



Youth, Peace and Security



On 9 December 2015, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) adopted Resolution 2250. It is the first resolution specifically addressing the role of youth (defined as 18-29 years old) in peace and security. The resolution is an important landmark for the recognition of the positive role young people can play in conflict and post-conflict setting. It provides a set of guidelines for member states, the UN and civil society in development of policies and programs. This global policy framework explores the devastating impact of armed conflicts on young people's lives and what must be done to mitigate its effects, as well as how youth can be meaningfully engaged in managing conflict, peace processes and creating peaceful communities. As of mid-2020, the Security Council adopted two YPS resolutions – 2250 (2015) and 2419 (2018).

Youth, Peace and Security: five action areas

The title of resolution 2250 is “Maintenance of International Peace and Security” which is a reference to Chapter 7, Article 39 in the UN Charter. Security Council Resolutions under Chapter 7 are binding.

This resolution is important because it:

- ✓ supports a new narrative
- ✓ provides recognition and legitimacy
- ✓ brings visibility
- ✓ promotes youth representation and participation
- ✓ fosters partnerships
- ✓ provides tools for countering violent extremism
- ✓ ensures an evidence-based approach
- ✓ ensures accountability

(1) Participation: governments to increase the participation of young people in decision-making at all levels in local, national, regional and international institutions and in mechanisms for the prevention and resolution of conflict. The Security Council to consider young people's needs during its missions.

(2) Protection: governments to ensure the protection of civilians, specifically youth, at times of armed conflict and post-conflict, including protection from all forms of sexual and gender-based violence. Countries to end impunity by bringing to justice those who commit genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes against young civilians.

(3) Prevention: governments to support youth's engagement by creating spaces in which young people are recognized and provided with adequate support to implement violence prevention activities. The need to create policies for youth that would positively contribute to peacebuilding efforts, including for their social and economic development. The UNSC also calls on all relevant actors to establish mechanisms to promote a culture of peace and discourage youth from all acts of violence.



Young women and young men Different backgrounds

“Today’s generation of youth is THE LARGEST the world has ever known, and ... young people often form the majority of the population of COUNTRIES AFFECTED BY ARMED CONFLICT”

“Disruption of youth’s access to EDUCATION AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES has a dramatic effect on durable peace and reconciliation”

“Youth should actively be engaged in shaping lasting PEACE and contributing to JUSTICE AND RECONCILIATION”

“A large youth population presents A UNIQUE DEMOGRAPHIC dividend that can contribute to lasting peace and economic prosperity if INCLUSIVE POLICIES are in place”

UNSCR 2419 (2018)

On 6 June 2018, the UNSC adopted the second resolution 2419 on youth, reaffirming its commitment to the implementation of UNSCR 2250. It has an **additional focus on the inclusive representation of youth for the prevention and resolution of conflict**, including when negotiating and implementing peace agreements.

The resolution also requested the UN SG to report on the implementation of resolution 2419 and 2250 by May 2020.



(4) Partnerships: governments to establish and strengthen partnerships with relevant actors by:

- ✓ increasing political, financial, technical, and logistical support to UN bodies engaged in promoting peace, development and equality;
- ✓ considering the Peacebuilding Commission’s advice and recommendations on how to engage young people during and after conflict when developing peacebuilding strategies;
- ✓ engaging community actors and empowering local people(s) – including youth, families, women, religious, cultural and education leaders – in countering violent extremism and promoting social cohesion and inclusion.

(5) Disengagement and Reintegration: Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) are strategies used in the aftermath of an armed conflict as a way to achieve sustainable peace. It refers to removing the armament from the possession of paramilitary groups (disarmament) as well as disengaging their participants (demobilization) and reintegrating them into society (reintegration). Resolution 2250 encourages all actors engaged in DDR to consider the impact of these processes on youth as well as the needs of young people affected by armed conflict. Aspects to be considered include:

- ✓ opportunities and policies in the fields of education,
- ✓ employment
- ✓ training in preventing the marginalization of youth
- ✓ promoting a culture of peace

SC also calls on all relevant actors to establish mechanisms to promote a culture of peace and discourage youth from all acts of violence.

Even though member states are responsible for the implementation of the resolution at the national level, **there are many ways in which young people and civil society organizations can participate in this process**, from leading it to cooperating with other stakeholders on the local, national, regional and global levels.



Progress Study on Youth 2018

The study documented the experiences of exclusion, described by young people from across the globe, as a form of structural and psychological violence deeply rooted in the reciprocal mistrust between young people, their governments and the multilateral system. This exclusion, and young people’s responses to it, manifested across six core areas:

- ☛ political exclusion
- ☛ economic exclusion
- ☛ education
- ☛ gender
- ☛ injustice and human rights
- ☛ disengagement and reintegration

The Global Coalition on Youth, Peace and Security (GCYPS)

The leading platform for shaping global policy and practice on youth, peace, and security. The GCYPS facilitates exchange, coordination, and collaboration between more than 70 organizations from civil society, including youth-led and youth-focused organizations, UN entities, donors, academia and inter-governmental bodies. It is co-chaired by the United Network of Young Peacebuilders (UNOY Peacebuilders), Search for Common Ground (SFCG) and the United Nations (Peacebuilding Support Office – PBSO and United Nations Population Fund – UNFPA).

UN Secretary Generals Report on Youth, March 2020

The UNSG reported on two key findings of the analysis. First, the young people’s essential role in peace and security is increasingly receiving recognition. There are many instances of Governments, United Nations entities, civil society actors and others stepping up efforts to meet the requirements of resolution 2250 (2015). Second, core challenges remain, including structural barriers limiting the participation of young people and their capacity to influence decision-making; violations of their human rights; and insufficient investment in facilitating their inclusion, in particular through education.

Since 2015, Member States, the UN system and partners have increasingly recognized the engagement of young women and men as central to inclusive and sustainable development. However, awareness yet to be translated into actions, such as national-level measures, institutional priorities, dedicated funding and accountability arrangements, to make sure that all actors can deliver on substantive pillars of resolutions 2250 (2015) and 2419 (2018).