-friendly platforms, the promotion of youth leadership on SDGs via leadership training and capacity building with such strategies as education, training programs, and the promotion for the appointments of Youth SDG Goodwill Ambassadors. Through the steadfast commitment to youth nationally implementing practical action plans for activities contributing to the SDG process and by motivating youth to actively engage in the SDG process through use of media (social and traditional) and by fostering key messages fashioned for youth to share with policymakers on the need for the implementation of the SDGs nationally, the City Bar aims to uphold the participatory goals of youth in the fundamental and essential decision-making processes of society at large.

(This draft statement is respectfully written and submitted by Sophia Murashkovsky, Ph.D., Esq., Co-Chair of the United Nations Committee of the New York City Bar Association, on behalf of the United Nations Committee.)