
YOUTH VOICES

FROM CENTRAL ASIA AND AFGHANISTAN

UN75 AND REGIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY



A large, abstract geometric graphic on the left side of the page. It consists of several overlapping shapes in shades of gray, dark blue, and light blue, forming a stylized arrow or chevron pointing towards the right.

YOUTH VOICES FROM CENTRAL ASIA AND AFGHANISTAN- UN75 AND REGIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY



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DISCLAIMER:

This publication collects the winning essays from the essay contest “Youth Voices from Central Asia and Afghanistan – UN75 and Regional Peace and Security,” organized by the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA). The views expressed in the essays are those of the respective author, and do not necessarily reflect those of UNRCCA or the United Nations.

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Dear Reader,

It is a pleasure to share with you this collection of essays written by the winners of our competition, “Youth Voices from Central Asia and Afghanistan – UN75 and Regional Peace and Security.” In it, you will find visions for the future by 19 young people from around the region: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Afghanistan.

I hope you will agree that these young people have done an excellent job of highlighting some of the key regional issues in Central Asia while also proposing solutions and – in many cases – underlying work they are already undertaking to help improve the world around them.

The essay contest was run in the context of the UNRCCA Preventive Diplomacy Academy, an initiative my office launched in 2019 to help develop the enormous potential of young people to support peace and security in the region and to promote the implementation of the Youth, Peace and Security agenda in Central Asia and Afghanistan at the regional level.

Our work in 2019 culminated in the first-ever Government-Youth Dialogue for Central Asia and Afghanistan, the very first regional platform for such interaction. In Tashkent, young people from all six countries presented their concerns and their ideas to their respective Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs, each of whom returned to their capitals with extremely positive impressions of the experience. For their part, our participants returned home as Youth Ambassadors for Preventive Diplomacy and I am gratified that so many of them continue to use the information and skills they acquired in our programme in their studies, work and daily lives.

In 2020, our essay contest winners participated in the second Government-Youth Dialogue for Central Asia and Afghanistan, which due to the ongoing global pandemic was held on a virtual platform. Nevertheless, it represented a unique opportunity for young people to make their voices heard by policy makers at a high level.

2020 also marked the 75th anniversary of the founding of the United Nations, and so we have combined our essay contest and the second Government-Youth Dialogue with the global UN75 initiative. All year, the Organization has been striving to build a global partnership with a wide range of people all over the world to realize their shared aspirations for a just, peaceful and sustainable future. Through our work, we are ensuring that the youth of Central Asia and Afghanistan have had the opportunity to contribute as well.

More than half of the population of Central Asia and Afghanistan is made up of people under the age of 30. These young people represent a vital resource for each of their countries and for the region as a whole. Governments – with the support of the United Nations and the rest of the international community – must all work together to help them develop their potential.

Investing in young people is critical to ensuring that the countries of the region succeed in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and improving the lives of everyone in the region – and beyond. And the fact that we are all living through such tremendous disruptions caused by the ongoing global pandemic only makes this all the more urgent.

I firmly believe that it is impossible for UNRCCA to fulfil its mandate to help the countries of this region solve common challenges through the tools of preventive diplomacy without engaging young people. Young people are often called the “leaders of tomorrow.” But they are also leaders today. By working with young people across the region, we can all contribute to ensuring a culture of peace and prevention throughout Central Asia and Afghanistan.

For our part, we hope that the Government-Youth Dialogue for Central Asia and Afghanistan will continue to be a permanent platform for this essential interaction, supported by UNRCCA, that can offer new opportunities, new ideas, new connections and new political space in each of the countries and the region overall.

Please, dear reader, join me in welcoming class 2020 of Youth Ambassadors for Preventive Diplomacy!

Natalia Gherman,
Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Central Asia,
Head of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy
for Central Asia (UNRCCA)



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Each State that invests in youth is investing in the modern development of the country and the world.

DULAT ABDISAMAT, 20

Taraz, Zhambyl Province, Kazakhstan



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Taraz, Zhambyl Province, Kazakhstan

We, the youth, as the “future of the world,” have always held a particular value. The development of the younger generation, its participation in society and its development depend on State policy, but also on personal initiative. Currently, young people play an important role in the development of any country, as they determine the future development of the society as a whole. For example, nation-wide organizations such as the “League of Volunteers,” the “Alliance of Students of Kazakhstan,” the military-patriotic movement “ZhasSarbaz,” the youth party “ZhasOtan” and many more have been formed in Kazakhstan. Every year, hundreds of young people across the country join these organizations. Each one of them has their own creative solutions to issues related to youth and ways to make youth develop an active life position. The ways of solving issues related to youth differ in each country, but ways of achieving the final goal remain the same, which makes them also creative. The exchange of experience and ideas among young people from different countries helps to improve work in the field of youth policy and opens up new opportunities for young people. Each State that invests in youth simultaneously invests in the modern development of the country and the world.

We must not forget about the international organizations that promote peace and security today. One of them is the UN, dealing with global problems. There are also structural divisions of the UN involved in the development of youth programmes for increasing the potential of the younger generation. One of them is the *UNRCCA Preventive Diplomacy Academy initiative*.

I was a participant from Kazakhstan in the UNRCCA Preventive Diplomacy Academy in 2019. The start of the first event of the project was in my hometown Taraz on 7 October 2019 and is vividly captured in my memory. This was my first experience participating in an international seminar with youth from the city of Talas from neighbouring Kyrgyzstan. During the three-day seminar led by wonderful trainers we studied the concept of preventive diplomacy and how to apply strategies for conflict prevention in our daily life. In addition, working in teams with other active young people, we mastered our leadership skills, intercultural communication and the basics of managing youth projects. We were also given the opportunity to develop our own project proposals and implement them by receiving small grants. My team of four people developed a project dedicated to the prevention of interethnic conflicts in our region. The “Jas turist” project provided opportunities for cultural exchange with the neighbouring county to prevent and resolve possible conflicts that might occur between foreign students. We managed to implement this project with great success and secure its outcomes for the future.

After the end of the youth seminars, UNRCCA invited the most active participants to take part in the first youth-Government dialogue in Central Asia and Afghanistan, which took place in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. In order to prepare us for the high-level meeting, we were invited to the UN regional office in Almaty, Kazakhstan, to participate in a series of preparatory trainings. We received training in public speaking and had very productive team work with youth representatives from all of the countries of Central Asia and Afghanistan. During the cultural events, we learned more about the national traditions and customs of our countries. And we were also given the opportunity to prove ourselves and bring our messages to the attention of the Deputy Foreign Ministers of the countries of Central Asia and Afghanistan at the annual high-level meeting.

I think that we, the youth, have fulfilled the hopes of the UNRCCA Preventive Diplomacy Academy, and especially those of the Head of UNRCCA, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Central Asia, Ms. Natalia Gherman. Thus, all young people who took part in these events gave their best for success. The UNRCCA Preventive Diplomacy Academy served as a platform for us to unleash our potential. In turn, I was also selected to participate in the ECOSOC Youth Forum, which will take place in New York, where I will be honored to represent the interests of the youth of the Central Asian region and Afghanistan. I am very grateful for the great trust and opportunity given to me to take part in this international event.

I am proud to say that I have succeeded in the field of youth policy after participating in these events. I also won many State awards. In order to ensure peace and prosperity, we continued our activity by developing a

Photos from our project “Jas turist” implemented with the UNRCCA Preventive Diplomacy Academy project



project to prevent interethnic conflicts in our region. By investing in youth, the State and various organizations are able to develop in youth their high civic activity and, patriotism, and neutralize destructive ideas. This is how I see the way of developing the role of young people in modern society!





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I see a world in which we will be protected from injustice, stereotypes and false information. A world in which you can really believe in high ideals, not be afraid of your opinion and feel a sense of security, to be yourself.

ZHANNA TURGUMBAEVA, 22

Temirtau, Karaganda Province, Kazakhstan



ZHANNA TURGUMBAEVA, 22

Temirtau, Karaganda Province, Kazakhstan

Because of the Covid-19 pandemic, unemployment rates have increased, not to mention the young people who have just graduated and have no work experience. Despite various Government programmes for supporting businesses, the employment opportunities they provide are often temporary and do not offer employment to all. Thus, the following risks increase: securing one's livelihood through illegal activities, increased crime rates, people falling under the influence of various religious movements, etc. The UN recognizes the potential of youth for conflict prevention and resolution, and the positive role that youth can play in negotiating and implementing peace agreements and conflict prevention. However, in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, the predisposition of young people to illegal actions as a source of income may increase and this largely reinforces the stereotype of young people as a potential threat.

In 25 years, I look for a world in which everyone can become whoever they want and work wherever they want. Also now there is an increased interest in work itself, in its meaning and importance rather than solely in the salary. Therefore, young people get depressed when they are working but not receiving any satisfaction from the significance of their work. The stereotype that this or that profession does not bring money should be eradicated. I think that it's worth transforming the sphere of education. This is necessary also because in most cases, after grad-

uating from university, students have to start learning everything from scratch at their workplace.

Why do so many people who study abroad prefer to stay there? This is called a brain drain. An interesting UN initiative could be launching a youth project on science in a particular developing country. Why not launch an exchange program between teachers from developed and developing countries for about six months? Children from remote regions have the same problem. When various seminars and conferences are being organized, only youth living in cities know about them. And how about youth from remote parts of the country who do not have a computer or money for the Internet? Therefore, it is so important to provide computers to families in need and to organize online conferences in district schools on universities admission requirements.

There is a huge amount of information and we are faced with the problem that people absorb more information than knowledge. Thus, an imbalance occurs, and not being able to think critically, not understanding the truth and the meaning of what we are presented with on social media, we receive distorted information. The world is developing, and this development has become the impetus for the emergence of a new sphere, just like science or economics - social networks. Social networks impact people's interests and views hugely, or exert pressure on their psychological well-being. The younger generation has already become active users of social networks, but they are often not protected against disinformation and the spread of fakes. As a preventive step, it would be interesting to introduce media education (media literacy) to the school curriculum.

Young people have always striven for new knowledge and have shown an interest in participating in public life with innovative ideas. Thus, creating platforms according to the interests of young people would also shape the spheres in which they want to work. For example, large enterprises could launch dialogue platforms for improving their processes by way of sharing ideas between young employees and management. Similar platforms can also be created in other professional areas.

Prisons and correctional facilities for minors in the countries of the Central Asian region need to be transformed and modernized. Developing a sense of being useful to the world by maintaining and developing their interests in one area or another during their stay in the institution, as well as working with a psychologist, would help these young people become aware of the importance of every step of their life. In prisons where adults are serving their sentences, it is necessary to conduct online trainings on business development and individual entrepreneurship, because few former prisoners are able to find jobs. In many ways, states require compliance with the rule of law by putting an emphasis on the fear of punishment. However, choos-

ing to focus on creating a culture of a dialogue and helping people understand that, on the contrary, the law is on their side, would be an excellent preventive measure.

In addition, I will only say that I do not want an ideal world or sugary kinds of people, a highly paid but undeserved position, striving for the modesty of the majority but without sincerity or help for those in need just for a positive checkmark. Peace is important, but it also contains issues that could bring people together; difficulties that they overcome through mutual assistance, setting an example of humanity for our children. I see a world in which we will be protected from injustice, stereotypes and false information. A world in which we can truly believe in high ideals, unafraid to express our opinions and feel a sense of security, to be ourselves.





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For young people to have a positive impact on peace and security, fundamental human rights must first be respected and protected.

ASSEM ZAYEVA, 20

Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan



ASSEM ZAYEVA, 20
Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan

The main task of the UN is to maintain peace and security in the world, and in 2015 the Security Council adopted a resolution on “Youth, Peace and Security.” After that, resolution 2419 (2018), a report of the Secretary-General, research reports and the “Youth 2030” strategy were adopted. This has helped us understand that young people also play an important role in the maintenance of peace and security and the UN has shown its support for youth in a number of its documents. These papers represent general, basic information that States can rely on. But for us, the important part is the mechanisms of these strategies and how States will implement them.

First, in order for the adopted documents to work in reality, young people should know about them. The key to this is good manners and education. People need to be properly educated, and this should start from childhood, including about the environment, people, animals, etc. It is important that schools teach the younger generation to understand who they would like to become in the future. There should also be specialized subjects, like those that teach such global problems as climate change, the importance of balance in the world, the consequences of armed conflicts, the role of international organizations such as the UN. To achieve this, it is important to update school curriculums. Some schools in rural areas suffer from a lack of technical equipment and access to the internet. As a consequence, people remain uninformed about the problems in the world. It is important to note that one of the reasons for unemployment is a lack of education. According to statistics from the International Labour Organization, in 2017

35% of the unemployed were young people, and today about 188 million people are unemployed. In addition, Security Council resolution 2250 (2015) also noted that hindering youth access to education could have a negative impact on lasting peace and reconciliation.

Second, the interaction between the State and the young generation needs to be emphasized. States must create a favourable environment for people and their health, and people must maintain balance and encourage economic development and stability in the country. The people must contribute to problem-solving in their countries, and at the global level this holds for all people on the planet. A good example is when the State provides opportunities for youth to develop their potential and skills and to demonstrate them, as well as to encourage the implementation of the Youth 2030 Strategy by implementing its priorities. It is very important for young people to participate in the political life of their countries, as well as to exercise their right to express their opinion on improving the economic and social situation. This might turn out to be some kind of barrier in the struggle for justice. For youth to have a positive impact on peace and security, fundamental human rights must first be respected and protected. I also agree with the opinion of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, Ms. Jayathma Wickramanayake: "I think that young people should have the opportunity to express their opinion, their concerns about the events taking place in politics. It seems to me that it is necessary to involve youth in a constructive dialogue with politicians and government organizations." I would like to add a statement made by young people in the Progress Study on Youth, Peace and Security with lead author Graham Simpson: "We, young people are only called when it's time to wave flags or put up posters. When we want to share our suggestions, they don't pay attention to us, and when we criticize, we are pushed into the background". In my opinion, in states with unstable economies, where conflicts occur, most often young people fall under the influence of terrorist groups like ISIS due to psychological and religious influence, as well as money. To avoid such situations, one needs to guide young people in the right direction to maintain peace and security, and not vice versa. Benefit from the ideas and creativity of young people.

Third, sometimes I have a question - what is still missing when there are resolutions, strategies, as well as different communities, forums, authorized bodies. But still, the number of people who are not actively engaged exceeds the number of active people. In order to involve more young people, you need to interest them, to show them how important it is that information is available to many people, to be available on social networks. It is important to organize various competitions, conferences, projects. And also it is necessary to give incentives and motivation for participants (prizes, certificates, internships, etc.). For example, when I participated

in the Model UN of Central Asia, we made important decisions, drafted a resolution, communicated with different people from different countries as real diplomats. All of this was part of the process of establishing a cooperation with other states and discussing proposed ideas for the prevention and resolution of conflicts. Also, in my opinion, one can come up with a game for mobile phones, where young people can learn about the main goals and objectives of the UN or a simulation of peacekeeping operations. In addition, one can come up with a mini-course about the UN, where one can watch animated video tutorials, take tests and get a certificate. Just imagine a common online platform where people from different parts of the world can communicate, share ideas, collaborate. This can serve as an incentive for volunteering at the UN.

In conclusion, if States comply with international principles, protect human rights and create a favourable society, then people will develop their countries and will strive for peace and prosperity all over the world.



Resources:

[https://undocs.org/ru/S/RES/2250\(2015\)](https://undocs.org/ru/S/RES/2250(2015))

[https://undocs.org/ru/S/RES/2419\(2018\)](https://undocs.org/ru/S/RES/2419(2018))

<https://www.undocs.org/ru/S/2020/167>

<https://www.un.org/youthenvoy/about/>

https://www.un.org/youthenvoy/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/WEBR-UN-Youth-Strategy_Booklet_-Russian-for-WEB.pdf

<https://undocs.org/pdf?symbol=ru/A/72/761>

https://www.ilo.org/moscow/news/WCMS_734862/lang--ru/index.htm

https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---europe/---ro-geneva/---sro-moscow/documents/genericdocument/wcms_614033.pdf

<https://tass.ru/obschestvo/4641280>





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... I see my world as kind and fair, where there is no inequality, where there is no violence. It will flourish and develop and provide every person with a home, family and security. And people will provide the same to the planet. If we learn to respect, love and protect nature and each other, I believe that a wonderful future will come.

UMUT ASYLBEKOVA, 20

Talas, Kyrgyzstan



UMUT ASYLBEKOVA, 20
Talas, Kyrgyzstan

2045 – FOR A WONDERFUL LIFE, CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN IN THE WORLD

Preventive diplomacy facilitates a common and unified ideology for humanity that contributes to a just, peaceful and sustainable future. What ideology does the UN support? In my opinion, the UN supports an ideology that serves the interests of all mankind and each individual person. The fundamental principle of this ideology is “Peace, democracy, progress and happiness.” People are born not for grief and suffering, but for happiness. But how can we change the world so that every person is happy? First, we need to develop and set an ideology. People’s lives would be a chaos and people would not be conscientious without an ideology. Thus, ideology is necessary, that’s for sure! We need an ideology approved by everyone. This ideology should be a “common and unified ideology of mankind.”

The UN’s ideologies are:

- Helping humanity;
- Helping each and every country;
- Helping each and every person;

In my opinion, in order for every person to be happy, the UN should consider and approve a “common and unified ideology of mankind.” The pandemic caused by the COVID-19 virus has shown that we are all in

the same spaceship. Mankind is a unified whole. All people's troubles are shared. Therefore, there is a need for a common and unified ideology of mankind. But a common ideology exists alongside other diverse ideologies. The difference is that everyone agrees with the common and unified ideology as well. It unites mankind in achieving a common goal.

A common and unified ideology of mankind offers a future for our children and grandchildren.

1. *The fundamental elements of the common and unified ideology of mankind are peace, democracy, progress and happiness.*
2. *Younger generations have different views.*
Younger generation think differently. Life is changing. The lifestyles and values, aspirations and goals of youth are changing. We must create a wonderful, better world. But this requires an ideology.
3. *Financial security and a high standard of living are the norm of life.*
There is no poverty and hunger. Nobody wants for anything. People's financial needs are fully satisfied.
4. *Bases and directions of action to achieve material well-being.* Production processes are fully automated. Work is done by robots. Previously unknown types of energy are discovered and used. New energy sources are used. Almost inexhaustible types of energy are known. Stationary operating space stations are a fact. Human life in space is impossible, but deliberate and correct space exploration will bring great benefit to humanity. Science and digital technologies are well developed.
5. *The process of globalization in a new manifestation.*
The whole of humanity bears responsibility for solving the economic, environmental and life problems of each and every person. Everyone should be happy and, therefore, everyone struggles for happiness.
6. *There is no indifference, alienation of one person from any other.*
Nationalism, racism, chauvinism, selfishness, intolerance, arrogance, hostility and war have been eradicated. All people are brothers and sisters.
7. *State borders are losing their former significance.*
The existence of interstate borders is only conditional and a memory of the past. People have the opportunity to live

wherever they want. There is free movement of people, goods and services. Customs barriers are removed.

8. *Tolerance and humanity.*
People are respectful of all religions; there is no gender inequality; sexual minorities are not subjected to violence and hate. Skin colour, race and nationality do not change a person. Everyone is united and equal.
9. *Protection of the Earth.*
The planet Earth is our common home. Protecting the Earth from any aggression and destruction is the sacred duty of everyone.

This is how I see my world: kind and fair, with no inequality and no violence. It will flourish and provide every person with a home, family and security. And people will provide the same to the planet. If we learn to respect, love and protect nature and each other, I believe that a wonderful future will follow.





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Inequality and lack of sensitivity to diversity in society have not yet found their solutions in the mosaic of ineffective government systems. In turn, these are the root causes of corruption, conflict and violence, often accompanied by brutality.

CHYNGYZ ISRAYILOV, 31

Osh, Kyrgyzstan



 **CHYNGYZ ISRAYILOV, 31**
Osh, Kyrgyzstan

PRESENT AND FUTURE OF PEACE IN THE CENTRAL ASIAN REGION

Instead of a preface

It was 1945, the Second World War was approaching its end - the most terrible chapter in the history of mankind, which flared up due to the irresponsible attitude to the preservation of peace and an unprecedented manifestation of cruelty. The United Nations was taking shape and it seemed that the world community had learned a lesson from the horrors of the war and matured enough to show collective responsibility and aversion to brutality in all its forms. However, for seventy-five years, the world continues to carry a heavy burden. Based on the example of various crises that have also affected the Central Asian region, we still observe that countries and people have not learned to take sufficient responsibility for promoting sustainable peace.

Current status quo

Despite the fact that it is 2020 and it seems that all the achievements of science and technology are in our hands, the rapid spread of the COVID-19 pandemic has exposed a number of serious problems facing humanity. As other regions around the world, Central Asia faced considerable difficulties in confronting such a serious challenge that caused fear in the society about the present and the future. Of

course, these problems are not new and the various existing disputes and crises in the region to a large extent occurred due to the above problems. Today, society cannot afford to live without fear about the present and the future, the reason for which is largely the unwillingness of the State and the citizens themselves to unite efforts for a common goal. In a recent speech, UN Secretary-General António Guterres accurately described a global reality that “while we are all floating on the same sea, it’s clear that some are in superyachts while others are clinging to the drifting debris.” Precisely this reality is taking place at the level of ordinary people in the countries of our region. Inequality and lack of sensitivity to diversity in society have not yet been resolved in the mosaic of ineffective Government systems. In turn, these are all root causes of corruption, conflict and violence, often accompanied by brutality. The initiatives and measures undertaken by people with an active life position to achieve an open civil society do not find adequate support in the system of State power. A similar phenomenon is possibly taking place almost all over the world, and the countries of Central Asia are no exception. However, this phenomenon becomes acute when certain categories of citizens become instruments in the hands of destructive parties or victims of violence and cruelty. Sadly, these are young people, people with disabilities and women. It is they who always have to cling to the “debris” of something common in crisis situations in order to somehow survive, when irresponsibility towards the world begins to spread around and cruelty reigns.

An ideal for 2045

The previous section focused on several important elements of our present, which deserve painstaking work so that we can live fully in a positive world in 2045. First, the situation with the pandemic has shown how effectively science and technology can be applied in various aspects of life. We see a huge human potential, especially in young people, in the field of information and communication technologies. These people should become the leaders of high-quality and safe digitalization of public affairs and activities. Second, access to the management of the countries of the region facilitated with the introduction of digital solutions will allow Governments to prevent and respond to emerging crisis situations in a timely manner. In turn, this will ensure broad participation of the citizens in the modeling of Government strategies for managing processes, including those of peace and development. Third, the direct involvement of people in management and decision-making processes will guarantee the transparency of State and non-state policies, which can increase collective responsibility for all problems and achievements in the countries of the region. Fourth, a sense of responsibility, developed through equal participation in the process of

governing of the States, should serve as an impetus for the promotion of a tolerant society and immunity against various kinds of violations of human rights. Fifth, realizing the inviolability of human rights, people and States in Central Asia will try to build consolidated communities for which equality, mutual trust, rejection of any form of cruelty and violence are of paramount importance.

Significant activities in these areas are already being carried out by various institutions and individuals in the countries of the Central Asian region. However, most of these institutions and people are representatives of civil society. For the sustainability of achievements and results, the full engagement of national Governments is necessary in order to increase accountability, inclusiveness, transparency and non-violence. Despite this, further advancement of the ongoing efforts and efforts of people in taking responsibility for what is happening will allow us all to coexist in 2045 in a positive world where everyone is absolutely equal - youth, women, minorities, those in power, people with disabilities. Such an ideal for peace in 2045 will prevent the root causes of crises not only in our region, but also on a global scale - like the terrible Second World War.





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There is an excellent saying of the legendary writer Chingiz Aitmatov: "The most difficult thing in life is to remain human every day." It has a deep meaning: **it doesn't matter if you achieve a high position in life or if you become the most popular person – the most important thing is to remain a person of good conscience.**

ALIYA ZHOLDOSHBKOVA, 22

Talas, Kyrgyzstan



 **ALIYA ZHOLDOSHBKOVA, 22**
Talas, Kyrgyzstan

When I heard about the pandemic in China, it didn't occur to me that this would affect our small country. There was a feeling that it would never reach us.

But now, when in Kyrgyzstan, and all around the world, there is a very high mortality rate and a high risk of infection with COVID-19, I understand how everything is intertwined, that the virus does not spare anyone. In Kyrgyzstan, as in other countries around the world, the situation wasn't easy. Medical personnel worked without breaks, a lot of volunteers joined in the fight against COVID-19 in its most critical phases. There were times that medicines and personal protective equipment became scarce. Thankfully, there were also CIS countries that lent a hand to Kyrgyzstan in this difficult times and send humanitarian aid in the form of medical equipment, medicines, etc.

In these days, not only the State is involved in the fight against the coronavirus, but everyone. Many famous people have taken the initiative to raise money in order to buy the necessary medications, oxygen concentrators, etc. I am happy to see that people are united against this disease. I wished for the future that there will be no inequality in my country and everyone, who is in need to receive medical care, would receive it in good time and quality.

Because of the quarantine, many people were left without work, especially those whose income is below average, who do not have a permanent job, but need to take care of themselves and their children. Despite the risk, everyone needs to work to feed their families.

However, the situation with the coronavirus in the world has affected humanity also positively. While staying at home, many have come to understand the value of family; because of online learning, the importance of teachers in our lives; when the number of seriously ill patients became more and more, the importance of doctors. We started communicating with our families, sharing thoughts and dreams, listening to each other's words, preparing delicious dinners and lunches at home for the whole family.

An Arabic proverb says: "He who is healthy also has hope, and he who has hope has everything." I am full of hope that we will soon return to our normal lives and will appreciate every moment spent with family and friends. After all, it is so important in such a difficult time to support and help each other. We will definitely overcome all of our difficulties! I want so much to hear good news, to visit each other, to arrange gatherings at home and just enjoy every day. After all, it is such happiness when all of our relatives are healthy and most importantly are around us.



I would like to express my gratitude to medical workers. Thank you for fulfilling your civic duty despite the difficulties and challenges that you are facing with every day.

There is an excellent saying of the legendary writer Chingiz Aitmatov: "The most difficult thing in life is to remain human every day." It has a deep meaning - it does not matter whether you achieve a high position in life, whether you become the most popular person, because the most important thing is to remain a conscientious person.

In 25 years, I want to see this world as colourful and beautiful as it is now, but the main thing is that human beings are not harming the environment, but, on the contrary, are doing everything possible for the prosperity of the Earth. I especially want to see my country without corruption, where absolutely everyone can receive free medical treatment and education, so that everything in the country is open and transparent. Let our hearts open to a new and better world, let us acquire a new self, better and more beautiful. The most important thing is not to stop listening to our inner selves. Time will pass to awaken in us all the most wonderful things that can change this world for the better. Indeed, in our lives there will be many more such victories and defeats, but the main thing is to move in the direction, when in 2045 we will do everything possible to improve our lives and the lives of others.





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Maybe we can change the world. After all, if a person changes himself, then they will change the world. We can start by educating people about the threats that emanate from the darkest corners of the world so that they are prepared for anything. After all, as the saying goes, ‘forewarned is forearmed’.

ALIYOR BOYNAZAROV, 23

Khorog, Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region, Tajikistan



ALIYOR BOYNAZAROV, 23

*Khorog, Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region,
Tajikistan*

OUR FUTURE IN PEACE AND SECURITY

Youth is the main element in the world that initiates the new world order. Youth determines our future. The news shows us victims of terrorism, and how many young people have joined such groups of violence and extremism. Young people become hostages of other people’s opinions because of their lack of awareness about the threats surrounding them.

I live in Badakhshan, in Tajikistan, which borders Afghanistan. And for half a year now borders are not peaceful, because the ideology of terrorism has already penetrated many areas of Badakhshan. Many join terrorist groups not knowing the kind of swamp they are going into. This all happens because in many regions there is no leader to follow. And because of that lack, they listen to the one “who promises them life in heaven, for which they must pay though with their soul and life.”

But how can we build a future in heaven when there is hunger, violence, injustice, corruption and no rule of law in the world? When no one wants to hear the voice of the youth, although they are all shouting that they are fighting for their children’s brighter future. The future will not come until we learn to listen to the young people. Because, the “LEADER” who will lead the people to a brighter future and not to the “bottom” will

emerge exactly among the youth. The role of youth for achieving peace and security is very important, because only all together can we overcome any viruses and crises.

The coronavirus showed us that alone we are powerless, that money is just dust, a bill needed only for purchase and investment. More than 20 million people worldwide have been infected, 765,469 have died, and only 14,019,648 have recovered.¹ Statistics show that we are completely powerless against this new threat. Over the last six months, the coronavirus has destroyed the economy, film industry and communities. The news shows that everywhere there are rallies and protests.

Since the outbreak of the pandemic, around the world and in my country, the access to information turned out to be an important right and a powerful tool. We, young people, understood that knowing what we are fighting with could save lives. Using the knowledge about the virus, the youth of Tajikistan tried in every possible way to stop or prevent the spread of the virus. Volunteers controlled the distance in stores and banks everywhere during the quarantine period. Also, volunteers brought sanitizer to every place in the city, and before entering a bank, a store or in order to cross a bridge, they cleaned people's hands.

Recognizing the need to tackle youth problems, the Security Council adopted two resolutions on Youth, Peace and Security (YPS): 2250 (in 2015) and 2419 (in 2018), thus laying the foundation for the YPS agenda. The Security Council recognized the potential of youth to resolve conflicts, and by all means wanted to convey to all States the role of the youth in establishing peace and security. Within the framework of the UNRCCA Preventive Diplomacy Academy, focusing on young people from Central Asia and Afghanistan (in which I also participated), seminars were held in border areas on issues of "Conflict Prevention and Security in the Regions."

Having been awarded with a youth grant by the Academy, we carried out a seminar on the topic "Friendship of Youth as the Key to Peace" among students of Khorog State University. The event aimed at preventing conflicts between young people from Badakhshan and other regions of Tajikistan. During the seminar, students from other regions of Tajikistan worked hand in hand with students from Badakhshan and as a result they developed their own project aiming at the prevention of the spread of the new coronavirus. They carried out a campaign in the city of Khorog under the name of "The danger of the coronavirus in the world, and how protect yourself."

¹ Statistics reflects the situation at the time of writing the essay (August 2020) // Internet resource: URL: <https://t.me/NovelCoronaVirusBot>

As a result, we took a step towards prevention of conflicts, changed opinions about Badakhshan and showed that we are one country, one nation. Many of the students became friends, learned a lot of useful things about themselves, and we, as project participants improved our diplomatic skills and launched a cycle of mutual understanding in Tajikistan. We are planning to replicate the same event also in other regions. Maybe we can change the world. After all, if a person changes themselves, they will also change the world. We can start by educating people about the threats coming from the darkest corners of the world so that they are prepared for everything. After all, as the saying goes: "Forewarned is forearmed!"

My name is Aliyor Boynazarov, and I want to build a future where there will be joy, happiness, peace and security.





ALISHO MIRZOSHIRINOV, 22

*Khorog, Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region,
Tajikistan*

THE WORLD I WANT ...

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Waging a war for resources, competing for dominance, following political ambitions These are the evils that ruin the efforts of the best of intentions. My personal opinion is that the UN is not panacea for all of the evils and ills. **Each of us is forming a piece of the UN. Each of us is a tiny contributor to either building the best future or, on the contrary, ruining it all.**

ALISHO MIRZOSHIRINOV, 22

Khorog, Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region, Tajikistan

I was born in the small town of Khorog, in the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast (GBAO) of Tajikistan in 1998. It was right after the civil war and the country was just healing from the wounds. The final peace accord was signed in 1997. Memories of the war were still alive. We had no electricity from time to time. It was a time of a humanitarian crisis. People were literally starving. We were all aid-dependent. There were internally displaced people, but locally people called them refugees. They were refugees of the war in their own country.

My father is a film director and my mom is a sociologist. Unfortunately, after the civil war there was no opportunity for them as young professionals to find appropriate jobs at home and so they left the country. Being well educated, they managed to find well-paid jobs in Russia, unlike many others who had to go for unskilled ones.

My parents are my inspiration to get a better education and help my community and my country. I am really proud of them, as after all the challenges they overcame in their lives they have returned back to their homeland, settled, developed their careers successfully and are now helping the youth in their community to build their skills and knowledge for their own futures. Thanks to good skills and education, young people

can later find the job that is interesting to them, that they like, and not any one just out of necessity.

I know that youth in my region have opportunities for education and development thanks to the support of both the local Government and international organizations. However, after graduation our youth mostly face unemployment. There are literally no decent job opportunities in tiny Khorog town, so many just move away to the extent possible. Many well educated young Tajik men and women join the groups of unskilled labour migrants, becoming cleaners, cooks, babysitters, workmen, etc. The luckier ones move abroad and have better conditions.

The small amounts of money that they manage to send home once per month feeds their families and mainly their children, whom they left behind. This causes a problem of generations, with youth spending their best years in labour migration and their children being raised without family bonds. A lost generation of children is being raised through Skype video-calls. Online communication is good, but it is mostly painful at times when you need the comfort of your loved ones. My heart aches for those families that are forced to live like this.

But I firmly believe in the power of education. I think we need to work hard to establish job opportunities for youth, so they wouldn't leave the country; so they wouldn't get so desperate and join terrorist groups; so they wouldn't deal in drugs; wouldn't become corrupt; and most importantly so they wouldn't lose their faith in having a better life!

I call for our Government and the international community to help us ensure more opportunities for youth and children. So that they feel needed. So that the young generations enjoy being young; so that they enjoy their jobs, be creative and live life to the fullest!

I have a dream ... the world I want is not yet real... but I believe it is possible to achieve with our joint efforts! I want the children in my country to have a choice!

I want the youth in my country to have a voice!

I want women in my country to feel secure and protected!

I want every man in my country to be able to have decent work!

I want every orphan to have a future!

I want every parent to have their own lives too!

I want every ill person to get treated and saved!

I want every migrant to be back soon!

I want every human being in this world to be happy!

I want peace in mind and worldwide!

I know there is a lot of power in us – the young generation. If a country observes human rights, is peaceful, has good governance and no corruption and nepotism, it is ideal.

Waging a war for resources, competing for dominance, following political ambitions These are evils that ruin the efforts of the best of intentions. In my personal opinion, the UN is not a panacea to all evils and ills. Each of us forms a piece of the UN. Each of us is a tiny contributor to either building the best future or, on the other hand, ruining it all.

The power is in us! We are the tiny dots that form the whole, and we should support the UN. We should volunteer. We should embody, promote and support the very important principles enshrined in the UN Charter. Our voices form the voice of the future! So let's be vocal and supportive!

The United Nations is about YOUTh!





 **SAODAT USMONOVA, 21**
Dushanbe, Tajikistan

*“Mankind must put an end to war,
or war will put an end to mankind”.*

JOHN F. KENNEDY

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It will be an honor for me to become at least a small part of the UN, helping to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). **That is why we in the Republic of Tajikistan under the NGO ‘Independent Center for the Protection of Human Rights’ have started our SDG Youth Initiative Group ‘Tajikistan 2030.’ Thanks to this, we will be able to develop our society by achieving the goals of the SDGs and the UN.**

SAODAT USMONOVA, 21

Dushanbe, Tajikistan

Preventive diplomacy entails diplomatic action aimed at preventing the occurrence of disagreements between parties, at preventing existing disagreements from developing into a conflict, as well as at limiting the spread of an existing conflict. Preventive diplomacy is one of the ways to prevent and stop the spread of a conflict, both within one region and beyond it.

The publication of the report “An Agenda for Peace” by Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali in 1992 laid down the official interpretation of the concept of preventive diplomacy, although it cannot be said that it did not exist before that.

Preventive diplomacy can be compared to a chess game, where each player calculates all losses in advance and changes the course of action for the better, in order to achieve peace. Although sacrifices cannot be avoided on the chessboard, in preventive diplomacy the main goal is to avoid human sacrifice, as well as large material costs during and after a conflict. However, the parties should understand that early prevention of conflict will be much more valuable and important, no matter what costs and efforts it may take. Because the material and non-material costs during a conflict or a war, as well as after it, will be many times greater.

Preventive diplomacy is not an independent form of UN peacekeeping, and it is applied simultaneously with other types and methods, for example, peacebuilding.

Why did I choose this particular topic? According to experts, in the post-Soviet space, the main region where the UN policy on preventive diplomacy is being implemented is Central Asia - Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

For these purposes, an international structure was founded in the region - the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA). The Centre was opened in December 2007. UNRCCA mandate states that its purpose is to assist the governments of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan in building capacity for peaceful resolution of disputes and conflict prevention through dialogue and attracting international support for the implementation of relevant projects.

So even during the years of the civil war in the Republic of Tajikistan in 1992-1997, one could observe preventive diplomacy activities, which were actively applied by the UN, which decided to send a UN Goodwill Mission headed by the Ambassador-at-Large and Director of the Political Affairs Department of the UN Secretariat, Raymond Sommereins. After visiting the confrontation spots in Tajikistan, they came to the conclusion to establish a peacekeeping operation as a conflict resolution strategy in Tajikistan. Various negotiations were held between the State and the opposition in the neutral zone, for example, a meeting in Moscow at the initiative of the Goodwill Ambassador in 1994, which brought together representatives of many countries concerned about the situation in the country. The result of the civil war was the signing of a peace agreement on 27 June 1997. Now, this date is remembered as the end of fratricide and is celebrated in our country as the "Day of Unity" - "Ruzi Vaadat" (in Tajik language). It is worth thanking the UN, as well as the other countries for the help provided.

I am a person who has not seen war, for which to a certain extent I am grateful to the concept of preventive diplomacy and the other forms of UN peacekeeping for the quiet and calm sky over my head. And I see it as my goal and task to introduce methods of preventive diplomacy in my daily life, as well as to provide direct assistance on these issues to the youth of our country.

Preventive diplomacy was able to show that peace can be achieved through negotiation and not through war, which leads to many casualties, destruction and crises. As a citizen of my motherland, Tajikistan, I am grateful to the UN and its peacemaking methods, namely preventive diplomacy.

However, given the number of terrorist acts, drug trafficking, water conflicts and the unstable situation in Afghanistan, the countries of Central Asia still need preventive diplomacy. The region continues to have a huge number of internal and external problems. Therefore, the policy of preventive diplomacy may be the pivot around which all the positive forces seeking to resolve the complex knot of contradictions in the region will unite. The ability to see, distinguish and prevent a problem long before it occurs, always and everywhere, will be of much higher priority. My key idea in this area is to teach youth preventive diplomacy (circles, debates, organizing a youth network) - not only students, but also schoolchildren. This will help them to become first-class diplomats in the future, work on the ground, predict the new trends, be able to convince and resolve conflict situations through negotiations and have IT capabilities.

It will be an honour for me to become at least a small part of the UN helping to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. That is why already now, in the Republic of Tajikistan, under the Public Association "Independent Center for the Protection of Human Rights," we have started a Youth Initiative Group on the SDGs - Tajikistan 2030, thanks to which we will be able to develop our society by achieving the SDGs and the UN goals.





BEKNIYAZ BEGLIYEV, 26
Ashgabat, Turkmenistan

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We young men and women represent future generations, and it is important that our voices are heard. **It is the young who are the source of fresh ideas. The presence of young men and women must be increased in all fields.**

BEKNIYAZ BEGLIYEV, 26

Ashgabat, Turkmenistan

Hello! My name is Begliyev Bekniyaz. I am glad that the United Nations gave us, the youth of Central Asia, a chance to express our opinions and maybe to make a small contribution to the maintenance of peace all over the world. In this essay, I'll try to give my point of view concerning the current security issues in our region and the world in general, and to show the way towards solutions.

“Preventive diplomacy” in my understanding. Its place in international relations system.

In my opinion, the core idea of “preventive diplomacy” is to eliminate all of the hotbeds of conflict, challenges and threats to humanity. Unfortunately, today we can clearly see that the efforts made by the United Nations are not enough. There are too many conflicts in the world that lead to the death of thousands, bring poverty and epidemics. All this testifies to the fact that the mechanism of preventive diplomacy needs to be improved. I think there should be more permanent Members of the United Nations Security Council. We could include Germany, Japan, Turkey and Canada. It would be better if we added all G-20 countries. The right of veto should be abolished. As new Members are added, issues should be resolved by absolute majority.

What kind of cooperation would be effective in order to reach the future you want?

I think the existing cooperation is enough today. We should strengthen cultural cooperation among the countries of Central Asia and Afghanistan. Mutual cultural enrichment should take place. Peoples of this region should know good one another's traditions and customs better. It is necessary to organize various competitions and festivals, sports events, tourist trips among our countries. Getting a visa should not be a problem. The Governments of the region should support private enterprise more. Illiteracy should be eliminated and the poor regions of these countries should be provided with new jobs. Illiteracy and poverty are the primary reasons for youth to get radicalized and join different types of terrorist organizations. The quantity of foreign scholarships should also be increased. Let the youth study in developed countries in massive numbers. Let developed countries send volunteers to teach the youth of Central Asia and Afghanistan. Such programmes should include those in both secondary and higher educational institutions. The UN can assist with this. Central Asia and Afghanistan should take each other's youth to study at their own schools and universities. For example, let the Afghans study in Kazakhstan, Kazakhstani study in Turkmenistan, etc. I am sure that graduates will have contacts in the countries where they study and positive interaction between the countries in this case is inevitable. In my opinion, this is a way in which we can strengthen regional security and international security in general.

How did COVID-19 affect your country and your region as a whole? What can make the things better?

There hasn't been any case of COVID-19 officially reported in Turkmenistan. Overall, there are many infected people in our region as all around the world. Many cases of infection have led to lethal outcomes. Governments introduced lockdown measures and provided financial support to the population. Certainly, the Central Asian countries are just developing, so the epidemic impacted our economies much more strongly than developed countries. But still we hope that things will get better soon.

What's the role of young people and people with disabilities in the maintenance of peace and security? And what actions can we take to create a better world for future generations?

Being representatives of the future generations, I think it's important that our voices are heard. It is exactly young people who bring new ideas. It is necessary to increase the presence of young men and women in all fields. The people of Central Asia and Afghanistan strive to overcome their most conservative. Let women study, improve themselves, make contributions towards the development of their countries and the whole world in general.

There are many times in history when women have made huge contributions in the maintenance of peace and security. Indira Ghandi is one good example. She spent her life trying to eradicate poverty and inter-faith conflicts. A Great Woman, indeed.

People with disabilities are a special class of society. I would say the most vulnerable class. Bearing in mind their needs, they should be provided with full-time jobs, conditions for moving around the city, treatment. Those who aren't able to work should get good social welfare.

What kind of a future do you want for your children and grandchildren? And how can the peace and security issues affect it?

As an ordinary human being, I hope that my children won't see hunger and wars, that they will have air to breath and a place to live. I hope that they will grow up to be normal people and have everything we were not able to have. If we settle conflicts peacefully, if the whole world uses its best endeavours to strengthen cooperation among countries, then we'll make our planet a true abode of happiness.





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From time immemorial, the Central Asian countries are linked by economic and cultural ties. This familiarization with the culture of each nation makes people not only aware, but also destroys false stereotypes. As a messenger of good will and an Ambassador of Preventive Diplomacy, I can say for sure that everything starts with us. Local actions make global changes.

SHUKURGELDI MYRADOV, 17

Ashgabat, Turkmenistan



SHUKURGELDI MYRADOV, 17

Ashgabat, Turkmenistan

THE WORLD IN 2045. WHAT TO EXPECT?

People always think about the future. They dream and aspire for greater and better things and they show it through new inventions, skyscrapers and even with silent wishes on falling stars. However, the main question is how to get to that future? Everybody should have a say in our common future, and I would like to present my voice, so let's time travel a bit and know the world of 2045.

The world remains alive with seven continents, many countries, numerous states and a population of seven billion. Making this multitude live together might seem insurmountable because with time, new definitions of peace appear. Among all this diversity of opinion, culture and ethnicity, the United Nations acts as the “glue” that aims to bring peace and equal opportunities to all. The contributions of the UN to this world have also impacted on me. Here is my story:

A boy named Shukurgeldi was born in a peaceful neutral country under a clear sky, a welcome son in his family. Due to the opportunities that he had over the course of his life as a young person, he studied, grew up, widened his horizons, dreamed and created. His achievements were the results of the peaceful and secure environment in his region, the predominance of a platform for realizing his potential in the country and the support of loved ones. At 14, he discovered something that had been missing for so long in his life – a chance to develop his society – Volunteering. Being a volunteer of the international network Y-PEER, Shukurgeldi learned important information about his health, HIV and STI prevention, the sexual and reproductive health and rights of young people, and gender equality and became a Master Trainer. At 16, he had the chance to become a participant of the UNRCCA Preventive Diplomacy Academy, a regional project that has given him skills in conflict prevention and familiarized him with the peace and security landscape



in Central Asia and the work of UNRCCA in this area. Later, he became a Leader of Volunteers and the Focal Point in Charge of Y-PEER. And here we are now in 2020.

My story is one of the many success stories that happened thanks to the UN working for 75 years to maintain a peaceful sky over our heads.

In 2020, the United Nations turns 75. The globe is very different from what it was in 1945 and I am sure it will change even more in the next 25 years, when the UN turns 100. The unknown variables of the future present many possibilities, but here is how I visualize our world in 2045:

The year is 2045. Humanity was able to achieve the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, but there is never a limit to perfection and the Earth has new missions. Shukurgeldi now lives in a world where everyone has water and food, where people - his family, friends and relatives - are healthy; they are employed and have access to education from anywhere in the world. People have made progress in society so that the concepts of racism and gender inequality remain almost only in history books. They have switched to clean energy and do not harm the environment. People have managed to restore all of the endangered species - there are no more Red Books. There are no political conflicts, because all peoples live in peace and cooperation, solving global problems together and achieving breakthroughs in all spheres. The countries of Central Asia play an important role in the global community in environmental and economic terms; their cities are centers of science, culture and development for people from all over the world.

It looks pretty nice, doesn't it? And most importantly, it is quite feasible. As a messenger of good will and an Ambassador of Preventive Diplomacy, I can say for sure that everything starts with us. Local actions make global changes. Here are some ideas of how to achieve a real and bright future for each person in the Central Asian region and on the planet:

- **Cooperation. Youth engagement.** Young people under 29 years of age make up more than 50% of the population of Central Asia. They have a huge potential for maintaining peace and development throughout the region. Since young people have innovative approaches and enthusiasm, it is important to organize round tables, discus-

sions among representatives of the youth of different countries, where partnerships for conflict prevention will arise and the spirit of good neighborly relations will be developed, as well as more things like the contest "Youth Voices from CA," where their voices can be heard.

- **Culture. Cultural projects and festivals.** Every nation has a culture. At the UNRCCA Preventive Diplomacy Academy, my team and I focused on the exchange of cultural experience in the creation of the project "AsiaVision." From time immemorial, the Central Asian countries are linked by economic and cultural ties. Familiarization with the culture of each nation makes people not only aware, but also destroys false stereotypes. It will be effective to hold more frequent and regular platforms for people of different nations to share their heritage.
- **Peace, security and preventive diplomacy promotion via the digital world.** Since preventive action is the prevention of disagreements between parties, this skill is necessary both in politics and in the life of every young person to create peace in their community. As United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres noted, "When I look at the web, it's clear that the web is a fantastic instrument for all of us." I believe that it will be effective in the era of digitalization to actively use the advantages of the Internet in promoting peacemaking and sharing the skills of preventive diplomacy. Thus, online campaigns and positive challenges will be efficient and will help develop young people's world view.
- **Ecology. "Our challenges are vast.** No Nation will solve them alone but together." Following SDG 7, 12, 13, 14 and 15, it is possible to overcome the process of desertification in our region and preserve a favorable environment. Also, in the Aral Sea basin, there are five independent States of Central Asia, having ancient cultural and economic ties. They hold a space with common environmental features. One of the priority goals for the Central Asian countries should be the preservation of the Aral Sea.

Gender equality promotion. A platform for realizing the potential of every girl and young person. Achieving gender equality means achieving all 17 SDGs, because it concerns everyone. The day when every girl has the right to a proper education, to make decisions and a place to work isn't a utopia. It can and will be achieved only with the help of gender equality.



Sources: <https://unrcca.unmissions.org/mandate>

<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>

<https://www.un.org/development/desa/youth/>



KRISTINA ORLOVA, 27
Ashgabat, Turkmenistan

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I see the positive impact on trends in promoting youth advocacy and peer-to-peer exchange, but for young perfectionists like me it is still not enough. **To ensure a prosperous future, the full potential of young people should be tapped.** It is evident that youth are now more powerful than ever before: we have acquired IT knowledge at an early age and have developed critical thinking and analytical skills to move beyond limiting models.

KRISTINA ORLOVA, 27

Ashgabat, Turkmenistan

The global COVID-19 catastrophe that became known to the world in late 2019 has proved the plain truth: youth should be the key actors in decision making, policy analysis and planning, as every action implemented by big organizations, governments and corporations will impact their future. Around 1.8 billion people on the planet comprise the vulnerable group of youth. As youth is not a permanent status but rather a transitional period in everyone's life, every external change directly affects the way we live and the choices we make, and shapes our personality. And it is true that the COVID-19 crisis has the potential to trigger instability and inequality. To ensure that “no one is left behind,” the postulate that is being actively promoted by the UN75, and to minimize negative effects being imposed on young people in the 21st century, the role of youth should be clearly understood in building human capacities, along with the key ways of supporting such a role.

It has been now five years since the adoption of Security Council Resolution 2250 and Agenda 2030. It was the start of a new era by including those who have usually been excluded and giving life to strong institutions, peacebuilding initiatives and justice for all. Now, I see the positive impact on trends in promoting youth advocacy and peer-to-peer exchange but for young perfectionists like me it is still not enough. To ensure a prosperous future, the full potential of young people should be tapped. It is evident that youth are now more powerful than ever before; we have acquired IT-knowledge at an early age, developed

critical thinking and analytical skills that let us move beyond the limiting models that were presented to us by adults. This is specifically relevant for Central Asian countries with their common Soviet past. The independence of Central Asian countries has given youth a new reality favouring individual approaches, innovative solutions and rapid development. In Turkmenistan, young people aged 18-29 comprise 53.7% of the population. Many of these young people are highly involved in social engagement, volunteering initiatives to help their country and



performing social responsibilities aligned to their values. At the same time, 8.2% of youth constitute the NEET group (Not in Employment, Education or Training). In my future, I would like to see well-educated youth who can address new challenges and sustain peace and security in the region. To ensure this today, decision-makers should follow these proposed steps to promote youth as agents of positive change.

1. **Make things transparent:** show the international community how youth contribute to ensuring positive change. One is usually more inspired by a personal story than statistical data or a formal report. Youth should be seen at all stages of planning and decision-making by bringing new approaches, ideas and solutions.
2. **Go beyond traditional models:** ensure that young people are at the core of each program or policy that has direct consequences for them. Youth are no longer defined by psychological unpreparedness, but rather by possessing a solid set of soft skills that can be pivotal for peacebuilding and ensuring security.
3. **Invest in education:** train youth to be new leaders. They should be experts in applying the best of their skills for mediation, conflict resolution and negotiation.

4. **Promote economic opportunities:** youth should be provided with greater economic opportunities as a motivation for choosing the right path in their lives. Once they are given the opportunity of prosperity, they will start contributing in ways that pay it back. It is a win-win investment.

It is estimated that over half of Central Asia's population is under the age of thirty. It is not just numbers that should drive attention and trigger the development of youth policies, but rather the fact that the voices of young people should be heard. We call for better investment in children and youth to ensure that they have the opportunities they need to thrive, learn, develop and realize their full potential for peace and security.





MOKHINUR BOSAKOVA, 27
Tashkent, Uzbekistan

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I am convinced that the promotion of gender equality must also go from the bottom to the top through education. If schools, from the first grades, raise awareness among boys and girls and explain gender and gender equality, then positive changes in society will have an increasing effect and will strengthen in the mentality of the younger generation.

MOKHINUR BOSAKOVA, 27

Tashkent, Uzbekistan

The issues of gender equality and women's rights have worried me since childhood. Since my mother from a young age repeated to me that my father was very angry when I was born, another girl in the family, and he even wanted to leave us. However, thanks to the intervention of the elders in the family, the marriage was saved. But the imprint of this situation has remained in me to this day. We do not have a very trusting relationship with my father, probably I still have not been able to forgive him for not accepting me in this world just because of my gender. Having matured, I realized that there are an incredible number of girls like me in our society, country and all over the world. There are many disliked women who do not believe in their worth, in their capabilities. Working for a women's NGO for three years, I have met women wrestlers, women inspirers, and leaders. I understand and feel how difficult it is to resist in such a patriarchal society.

Over the past decades, the international community has created some of the most influential and necessary legislation on women's rights, approved by most countries. But the implementation of these acts takes place in each State with varying degrees of interest from higher structures, within which men dominate. I believe that this particular factor plays a key role at the decision-making level in promoting gender equality from the international level to the local one. Until separate ministries for the status of women are created, with a prevailing number of female workers, no one will be very effective in promoting

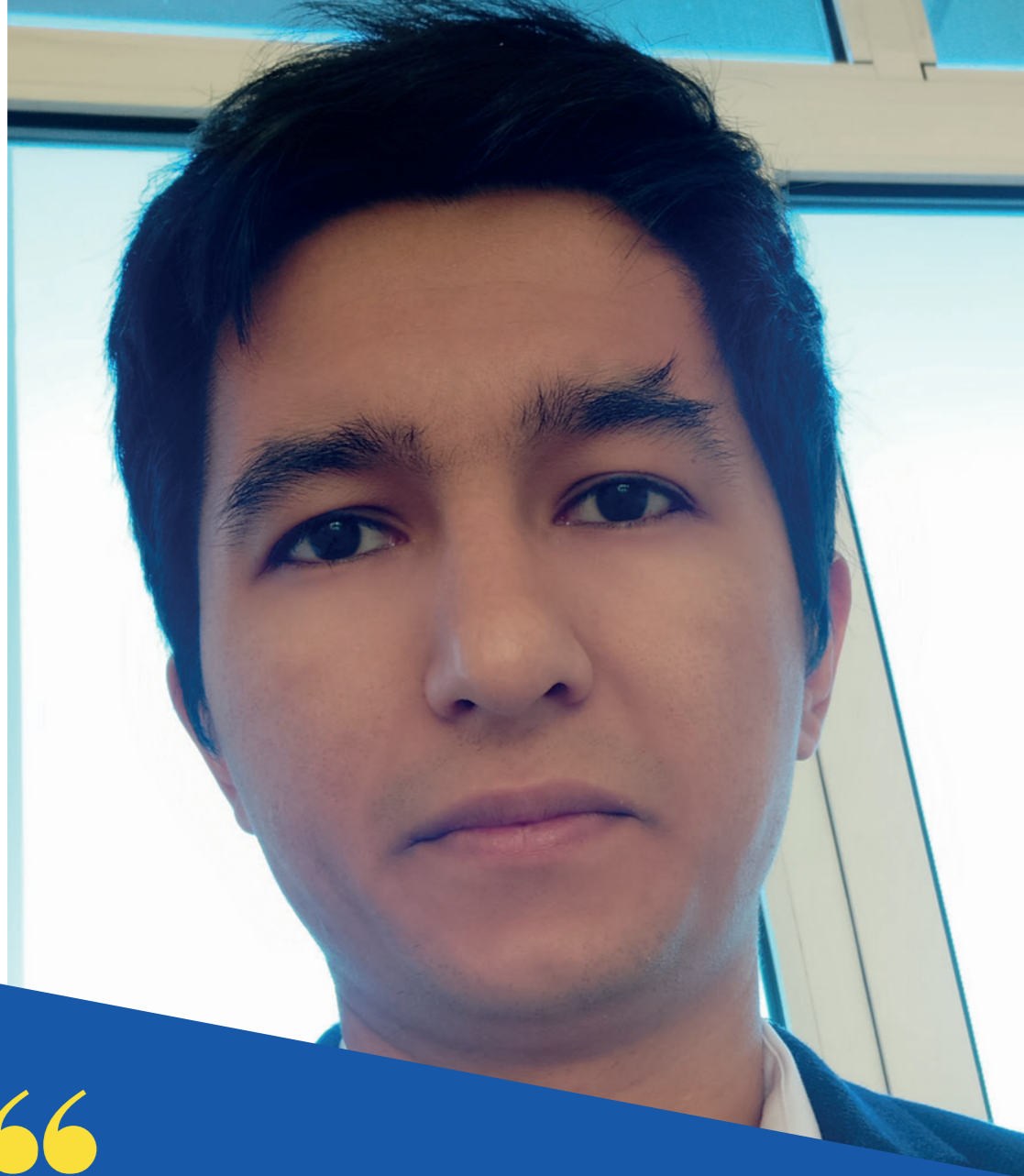
international legislation on women's rights in any country. I am sure that a women's institution at the decision-making level would be able to protect every woman and girl on any issue. This ministry would have not only to protect women at the country level, but also support and promote them in all areas of activity and provide them with new opportunities. As far as I know, such a ministry has been created in South Korea, thanks to which it is ahead of several developed countries in terms of the level of gender equality.



On the other hand, I am convinced that the promotion of gender equality must also go from the bottom to the top through education. If from the first grades in schools they will raise the legal culture of boys and girls, explain what gender and gender equality are, then positive changes in society will have an increasing effect and will strengthen in the mentality of the younger generation. That in the future will create a gender-sensitive society that will actively and consciously adopt and support international and local legislation on the rights and opportunities of women and will not accept any gender discrimination. The only obstacle to the full implementation and productivity of this approach may be the religiosity of a patriarchal society, which seeks to maintain the dominant position of men in all spheres. I do not exclude the possibility of the existence of other methods and tactics for promoting gender equality, but living in such a society, I see the solution to the problem of discrimination, violence and the belittling of the role of women in the country in this form.

I have no doubt that, thanks to global cooperation and the increased work of women's NGOs, by 2045 we will make significant progress on the issues of women and girls. A citizen of any country will come to the realization that gender equality benefits not only women, but also men. I believe that after a quarter of a century, ministries and departments for women's affairs will emerge in many States, which will have a tremendously positive impact at all levels. I would very much like to hope that thanks to the comprehensive and well-coordinated work of the UN and other international organizations, every girl who comes into this world will never regret that she was born a girl and will be able to live in peace and safety wherever she is.





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In my humble opinion, it is unfair living and working in conditions that lead people to join criminal gangs. **When justice reigns in the world, people live peacefully.**

MUKHAMMAD SAYFIDDINOV, 20

Bukhara, Uzbekistan



MUKHAMMAD SAYFIDDINOV, 20

Bukhara, Uzbekistan

WE WILL CHANGE THE WORLD

Events take place in our lives that most people think about and support their implementation. So, when we live in a society in which there is no justice and peace, it means that billions of people support such an ideology. By changing their way of thinking, we will change the world.

The truth is that in order for someone to live well, others have to do the dirty work. Since each one of us wants to live in better conditions, we want others to do the dirty work, but not us. Therefore, for the exact same reason, corruption can occur. In the search for a better life, people are sometimes prone to theft, robbery and organized crime.

You know better than me that there is also international organized crime. When one country fights with another, we know exactly who our opponent is. However, if traitors from these two countries start a conflict between their countries because of their own interests, we will have to fight with invisible ghosts.

So why do people break the law? Is someone unjustifiably committing murder? Is someone stealing for no apparent reason? When will we become peaceful?

There is no security other than knowing for sure that those around you do not need to attack you.

In my humble opinion, it is unfair living and working conditions that incite people to join criminal gangs. When justice reigns in the world, people live in peace. After 25 years or 100? Let's say in 1,000 years. No matter the time, the truth that is written on the ring of my ancestor [Amir Temur] never loses its relevance – POWER IS IN JUSTICE.

Let's put it another way. The Prophet and King Solomon, son of the Prophet David, entered Paradise a thousand years later than everyone else, and they asked him:

— What kept you for so long?

— The Creator gave me the opportunity to rule the whole world. He asked me if I was fair and honest with all beings during my reign.

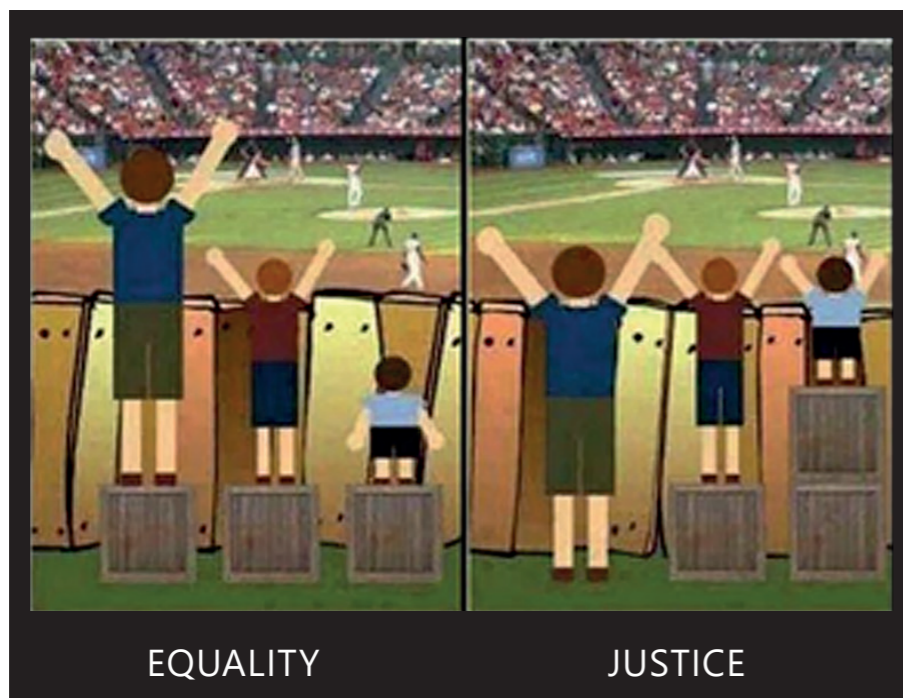
So, this means that justice is of great importance for God too.

My only suggestion to you is to build a global just society. Or do the people who drive million dollar cars not know that somewhere people are dying from thirst and hunger? Without justice, peace on Earth will never last long. You want to promote peace and security in the world? So, educate a new generation for whom justice will be the main criterion in their lives.

With the introduction of the republican form of Government, the principles of equality have been constantly and everywhere expressed. But not a word about justice. Or do you think that justice is needed only in the courtroom?

Take note of the difference between equality and fairness in this picture.

Isn't it time to stop screaming about equality?



Isn't it time to take up justice?

If those around us do not need to attack us, maybe they want to anyway? After all, needs and desires differ. The desire to harm society is connected with moral human principles. And such principles are also formed when a society violates a person's life by acting without justice. Isn't it time to create a school subject like "Principles of Justice" for our children to acquire these skills?

I really want to create a legal organization that will ensure and control fair working conditions in enterprises and factories. The point is that child labour should not be allowed. It is necessary to create favourable working conditions for the young generation so that they strive to create a better future.





SHAKHODAT OBIDOVA, 27
Kagan, Bukhara Region, Uzbekistan

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My dream is that my children will have a better life than mine. For instance, living in a good, ecologically safe and economically developed country, caring for their old parents and taking advantage of everyday life without bad things like violence, crime and drugs.

SHAKHODAT OBIDOVA, 27

Kagan, Bukhara Region, Uzbekistan

As humans we have achieved a lot throughout the years. Year by year, people have understood that violence and wars cannot bring goodness to the world, and preventive diplomacy can contribute to a great success for the countries. It can bring friendship, develop economies and cultures. Ultimately – “what goes around, comes around”. This would mean that if we are good to nature, to the other people, good will return to us.

Over past centuries, kings always tried to have good diplomatic relations with their neighbours. Now, all countries have embassies to solve problems and organize different events and festivals to exchange ideas and culture.

In the future, there will be established joint embassies – all nations’ representatives gather in one embassy, and they produce new programmes to improve relations among States.

Today, the whole world is overcoming the Covid-19 pandemic, which damaged all spheres of society. For instance, it has caused rising unemployment and illnesses, destroying the economy and sometimes relations in families. But the virus also gave us a chance to realize how important humanity is. It showcased how little all countries’ scientists were prepared to create a vaccine for Covid-19. We need to develop biogenetics to prevent such kind of illnesses in the future. It is like a black war and we need a strong spirit to overcome it.

In Uzbekistan, all people tried their best to overcome the situation, while sick people are being treated free by the Government. Products are being organized for free to poor people by sponsors. People are being informed and instructed through mass media.

Now a lot of countries permit immigrants to visit without a visa and support them. To provide peace and security, countries are paying attention to making good relationships with their neighbours. Although Covid-19 is damaging to all countries, some countries which previously have banned tourism are permitting it now. There have been conflicts between citizens and security forces in some countries because of misunderstandings. There should be explanatory films about these conditions.

In my country, people are friendly and support the Government by giving taxes on time and rich people are supporting poor people and sending necessary products to remote places. Our military has been protecting us and is being polite to local people.

The Government has been caring for every citizen in our country and appreciation among the people can be seen clearly. This inspires me.

In the future, innovative centres should be organized, free sport centres, laboratories under Governmental policy to prevent different viruses and bacteria. There should be social centres to entertain people, where they can forget anything bad and keep busy with useful activities. In each corner of each region, there should be ec-orangers who support cleanliness. By 2045, great changes will be seen in the world.

Global development can cause some conflicts among countries, so solving these problems requires intelligent politicians who know psychology better and comment on situations properly through mass media. Supporting this with laws can be helpful for avoiding political struggles.

Women and men have equality right now, but in some remote areas it is not guaranteed and provided. There should be volunteer groups who work on making this situation better. Women are essential for keeping the peace by making their family mentally strong, and they should also have knowledge and experience of this. People with disabilities can contribute to the world by doing any kind of crafting and, when Government creates conditions for them, they will prove themselves.

My dream is that my children will have a better life than mine. For instance, living in an ecologically safe and economically developed

country and caring for their old parents and taking advantage of everyday life without violence, crime and drugs. I am an English teacher and I keep going on my way. I want every country to be safe and peaceful, smiles on every child's and elderly person's face, with their souls soothed from their bright future. I always beg God for peace in the world.

The UN has been supporting countries and people and it can strengthen its outreach with brochures, organizing festivals, annual events in countries turn by turn, convening meeting and explaining its aims and plans, taking comments from young people in schools, colleges and universities in remote areas. It inspires them for the future. I am grateful for these events. Thanks much.





ZAKRIA FAZIL, 30

Qala-i-Now, Badghis Province, Afghanistan

**THE IMPACTS OF MULTILATERALISM
AND REGIONAL INTEGRATION ON PEACE
AND SECURITY IN CENTRAL
ASIA & AFGHANISTAN**

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Central Asia and Afghanistan could have very strong economic ties by making a strategic partnership with each other on the basis of the strong traditional bonds among the nations that have existed for centuries. **As a result, multilateral cooperation among these states could reduce security threats and strengthen regional and international peace and security.**

ZAKRIA FAZIL, 30

Qala-i-Now, Badghis Province, Afghanistan

Sustainable peace and security can have a huge impact on a country's socio-economic growth and political stability, and can help foster the development of a functioning democracy, human rights, gender and ethnic equality, education, and technology. As an Afghan citizen who has witnessed the negative impacts of prolonged instability in my country, I believe Central Asian countries, particularly Afghanistan, struggle to maintain peace and stability. For example, the gradual withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan created a power vacuum in the country, which led to the Afghan Government proactively seeking out alternative sources of military assistance. The Afghan Government is constantly trying to find ways to create political stability, and protect its citizens from inter-ethnic conflicts and attacks from militant fundamentalists groups. The Central Asian states can play a strategic partnership role in the legal framework because these countries share historical and cultural linkages, close economic ties, and the collective potential to overcome these problems. In short, the goals of peace and stability would be better served by regional integration and multilateral cooperation among these nations.

First, the Central Asian countries and Afghanistan share a lot of commonalities in terms of history, culture, language, religion, geography.

These linkages help tie us together and strengthen our relations. However, the past few decades have seen decreased political cooperation among the Central Asian countries. As an anecdote, the city I live in, Qala-i-now in Badghis province, is less than 50km from Turkmenistan's border. Yet, all I know of Turkmenistan are its electric power cables that we use when we switch on the lights in our rooms. This is because we largely avoid closely engaging with our neighbouring States so as to avoid interfering in their domestic affairs. This is in stark contrast to what I saw in Southeast Asia, where citizens of each state could travel to all Southeast Asian states without a visa in their passports. This has helped citizens of the Southeast Asian states learn more about each other's country and has fostered closer socio-economic ties among the populations of each nation.

I believe the Central Asian states and Afghanistan could create a similar environment to that in Southeast Asia by way of treaties, agreements, and policies to loosen their borders or their societies. This could be done through policies that focus on better education, youth empowerment, gender equity, preventing radicalization, diplomacy and multilateralism. Improved educational programs would help the Afghan Government fill in significant gaps in the country's labour force, particularly in public administration, management, and the judiciary. Providing decent job opportunities, providing sustainable non-poppy crop alternatives, improving infrastructure, and assisting underprivileged and disenfranchised Afghans could reduce rural Afghan support and dependency on insurgent groups.

Secondly, there are several factors that could incentivize the Central Asian states and Afghanistan to engage in multilateral cooperation. All parties have committed themselves to strengthening commercial relations, scientific and technological cooperation as well as to support and expand cooperation in other areas. For example, the trade and economic interests between Central Asia and Afghanistan is a major aspect of the relationships among these countries. Afghanistan's economic situation, growth and social improvement is a key solution to address major regional issues. In contrast, emerging global powers like India, Pakistan and China need to satisfy their huge and growing energy demands, as well have direct and clear access to regional and global markets for their exports. For India, the most direct route that connects this country to the landlocked and energy-rich Central Asia states is through Pakistan and Afghanistan. Hence, Central Asia and Afghanistan could foster strong economic ties through strategic partnership with each other as a reiteration of the strong traditional bonds among the nations that have existed for centuries. As a result,

multilateral cooperation among these states reduces security threats and strengthens regional and global peace and security.

Thirdly, radicalization and extremism have remained the primary threats for the sustainable peace and security of Central Asia and Afghanistan. The countries of this region, through collaboration in international organizations such as the UN, can utilize regional cooperation and integration as a means to curb the threats of extremism and radicalization, to ensure lasting peace and security in the region.





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We, the youth, want a world in which the rights of every human being are considered and respected equally, without any discrimination against them. We want peace and equal rights, we expect equal access to educational opportunities and the right to work.

SALWA NEZAMI, 25

Kabul, Afghanistan



 **SALWA NEZAMI, 25**
Kabul, Afghanistan

THE FUTURE WORLD

The world that we as youths want, especially for the upcoming years, is quite different. We see this from the lens of idealism. The idealistic world that we expect is way different; a world free of violence, war, terror, conflict, inequality, nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction. We want peace, equality for all regardless of their color, race, ethnicity, and/or religion. We want equal rights for every person living on the surface of the planet. We want a world free of conflict and war, in which humans would be treated as humans and not as objects of political games. We want a peaceful life free of violence in which women, children and adolescents attain the basic rights they deserve, especially in Central Asia and Afghanistan. We want peace and justice and are tired of war and violence. We want a clean environment for all living beings. Last but not least, we want equal opportunities for learning for all, regardless of gender and/or background.

Part 1: Preventive diplomacy, according to scholars, is an action to prevent disputes from arising between parties. I think preventive diplomacy is the measures taken by international actors and the involved parties that seek to prevent disagreements and disputes from ending up turning into conflicts and major wars, or to limit the impact of conflicts when they

occur. Preventive diplomacy can mitigate the risk of threats – one of which could be use of nuclear weapons. The established taboo on nuclear weapons that mitigates their use can be seen as a good example of preventive diplomacy, but still it might not be enough to prevent the use of nuclear weapons by States and super powers when conflicts arise. Preventive diplomacy can mitigate the risk of conflict and prevent States from entering into war against each other. Through the implementation of such diplomacy, the world would be a safer place for humans. Obviously, when a conflict forms, it impacts the life, education, career and background of human beings. For instance, when the Taliban entered Afghanistan back in 1996, girls were prevented from going to school, women could not work or leave their houses even for medical treatment and thousands more restrictions were imposed on the people of Afghanistan. When the U.S. invaded Afghanistan after the 11 Septem-



ber attacks, the Taliban regime collapsed and democracy was installed. Consequently, women found opportunities to go out of their homes and work in offices, and girls found opportunities to get back to school and continue their education. I was one of them.

Part 2: Considering the fact that international system is now multipolar means the new raising powers such as China, Turkey, Russia are now rapidly influencing the world politics. I think through manipulating the international system and positive interventions by the U.S. and other powers working jointly with the countries of Central Asia, which are suffering

from protracted conflicts, and the provision of academic and technical assistance, the region could potentially improve, and peace could (?) become sustainable. The Asian states could work jointly to stop terrorism and negative behaviours. We can cooperate in areas such as education, knowledge exchange, economics, science, technology and sustainable development. This would provide opportunities for youths in particular to exchange their views, learn about other Central Asian countries' backgrounds, history and development? and use the knowledge they gain to introduce new initiatives to their own States. This could encourage a spirit of peace among the people and their countries.

Part 3: Since February 2020, when COVID-19 began to spread, the Government imposed restrictions on the unnecessary movement of citizens in the major cities of Afghanistan. Since the declaration of these restrictions, citizens almost experienced a different era. They enjoyed less crowded streets and a cleaner environment due to less movement of cars, and they had opportunities to learn and read books. But again, if we move to politics, no changes have been observed in the behavior of terrorist groups and COVID-19 could not stop them from attacking civilian and military objectives.

Part 4: I think we – and me myself – as youths, can have a crucial impact on our world because we think differently from our ancestors. We learn, and by learning the literature and history of our nations and about the decisions made by our leaders over the course of decades related to any phenomena, we can judge their actions, and from their judgments and decisions we learn when to make which decision. We can contribute to bring peace and prosperity to our nation by leveraging our influence in decision-making processes. We can campaign for peace, education, clean environment, women's and children's rights, and thousand more issues by raising our voices on platforms such as social media, television, radio and even painting and photography. We can write essays based on facts, not fictions, to let our disadvantaged and very vulnerable people know the improvements of the new world and contribute to peace building, peacemaking and peacekeeping processes. The UN, by providing more support to the youths – and especially to active youths – can fulfill its part. The UN can politically and financially support us in implementing our projects.

Part 5: More than 60 per cent of the population of Afghanistan is under the age of 25. If we look deeply, South Asia is one of the regions with a huge young generation. Young people could act as change agents if used or engaged in activities. For instance, involving youths in initiatives to raise their awareness practically as well as involving them in campaigns would be effective. The most important point to



be considered is that youths are technically involved by anti-government troops to fight against the Government. This shows a failure of the Government of Afghanistan to provide youths with proper jobs, education and development opportunities. What we can do is to mobilize youth, women and people with disabilities. These particular minority groups should be given opportunities to raise their voices and encourage their counterparts in rural and urban areas to contribute to the process of peace building. What is important at this point is to pave the way for their contributions. We must develop a viable blueprint to map, identify, capture and engage youth and women in development processes.

Part 6: I think at the moment the hottest issues to be paid attention to are: COVID-19, regional peace and security, climate change, inter-state conflicts and conflicts among states, and preventing states from using nuclear weapons. By successfully managing these issues, we would be able to secure a better future for our future generations. Successfully managing the COVID-19 pandemic, controlling and peacefully resolving regional conflicts, rationally and responsibly using natural resources, and acting as mediator to prevent States from entering into wars that potentially could lead to nuclear wars are top priorities for us.

Part 7: The future that we expect for our future generations is full of peace and stability, a world free of violence, conflict, war, instability and nuclear weapons. We want a world in which the rights of every hu-

man being are considered and respected equally without any type of discrimination against them. We want peace and equal rights, we expect equal access to educational opportunities and the right to work. Regional peace and stability could play a major role in their lives. Any unexpected conflict could damage their lives and ruin their future. For instance, the conflict in Afghanistan left 3.6 million children out of school and involved them in child labor, child marriage and paved the way for their involvement in the war. If the war continues, the impact will grow double and impact the lives of even more youths, women and children.





MARIAM ABDUL SHUKUR SHUKURI, 25

Afghanistan (currently living in Dushanbe, Tajikistan)

WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY

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Since the family is the first school for everyone, we can say that the beginning of women's problems also lies with the family. And too often from childhood, they are discriminated against and not treated as human beings, they are subjected to physical and psychological violence and even raped. They are deprived of basic rights such as studying and working.

MARIAM ABDUL SHUKUR SHUKURI, 25

Afghanistan (currently living in Dushanbe, Tajikistan)

Women make up half of society and hold a special place in the family and society in different countries. Due to the fact that the main focus of our discussion is the women of Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan) and Afghanistan, first of all, it is necessary to take into account people's commitment to cultural and religious principles, which may oppose generally accepted norms in the world and society. Spiritual and moral values are not always interpreted correctly, which is why sometimes the rights of women are being restricted. Since the family is the first school of life and a place for everyone, we can say that challenges for women also begin within the family. Sometimes, gender discrimination occurs and since childhood girls might be subjected to physical, psychological and even sexual violence. Many of them are deprived of their basic rights, such as the choice of profession and career.

In some Afghan families women have been exposed to violence since childhood, while giving a birth to a boy has a higher priority.. Girls are not welcomed to study. Even if they go to school, when they turn 13 or 14 years old, according to their families they are already adults and must get married and leave their primary home. It goes without

saying that an Afghan girl is a guest in her father's house and the longer she stays there, the more uncomfortable she feels. Afghan girls often do not have the right to choose a husband or fall in love, because this is contrary to the local beliefs and culture. Those girls who marry for love are often called immoral or harmful. The religion of more than 95% of the people of Afghanistan is Islam, and people, due to incorrect interpretation of the bases of the religion and listening to some of its followers, who are less aware of the essence of the religion and the powers granted to them, make women sit firmly in the corner of the house and follow their husbands and men.

Although Islam itself is a religion of love, peace and friendship, and in Islam women are given the highest position and rights. Here, I call on the Government to take the necessary measures in this regard, including preventing the spread of superstition by some mullahs and religious scholars who have little specific and truthful knowledge about religion and Islam.

Child marriage and abuse are on the rise in rural and remote areas, where Afghan women are subjected to domestic violence and murder or are forced to flee their homes.

Thus, despite this, women today are making every effort to change the situation.

Countries should strive to improve the role of the women in government, their participation in decision-making of state policies on an equal basis with men.



I would also like to write about the emotional violence against women. As the world battles the deadly Covid-19 virus from the end of 2019 and throughout 2020, Afghanistan and other Central Asian countries are not far lagging in world statistics that show that violence against women in quarantine has doubled. While in self-isolation, many girls and boys use social media and dating sites, which increases the risk of emotional and sexual abuse of girls.

In recent years, the issue of peace negotiations and the Taliban joining the Government or the creation of an Islamic state has been very acute, but we call on the Afghan Government, the international community and other organizations working to protect women's and human rights to participate in these negotiations. The international community has supported the activities carried out by Afghan women, even if their achievements are at the level of the central cities of Afghanistan, and expressed its support so that the achievements of women over the years do not get lost.

And finally, I want to write about the worst type of violence, namely violence against women by women. In some countries, such as Afghanistan, women struggle to prove themselves and succeed not only against men, but also against other women. A woman working outside of her home is criticized not only by men, but also by women, who by promoting a sense of honour demean the other woman and violate her rights.





TAEHWAN KIM, 17

Republic of Korea (currently living in Tashkent, Uzbekistan)

BLOSSOMING INTO PEACE AND PROSPERITY: CENTRAL ASIA 2045

The Central Asian nations (Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Afghanistan) have strong historical and cultural connections. All of them have the same main religion, Sunni Islam and, except for Afghanistan, they were all united under the Soviet Union. But unfortunately, these nations have recently become more isolated from one another. This isolation has led to economic damage, less mobility, and threats to peace. Thus, to build a more stable and successful Central Asia by 2045, it is essential to foster unity and communication within the region.

Currently, the countries of Central Asia are rather isolated. As part of the Soviet Union, most of these nations were connected, but international borders were created when they gained independence, dividing populations and disrupting industrial and transportation links. Currently, it can be costly and difficult to obtain visas, which limits the connections among these states. To achieve a better 2045, Central Asia must work on solving this problem. By loosening or opening borders between nations that share similar history and ideology, they will benefit, as they will be able to collaborate more effectively. Populations that have been divided will be reunite-

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By loosening or opening borders between nations that share a similar history and ideology, they will benefit more as they will be able to collaborate more effectively. Populations that have been divided will be reunited, and this will promote better relations and mutual understanding between the nations.

TAEHWAN KIM, 17

Republic of Korea (currently living in Tashkent, Uzbekistan)



ed, and this will promote better relations and mutual understanding among the nations. A good model for this could be Europe's Schengen Area, which allows people to move freely among the member nations without visas or passport checks. While the Central Asian countries have used the threat of terrorism as an excuse to tighten border control in the past, this has been largely ineffective, and a more united Central Asia could also work together more easily to stop the spread of terrorist groups.

To build a better future, Central Asian nations also need to work together more closely. After becoming independent, the countries formed and joined different regional organizations and treaties. I think it would be beneficial and I would like to see that by 2045, countries in the region have closer unification similar to the European Union, achieved by integrating policies to create an economic and monetary union with a common currency and free trade among member states. Central Asia should also aim to create a political union, with some shared laws and agreements, while also respecting the sovereignty of the individual nations. This would allow the region to focus on common goals such as reducing extremism, investing in infrastructure, and creating a more sustainable future.

Finally, to improve the future of the region, it is crucial to improve the situation of the youth. After the fall of the Soviet Union, access to all levels of education in Central Asia fell, and internet access in the region is low, with less than a third of the population connected in Ta-



jikistan, Turkmenistan, and Afghanistan. In an increasingly digitized and globalized world, this puts Central Asian youth at a severe disadvantage. To create a generation of capable future leaders, Central Asia needs to invest more in its education systems. It should also strive to improve internet infrastructure, as internet access is the key to thriving in the modern economy. Furthermore, better internet access will allow the youth to play a role in important regional and global discussions. It is significant for leaders in Central Asia to acknowledge the youth as potential leaders and provide a platform that they can use to talk about policies and social issues that are important to them.

To conclude, Central Asian nations are not currently realizing their full potential due to a lack of unification. If they open up their borders to one another and use economic integration, it



would create notable increases in economic growth, political stability, and more. Furthermore, by acknowledging youth as potential leaders and creating a platform through which youth can collaborate with each other, the governments of Central Asia can invest in their future. As the internet is a crucial link that joins the world together economically and socially, improving internet accessibility in these regions is significant. If these steps are taken, Central Asia will thrive and by 2045 it can be a peaceful and prosperous place.



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