



The Youth Forum in the Arab region

19 -21 December 2018
Assilah, Morocco



المنتدى المتوسطي للشباب - المغرب
ΕΘΝΟΛΛΙΓΕΣ ΣΕΚΙΣΗ ΜΕΔΙΤΕΡΡΑΝΕΩΣ
The Mediterranean Forum for Youth - Morocco



Message from the Regional Director



The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Arab States Regional Office (ASRO) in partnership with the World Organization of the Scout Movement, and the Mediterranean Forum for Youth - Morocco, organized the inaugural Youth Forum in the Arab Region, held at the Prince Bandar Bin Sultan Library and Hassan II international forums centre in Assilah, Kingdom of Morocco, from 19-21 December 2018.

Aiming to set and advance a youth agenda in the Arab region, and to promote a practical framework for realising UNSC resolution 2250 on youth, peace and security, the Forum gathered more than 250 participants comprising young people, ministers, senior officials from Arab governments, senior United Nations officials, representatives of international agencies, legislators, academics, researchers, youth development practitioners, young innovators, youth celebrities, artists, and representatives from civil society as well as youth networks and private sector, media and other development partners.

Working with the intent of laying down a strong foundation for the forum as the Arab region's "Youth Space", the 2018 inaugural gathering focussed on defining elements of a new paradigm and narrative on adolescents and youth in the Arab region, with special reference to themes of innovation, youth, peace and security.

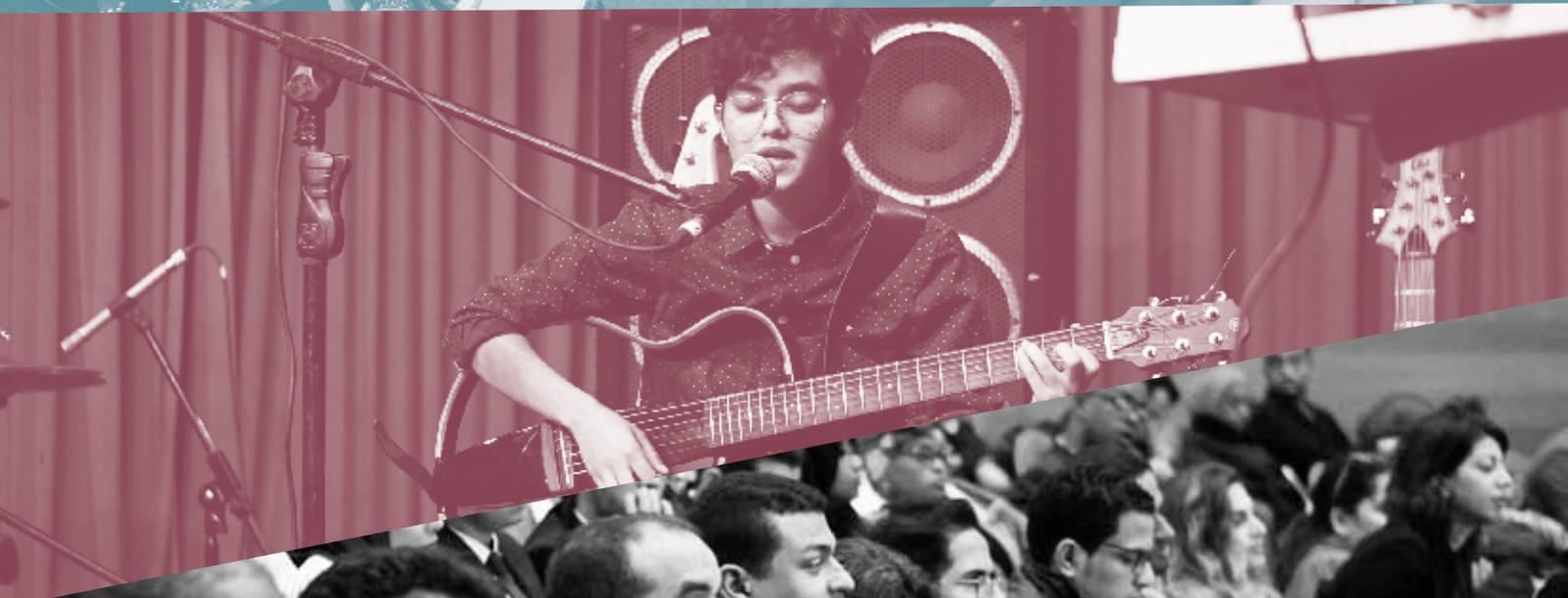
This first ever forum provided an inspiring platform for intense discussions and lively accounts attesting to the resilience, innovativeness and creativity of young people in the Arab region, with evenings devoted to music, poetry and the arts. Enthused participants discussed a wide range of topics and issues including sustainable development, youth, and peace and security initiatives in the context of helping realise the aspirations and potential of the region's young women and men. This report summarizes the Forum's key messages and proceedings with a view to disseminating them more widely as a synergistic basis for follow-up implementation and collaborative partnerships.

UNFPA Arab states office initiated the idea of the Youth Forum as a regional space for youth in the region (including Arabs and non-Arabs), and supported the establishment of the forum by organizing the inaugural event and by launching the regional framework for Youth, Peace and Security (YPS). We in UNFPA strongly believe that this initiative should be open to other partners and agencies interested in helping promote the regional youth agenda in the Arab region. Moreover, the forum should be led by young people with support from national, regional and international partners.

The Assilah's call for action raised the bar in keeping with the expectations expressed as well as the priorities and interventions the forum articulated. It also called for strengthened and coherent coordination between national and regional partners to keep youth at the heart of the development agenda. It called also for a new narrative and paradigm for adolescents and youth with the emphasis on solutions not just challenges, and it highlighted the need for investment in young people, belief in their abilities and engaging with them as peace and development agents in both development and conflict settings.

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Introduction

The United Nations Population Fund Arab States Regional Office in partnership with the World Organization of the Scout Movement, and the Mediterranean Forum for Youth, organized the first-ever Youth Forum in the Arab Region, which was held at the Prince Bandar Bin Sultan Library and Hassan II international forums centre in Assilah, Kingdom of Morocco from 19-21 December 2018.

In order to achieve a transformative leap and qualitative improvement and growth for youth in Arab countries, there is need to build on the overall approach and to develop youth policies and strategies within a framework that upholds their rights and fulfils their potential as they help optimize national sustainable development efforts in their respective countries. Such an approach calls for a dedicated regional space or platform, creative and effectively dynamic, where young people can be brought together to meet on a regular basis with concerned decision makers and other relevant stakeholders to promote dialogue and synergies.

In this connection, the Forum's main objective is to set and advance the youth agenda while promoting youth, peace and development in the Arab States. The aim is a dynamic, rights-based and representative regional platform that consults, engages and proposes actionable and innovative solutions on youth issues and challenges

by bringing together representatives of all relevant stakeholders.

The Forum, designed to be the first in a series of regular (annual or biannual) forum that constitute "The Youth Space" in the Arab region, is intended to open horizon for dialogue, debate and tracking development and implementation of a dynamic youth agenda in the Arab region.

The agenda for this first, 2018 convening of the Youth Forum in the Arab region comprised 21 sessions including two plenary sessions plus a series of interactive workshops and marketplace presentations. The sessions focused on defining elements of a new paradigm and narrative on adolescents and youth in the region. Themes were innovation, youth, peace and security with the objective of ensuring a strong foundation for subsequent convenings of the Forum.

Participants agreed on several key messages, grouped by issue according to session discussions and highlighted in the Forum outcome summary statement -- The Assilah's Call for Action. This report will be widely disseminated to relevant regional and international fora such as the 2019 ECOSOC Youth Forum and the 2019 EURO-Arab Youth Forum and shared also with different partners such as the Regional UN Development Group.



I. Assilah's call for action: Key messages from the Youth Forum in the Arab region

A. General messages

1. Reaffirm the principle of young people being equal partners by being informed, consulted and empowered to contribute to the sustainable development of their societies through their innovative approach and proposed solutions to the region's most pressing challenges;
2. Emphasize the need for a new positive narrative around young people in all spheres including family, society, politics, culture and media in order to promote youth as positive change makers and problem solvers and show how, when equipped with the requisite skills, their insights and innovations can help speed up attainment of SDGs' and the 2030 agenda in the Arab region;
3. Express concern about tremendous challenges faced by young people in the region including lack of adequate employment opportunities; weak participation in policy making; inadequate health and education services and limited access to youth friendly health services and to opportunities for benefiting from effective essential life skills; all of the foregoing compounded by the significant impact of regional conflicts, local terrorism, general instability and all forms of irregular/illegal migration;
4. Recognize that today's generation of Arab youth -- one third of the region's population, a demographic often forming the majority of individual country populations -- is most vulnerable to armed conflicts; and, in this context, take note of the implications and possible consequences for the region's peace and security when its youth are faced with increased unemployment, reduced economic activity and soaring educational drop-out rates, which, combined with an inability to access information, skills and opportunities, only add to the risks associated with illegal migration and violent extremism;
5. Emphasize the links between the international and regional milestones on youth, peace and security such as UN Security Council Resolutions 2250, 2419 and the "Arab Declaration in Support of Joint Effort to Combat Terrorism" that was endorsed by the Arab Summit in 2017; as well as, the subsequent regional, sub-regional and national consultations on Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) in Arab states since December 2016 as well as the Regional Strategic Framework on YPS in Arab states launched during the Forum;

6. Confirm education's protective and empowering role for young men and women and the key role that educators and educational institutions play in addressing the root causes around violence, extremism and the risks associated with irregular and illegal migration;
7. Acknowledge and help realize the positive effect of youth entrepreneurship in addressing youth unemployment and the potential this offers in motivating the region's young men and women to set up social entrepreneurship projects for rural development and those addressing social problems in their countries;
8. Reaffirm that youth in the region are a developmental blessing when adequate policies are in place that invest in their capacity and knowledge and seek to ensure that they are provided with the rights and space to support developing, implementing and following up on national programmes;
9. Confirm the centrality of adolescent girls and the importance of asset-based initiatives and programmes to mitigate the challenges and risks facing girls such as the harmful practices of FGM and child marriage and empowering them with the power of choice including reproductive health and rights in all economic, social and political spheres;
10. Emphasize the importance of recognizing the role of young people as makers, innovators and agents of change so that governments and communities provide young people with access to opportunities, skills, and information about all matters related to young people's rights and well-being.



B. Towards a new paradigm for youth in the region

11. Proposed a new paradigm stressing the need to value and collaborate with young people by recognising their potential as the region's demographic bulge and so, taking account of and respecting their concerns and aspirations, seat at them at the decision making table and not treat them merely as beneficiaries of a process;
12. Call for interdependence between youth and policy makers at all levels but especially where local policy makers commit to investing in youth capacities and skills as the main cornerstone of the proposed paradigm;
13. Ensure commitment by states for a new social contract with youth enhanced by regular and extensive multi-platform dialogue that includes civil society partners;

14. Address the youth trust deficit that exists within states using innovative approaches such as shadow youth governments and reports on government performance by youth to enhance accountability to youth and systematize their contribution in the planning, implementation and monitoring of government plans;
15. Call for an inclusive new narrative for young people in the region enhanced with intergenerational dialogues within societies and families promoted by programmes such as positive and inclusive parenting and premarital counselling.;
16. Enhance participation by young Arab men and women in media both as active and informed consumers and as producers of media and help set guidelines for Arab media to better reflect the stories of the youth generation;
17. Stress the importance of educators and educational institutions adopting student-centred approaches and work with teachers and other education professionals towards a more youth-positive narrative in education;
18. Confirm the need to maximize youth grassroots-level involvement by promoting social entrepreneurship programmes, flexible Arab students' employment programmes and sustainable volunteerism and internship opportunities drawing on university and employer accreditation systems to facilitate youth education-to-employment transition;
19. Call for regional simulation activities and incentives to encourage youth grassroots and civic involvement preferably implemented with university and civil society organization (CSO) backing and support to better foster community service and social responsibility values among Arab youth, especially young women and rural youth;
20. Affirm the important role of the arts, media and sports in the region as catalysts for social change and as effective tools to promote peace, youth civic participation as well as helping combat all forms of harmful practices against women and girls;
21. Propose the development and launch of a regional youth-moderated platform/ knowledge bank that documents ideas, innovations, initiatives and lessons learnt from successful youth initiatives on SDGs that can be supported by partners both technically and financially;
22. Lobby to ensure that future sessions of the Youth Forum continue to give prominence to the need to reinforce youth contributions to SDGs in the region.



C. Innovation at the Service of Youth in Arab States

23. Call for development of a regional Artificial Intelligence platform to gather and analyse Arab Youth sentiments on the internet and social media platforms and act as a repository for Arab youth voices and concerns and provide feedback to governments with enhanced security mechanisms to ensure user privacy;
24. Proposed creation of a cadre of Arab Youth Researchers to research and develop knowledge and advocacy products about youth priorities and spaces based on robust evidence generated by AI and big data analytics;
25. Urgently address adolescent and youth health in the region with emphasis on sexual and reproductive health needs using innovative approaches such as regionally promoted hot line services and online platforms paying special attention to youth mental and psycho-social wellbeing needs;
26. Promote the importance of the role states, families and civil society must play in ensuring a protective environment for adolescent girls that protects them from risks while helping them develop their skills to realize their potential and dreams. Also called for assets-based programmes at girls' safe spaces and affirmative action programmes at education institutions to realize Arab girls' equity in accessing education, health, training and employability services;
27. Denounce all forms of violence against adolescent girls in the region especially child marriage and female genital mutilation/cutting, citing such harmful practices as clear barriers preventing girls from fulfilling their potential;
28. Suggest promoting more youth entrepreneurship in the region as follows: a) building a strong ecosystem and enabling environment to encourage and support youth enterprises; b) support youth employment through proactive mechanisms based on age and gender and; c) behaviour change campaigns addressing the culture of work among young people; and, (d) promote technical and vocational training specifically designed to respond to job market needs;
29. Call for regional and country level programs and funds to encourage youth innovation with focus on young women's projects and young people in underserved areas;



D. Youth, Peace and Security in Arab States

30. Roll out regional strategic framework for YPS in Arab States by implementing projects, initiatives and programmes corresponding to the five pillars of related UNSC resolutions;
31. Propose launching national dialogue and discussions with youth, decision and policy makers (e.g. ministries of youth and other relevant national ministries) and legislative committees (e.g. led by the parliamentary youth committees) in the region about how to operationalize the regional strategic framework for YPS and develop national action plans on 2250;
32. Call for political commitment to facilitate orderly Arab youth migration, including the creation of decent jobs for youth to address unemployment, and provision of adequate health and protection services catering to the needs of young men and women on the move;
33. Intensify efforts to develop information and communication campaigns correcting misconceptions about migration and promote success stories about youth who opted to migrate and achieve their dream or those who succeeded while staying in country;
34. Empower the marginalized and most vulnerable social groups, especially adolescents, young people, women, persons with disabilities, older persons and migrants, and involve those groups in developing economic and social policies towards sustainable development and peace processes;
35. Take due account of the critical role educational institutions play in fostering values of social cohesion, tolerance and acceptance and how they also serve to protect and respond when and where the region faces waves of violence and extremism;
36. Promote a more inclusive and enabling humanitarian and development system and adopt new ways of working that include young people as equal partners; commit to investing in their capacity and skills and respond to their needs especially when affected by crises in the region.



II. Sessions and presentations

1. In addition to the introductory and opening sessions, the Forum comprised four plenary sessions and 15 workshop discussions around the three main themes of development, innovation and peace for youth in the Arab region. The sessions covered the following topics:

Introductory session	Introductory session to the Youth Forum in the Arab region
Plenary session I	Towards a new paradigm for young people in Arab states
Opening session	Opening and launch of the first "Youth Forum in the Arab region" - welcoming remarks by partners and youth officials
Parallel workshop 1	Reframing perceptions and Building Trust towards a new social contract between young people and the state
Parallel workshop 2	Elements of the envisaged new and inclusive narrative for young people in the Arab region
Parallel workshop 3	Effective modalities to better engage youth at grassroots-level
Parallel workshop 4	Role of arts and media in promoting the envisaged new narrative
Parallel workshop 5	Reinforcing concrete contributions of youth to achieving SDGs in their countries
Plenary session II	Innovation at the service of youth in Arab states
Parallel workshop 6	Customizing a Regional Artificial Intelligence-based platform for youth in Arab states
Parallel workshop 7	Innovation in adolescent/youth health and wellbeing
Parallel workshop 8	New generation of life skills and citizenship education
Parallel workshop 9	What works to fulfil adolescent girls' potential?
Parallel workshop 10	Youth entrepreneurship and employability
Plenary session III	Youth, Peace and Security in Arab states
Parallel workshop 11	Launch of Regional Strategic Framework on Youth, Peace and Security in Arab states
Parallel workshop 12	Coalitions on Youth, Peace and Security
Parallel workshop 13	Youth in humanitarian settings and fragile contexts
Parallel workshop 14	Youth and Migration
Parallel workshop 15	Role of youth in reinforcing social cohesion and tolerance
Plenary session IV	Institutional framework for the Youth Forum in the Arab region

2. The following sections summarize each session and the related topics of discussion.

A. Introductory session

3. Ms. Nour Al Mahrooqi, youth representative from Oman and Mr. Anas El Gharbi representative of the Local Youth Council of Assilah, Morocco, welcomed the Youth Forum participants who travelled an average of 15 hours to attend. The turn out and the enthusiasm of the assembled delegates reflected palpable excitement and hope plus an affirmation of the Forum's goals for the role of youth in the Arab region including a new paradigm for institutionalizing a regional youth space and contributing significantly to the region's youth agenda.

B. Opening session

4. The opening session comprised official welcoming remarks by Dr. Luay Shabaneh, Regional Director, UNFPA ASRO; Yassine Isbouia, General Coordinator, The Mediterranean Forum for Youth - Morocco; HE Mohamed Benaissa, Former Minister of Foreign Affairs and Mayor of Assilah; Dr. Rachid Renga, Youth and Culture Adviser to the Prime Minister, Morocco- as well as youth representatives Ms. Ala Hamdan, social films director from Jordan and Ms. Donia Saadaoui, Municipal Councillor from Tunisia. Both spoke of how working with young people could yield harmonized solutions to youth issues arising in political settings such as municipalities or at the community level, as for example changing attitudes to and educating people about GBV. They urged greater recognition for the value

of youth contributions, while also urging youth to be catalysts for change through the input they provided decision makers and to extend those efforts to proposing solutions to aid states.

C. Plenary sessions

Session I: Towards a new paradigm for young people in Arab states

5. The panel was moderated by Mr. Samir Anouti, Regional Youth Adviser, UNFPA. Dr. Khaled Louhichi, a specialist on the subject matter, outlined the current situation of young people in the Arab States and made the case for a new paradigm for young people based on accountability and, acknowledging what they had to offer. Dr. Louhichi pointed out the investment opportunities young people represent for their countries, and how it made sense to support and expand their skills development and to encourage and ensure that youth played a full part in decision making at all levels. Also on the panel were HE Khaled Othman Muawiya, Minister of Youth and Sports, Sudan, and Elias Hankash, member of the Lebanese parliament, who weighed in on the subject of participation at the local political level by youth and the need to recognize the invaluable contributions youth can make in finding local development solutions. The panel's two youth representatives - Ms. Inas Dajani, Regional Y-PEER Centre, and Ms. Iman Lhrich, Mediterranean Forum for Youth - stressed the importance of bottom-up approaches to development and youth initiatives in general.
6. The main interventions focussed on the need to adopt different approaches when it comes to youth policies and programmes, especially the importance

of basing them on the principles of equal partnership, accountability for results, and investing in the potential of Arab youth in order to reap the benefits of the demographic dividend as well as keeping in mind that the role youth represents as a major actor in achieving sustainable development and peace.

7. Finally, panellists reaffirmed that young people today are well equipped to complement state efforts because of their education and their ICT skills. For this reason, the new paradigm should move away from a traditional top-down approach to youth issues and instigate a bottom-up dynamic that introduces new modes of partnership and mainstreams youth issues across all sectors.



Session II: Innovation at the service of youth in Arab states

8. The second day plenary session centred on the theme of innovation, entrepreneurship, big data and Artificial Intelligence. Moderated by Mr. Khaled Alharibi, Director of Impact Integrated,

Oman, the panel featured interventions from HE Hassan Mohamed Kamil, Minister of Youth, Djibouti; Ms. Rabiaa Najlaoui, Youth Adviser to the President of the Republic, Tunisia; Dr. Rascha El Ragheb, Executive Director, National Training Academy, Egypt; Mr. Kareem Hassan, Managing Director, Bena Foundation, Egypt; Dr. Marwan Tarazi, Birzeit University, Palestine, and Mr. Amr Dawood, Awarded Social Entrepreneur, Egypt.

9. Other participants included key youth and education decision makers in Arab states who, sharing their experiences and insights, stressed that the onus of serving young people, capturing their innovations and harnessing their potential should not be assigned solely to youth ministers but rather is a collective responsibility shared by governments at large.
10. Two young entrepreneurs detailed how they used innovative participatory methods to engage their peers in development solutions for issues ranging from water and sanitation, to upcycling public spaces, protecting the environment and promoting social cohesion. Their successes in motivating young people to be part of the solutions and making inventive and cost-effective services available to rural communities set a remarkable example, well worth emulating and replicating among Arab youth and development actors.
11. Speakers shared concerns about the risks implicit in not taking advantage of innovation and technology given the huge potential of Arab youth to benefit from access to suitably upgraded educational and training opportunities designed to enhance their abilities and capacity to cope with changes in the ecosystem and market needs. In this context, some participants also warned that a failure

to direct this youth resource potential towards rural development and peace could put the young at risk of being mobilized by extremists and radicalized, thus becoming an economic burden and a source of unrest for individual states.

Session III: Youth, Peace and Security in Arab states

12. On day three, the panel discussed the role of youth in promoting peace and security in Arab states in line with international and regional commitments towards fully engaging young people as partners. The panel was moderated by Mr. Mohammad Naciri, Regional Director, Arab States Regional Office, UN Women. Panel members included Mr. Samir Anouti, Regional Youth Adviser, Arab States Regional Office, UNFPA; HE Dr. Sahar Qawasmi, member of parliament, Palestine; Mr. Abdel Kader El Khissessi, Union for Mediterranean; Mr. Graziano Tullio, Youth Cooperation Programme, Council of Europe/North-South Centre; and, Dr. Rachid Renga, Youth and Culture Adviser to the Prime Minister of Morocco.
13. The Regional Strategic Framework on Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) in Arab states launched during this session is intended to demonstrate and foster the region's commitment to youth, peace and security. YPS provides a region-appropriate, systematic approach to achieving the five pillars for action related to promoting young people's contribution as agents of change to the maintenance and promotion of peace and security as called for by UNSCR 2250 and 2419 as well the Arab Summit's Decision 699. The framework represents the outcome of two years' work kick-started by the 2016 Regional Consultation and High Level Dialogue on YPS in Arab states. It encompasses

the findings of country, regional and sub-regional level consultations with youth, civil society and UN partners and donor representatives. The Framework provides evidence-based guidance on key strategic YPS interventions as well as recommended actions to achieve them at country and regional levels.

14. In a fact-filled presentation, Sahar Qawasmi of Palestine illustrated how the youth, peace and security agenda should encompass the impact of armed conflicts on young men and women in the Arab region. She noted how 40 percent of the 60 million displaced people worldwide originate from the Arab region, mainly Syria and Palestine, and how more than 7 percent of the region's population live below the poverty line and how, in conflict affected states such as Iraq that percentage reaches 28 percent. The impact of conflict and poverty on the region's youth is typified by the disproportionate levels of unemployment among youth, in which young women are the more vulnerable. The region suffers from the lowest statistics in gender parity with the lowest participation of women in both the economic and political spheres: 47 percent young female unemployment and only 15.2 percent female representation in parliaments. All this in a region that accounts for 48% of the world's proven oil reserves, a region that has increased its arms import by more than 103 percent between the periods 2008-2012 and 2013-2017. Yet the fact that such economic advantages and this scale of security reinforcements is not reflected in the welfare of the region's young men and women surely indicates the pressing need to prioritize youth within the peace and security agenda.
15. The Arab Youth Forum convened shortly after the *2018 Lisbon Forum on Youth*,

Peace and Security had raised the need to strengthen youth engagement in peace and democratic processes in the Euro-Mediterranean region. The Lisbon's recommendations were: a) that existing data and information gaps about youth engagement should be offset by ascertaining just how the informal and less quantifiable aspects of youth participation contribute to peace and democratic processes and by registering these efforts and their impact more precisely; b) YPS should encompass not only the conflict in the Mediterranean region but also other forms of insecurity in Europe, specifically structural and cultural violence and discrimination against refugees and migrants; c) national security concerns should also encompass economic security, identity and cultural security, issues all responsible actors are obliged to preserve and; d) the inclusion of women in peace building should neither be understated nor delegated to a single institutional entity since it is a responsibility for all, with schools serving as the primary entry point for disseminating and making understood the values of peace, dialogue and non-violence. At the conclusion of the session, participants were invited to voice their messages and recommendations on YPS and to build on the outcomes of the Lisbon Forum.

Session IV: Institutional framework for the Youth Forum in the Arab region

16. The final plenary session was devoted to an open discussion of how the Forum proceedings, dialogue and exchanges had yielded some guidelines for future events as well as identifying key elements and features of the envisaged institutional framework for the Youth Forum in the Arab region. Dr. Luay

Shabaneh, Regional Director, UNFPA ASRO, shared an initial assessment of lessons learned that touched on successes as well as the logistical challenges encountered in ensuring the diversity of youth participants; the quality of contributions by the range of different profiles participating in the Forum; the engagement and involvement of partners and experts; the extent and influence of contributions that reached beyond the Forum's content (e.g. culture, arts and media exchange and collaboration); and the readiness and willingness of decision makers' to take on championing the youth agenda locally and elsewhere.

17. As to how to proceed by establishing a way forward derived from the initial Forum, participants suggested: a) youth becoming a strategic partner in the preparation, implementation and follow up; b) assigning a single theme to each ensuing Forum (e.g. YPS, innovation and AI, culture, political participation etc. and to set up a polling system in order to select the theme; c) restructure the Forum to include additional workshops, social media exchanges, market place exhibits and other alternative spaces that would enable more interaction and networking; d) elect/nominate/appoint a Youth Forum advisory board mandated to help plan and organize future versions of the Forum (members to be selected on an annual/biannual basis from among Forum participants and; e) develop a robust Youth Forum follow up mechanism with indicators and targets in order to ensure that partners deliver on their commitment to Forum messages, solutions and collaborative projects.
18. The inaugural Forum was in many ways a trial run designed to capture the strong and timely need to institutionalize and

regulate space for dialogue among the region's youth. Participants called for national ownership of Forum outcomes and suggested a good follow up would be to disseminate outcomes such as the Assilah's appeal for action through parliamentarians and youth initiatives in support of advocacy for national youth policies.

19. Looking to the future, the Youth Adviser to the Tunisian President pledged to host the 2019 edition of Youth Forum in the Arab Region while Mr. Elias Hankash, a member of parliament in Lebanon, suggested that Lebanon would host the 2020 convening of the Forum.

D. Parallel workshop sessions

Parallel workshop 1: Reframing perceptions and building trust towards a new social contract between young people and state

20. The session framed the discussions around the proposition of a new social contract between young people and Arab states. It confirmed that the Arab youth trust deficit was the result of low confidence in political leadership, possibly due to the absence of intergenerational dialogue with youth, the non-existence of spaces and platforms for youth to assemble and express themselves and their concomitant sense of not counting or belonging. These were among the factors blamed for decreased political participation by the young and they were also cited as an obstacle to be overcome if a new social contract is to

be forged between young people and the state.

21. Suggested to overcome this trust deficit and to strengthen community development included: a) encouraging dialogue with youth and civil society and through the use of new technologies and platforms; b) implementing social cohesion programmes and initiatives; c) supporting civic and political education programmes for youth to give them a greater sense of belonging; d) the government side to highlight and take note of programme successes for alleviating the suffering of vulnerable groups and; e) to enhance trust in youth contribution by documenting the positive impact of youth-led projects and initiatives.
22. The new understanding and agreement concerning rights, responsibilities and entitlements should also apply to the roles of such stakeholders as civil society and the private sector, which are often capable of filling in the gaps and complementing government plans, thereby augmenting the role of the state. Participants called for increased youth participation in planning and implementation of government plans.



23. Participants made clear that the terms of the new social contract should be based on investing in the capacity of youth to become positive change makers; attention, respect and accountability to youth by putting in place mechanisms and reporting systems like shadow youth government; and, increased financial commitment and budgets specifically designated for youth programmes. Another proposal was that periodic national-level surveys and polls be conducted to ascertain youth opinion on how state management of affairs should be implemented as a way of ensuring greater involvement by youth and other concerned community groups.

Parallel workshop 2: Elements of the envisaged new and inclusive narrative for young people in the Arab region

24. Participants asserted that current political and media accounts of young people in the region are often generate a negative impression, presenting youth either as minors in need of parental or state care and protection or as troublemakers contributing to violence and instability in Arab societies. Participants noted that this problematic narrative is badly perceived by young people who point out that it stigmatizes them and makes no allowances for their capabilities, their diversity, their potential as a societal asset, and that this negativity impedes their representation at public spaces and their rights of citizenship.
25. The workshop discussion underscored the fact that current perspectives on young people within family, society, educational institutions, culture, media and the political sphere are not conducive to the proposed new paradigm for working on youth priorities based on the principles of partnership, capabilities and accountability.
26. Participants suggested a number of measures to help counter this narrative. Examples included: a) enhancing intergenerational dialogue within the family to build trust between young people and parents and promote awareness and recognition of the capabilities and contributions the younger generation youth can offer; b) increasing youth participation and visibility in media so they can be the content-creators describing their ideas and contributions; c) adopt more student-centred approaches in education by engaging with teachers and other education professionals to develop a more youth-positive narrative in education.
27. Given the role media can play in shaping how the community perceives youth, participants called for dedicated efforts to ensure youth participation in media production and endorsed guidelines to help promote positive narratives.
28. In line with human rights principles, participants suggested the new narrative on youth should take account of and respect the diversity and the diverse and specific needs of young people (i.e. gender/ adolescent girls, religion, ethnicity, socio-economic status, access to services, and disability including HIV/AIDS status). The current narrative, they said, sometimes portrays youth as a homogeneous group affected by the same challenges and with similar abilities. With this in mind, participants called for regional approaches to help reform and renew the narrative.

Parallel workshop 3: Effective modalities to better engage youth at grassroots-level

29. Participants tapped into two levels of grassroots engagement: the first, the institutional level (local government/

municipalities, NGOs and CSOs) and the second, youth themselves. The workshop focussed on how to maximize the benefits of youth efforts and their contributions whether derived from volunteer activities or civic engagement. Lack of coordination and complementary were cited frequently in discussing the work of institutions (governmental or civil society), with a number of participants pointing out that this lack of synergy is sometimes a result of competition for resources and donor funding. It was also noted that the lack of dedicated civic educational programmes was chiefly responsible for decreased youth civic participation and volunteerism in the region.

30. Participants indicated that current modalities of grassroots programming lack robust monitoring and evaluation and results reporting systems. Moreover, knowledge about existing programmes and practices in the region is scattered and inaccessible. To overcome this, participants recommended setting up regional knowledge-sharing platforms that would list and catalogue grassroots youth initiatives.
31. Participants also suggested a need for unconventional and innovative approaches to enhance grassroots engagement, including: a) promoting social entrepreneurship programmes that address real concerns of youth such as unemployment and are capable of responding to specific local community needs and; b) facilitating employment opportunities to help young students gain more professional experience before applying for jobs, preferably focussing on opportunities in underserved communities.
32. Participants noted that the current mode of volunteerism favoured by NGOs falls

short of the desired pro-youth impact and in some instances could be deemed exploitative of young people. To redress this, they proposed that sustainable volunteerism programmes which have an accreditation system in place that tracks volunteer assignments and hours worked in a standard format should take steps to have such accredited efforts recognized as work experience by potential employers. In addition, youth volunteers should be encouraged to take on assignments in remote areas and areas of highest need, and such assignments should be factored into the accreditation system.

33. In the context of promoting regional experience exchange, participants suggested the use of simulation exercises on civic engagement and citizenship to demonstrate how contributions to social and political change could be implemented by universities and CSOs using the example of youth volunteers to promote greater awareness of the values of community service and social responsibility.



Parallel workshop 4: Role of arts and media in promoting the envisaged new narrative

34. Renowned regional actors and musicians served as moderators to lead a session notable for its lively discussions as to how the arts and media could best promote a positivist narrative about Arab youth. Participants included a diverse cross section of young people, CSOs, decision makers and academia. The assembled expertise made for a rich discussion about media production and consumption in the region and the resultant impact on young people. At the outset, participants described art as a powerful, universal language readily understood by people regardless of age, sex, religion or language and capable of communicating emotions and feelings and not just in words.
35. Moderators challenged participants to share their experiences of using media and the arts. Respondents cited many examples ranging from the use of music for peace and social cohesion among different religious sects in Lebanon, through the staging of interactive theatre among youth networks (Y-PEER) to the use of music and arts by aspiring youth groups to reconnect with their local heritage as exemplified by Jordan's Rum Band. Participants agreed that art in all its forms, including music, painting and movie production, could play a pivotal role in developing a new narrative for young people in the region because of its appeal and ability to reach young people and the fact that it encourages and enables youth to create their own content and disseminate the results widely.
36. Participants endorsed the use of media and arts as powerful tools to raise youth awareness and address the lack of engagement in various sectors and

issues like sexual and reproductive health and peace, civic engagement and social cohesion. They also called for a regional-level, youth-led arts project where young artists from a variety of fields (theatre, music, blogging etc.) could contribute to an inclusive Arab narrative that speaks to their reality, aspirations and dreams and help create additional spaces for different art forms.

37. To help empower Arab youth to occupy and make use of the arts and media space, the session recommended: a) initiatives to support and encourage Arab youth to create different art forms and to generate media products; b) programmes to help make young artists more aware about issues of intellectual and copyright and to familiarise them with and reassure them of their rights to freedom of speech; c) developing programmes on arts education and designating spaces for arts starting out with classes for children; mainstream issues related to human rights; creating spaces and opportunities for regional arts and media exchange through festivals, exhibitions and fora.

Parallel workshop 5: Reinforcing concrete contributions by youth to achieve SDGs in their countries

38. The session reviewed some of existing regional-level processes in assessing the contribution by youth to the accelerating action on SDGs. In this connection, participants identified some of the region's problems involving youth and SDGs, including: a) lack of youth awareness of SDGs and the commitment of governments as expressed in national plans for 2030; b) despite the number of actors working on SDGs, many of their initiatives, especially those pertaining to youth, lack sufficient sustainability and scale to replicate and expand; c) more

work needs to be done to boost private sector partnership in SDGs and d) more work is needed to contextualize SDG indicators and targets within the region, specifically in terms of the region's young men and women.

39. Participants called for: a) a regional youth SDGs platform-cum-knowledge bank of SDG initiatives and projects partners would be willing to support and help implement both technically and financially; b) inform youth of the Arab region's commitment to Agenda 2030 through formal education (e.g. as part of school curricula) and informally via out-of-school awareness raising; c) the launch of regional competitions - e.g. Arab youth SDGs champions and Arab sustainable cities -- that would generate interest and momentum about SDGs among youth and in cities and states; d) allocating the issue of youth and SDGs a regular niche on the agenda of all future Youth Forums.



Parallel workshop 6: Customizing a regional artificial intelligence-based platform for youth in Arab states

40. The session centred on a panel discussion about how advocacy activities can best make use of real time and user-generated data available from the Internet and social media platforms to fill the existing information and data gap about Arab young people. Panellists conceded

that current regional surveys on young people may not adequately reflect their needs, sentiments and opinions and suggested that, with increased Arab youth connectivity, there is now an opportunity to capture and categorize youth needs in real time thereby opening the way to advocate more effectively for their welfare among policy makers.

41. A feature of the session was a presentation was about an existing AI platform (neto.ca). The system navigates big data to provide evidence-based information by mimicking human logic in large data sorting. It was mooted that the proposed regional AI platform use comparison analysis of official and social media accounts of users from the region. Also, that it develops tools to capture and monitor data about topics, programmes or events that are of interest and relevance and then gather and review the actual opinions expressed of selected population groups. Real time information and feedback derived from the platform and its analysis could support governments and organizations responsible for pro-youth programmes and policies and help them adjust and align their interventions to deal with real time issues raised by youth in their social media channels and on related media platforms. This innovative approach would also facilitate feedback on services delivered.
42. Participants welcomed the idea of a regional AI platform that would act as a repository for youth voices and concerns and provide feedback but they expressed some reservations and cautioned about the issue of user privacy, especially if the platform were cloud hosted. As a result, it was suggested that when it comes to providing governments with platform-derived recommendations measures should be taken to ensure exclusive

access rights and secure protection mechanisms in respect of the personal data of the young people whose opinions and voices might be captured by this platform.

43. Participants also noted that if the platform depended solely on social media accounts it would fail to capture the opinions of all groups of young people since it would only access publicly published posts and not all social media posts by Arab youth. In view of this, participants suggested increasing the platform's data pool so as not to rely only on public social media posting.

Parallel workshop 7: Innovation in adolescents/ youth health and wellbeing

44. Participants discussed the concept of health, taking account of the fact that in many instances in the region health is understood and framed as the absence of disease and not as a state of body, soul and mental wellbeing. It was also noted that youth in the Arab world do not have access to age- and need- appropriate health facilities in addition to the lack of information and statistics about both sexual and mental health. Also many noted that. It was also pointed out that this absence of vital data is due also to social norms and taboos around sexual and mental health.
45. Suggestions for innovation in adolescent and youth health and wellbeing included making health information and services accessible via hotline services and online platforms. Making it possible to subscribe to the services anonymously would make access available to all groups of young people without any stigma.
46. On the issue of equitable access to health care for youth, participants

called for the availability of high quality health centres and for youth facilities like sport centres, which, participants suggested, could help raise awareness among the youth in the field of sexual and reproductive health. Additionally, participants called for greater attention to be paid to youth mental health issues in the region, noting alarming indicators that signified the stress, conflict and social problems being experienced by young men and women which could result in depressions, anxiety disorders and other mental health conditions.

Parallel workshop 8: New generation of life skills and citizenship education

47. The session reviewed the current status of education in the region that – despite some good exceptions- was described as a “failing system” due to its overemphasis on certification rather than actual learning outcomes and skills. Additionally, the region's education system is particularly suffering from the following challenges: a) high costs incurred by households due to the reliance on private schools\ universities and private lessons; b) corruption in attaining diplomas; c) lack of a mentorship scheme in the learning system and; d) and reduced attention to students' skillsets, health and wellbeing including mental health.
48. Participants discussed the bottlenecks in the region's educational system in an effort to recommend viable solutions. They identified what is missing from today's educational approach and found those to be: a) education as an enabler to social change rather than means to attaining certifications and social status; b) the system's ability to reach the most in need especially youth in rural areas, adolescent girls and minority groups; c) youth engagement in curriculum development and; d) new youth-

generated innovative tools and pedagogy and; e) approaching national education through multi-sectoral strategies that engages the different ministries and stakeholders.

49. In light of assessing the educational system and its missing elements, participants proposed a new learning agenda for the region; one that is context-specific based on national situational assessments of the curriculum including schools and teachers' capacity assessment. In addition, the learning agenda should adopt the approach of the new regional life skills and citizenship education model (LSCE) and enhancing it with elements such as peer to peer education, parents' involvement in students' education and school activities and engaging the media under an agenda of education for social and development change.



50. Recommendations included adopting new approaches to improve the education system in the Arab region and providing it with a holistic, lifelong, rights-based vision to maximize the potential of young generations with provision for country-level adaptation and fine tuning. Greater efforts should be made to improve and extend competency-based education and incorporating LSCE employment concepts in education of LSCE so that young people are better equipped to handle the transitions from childhood to adulthood, from education to work, and

from economic and social dependency to responsible and active citizenship – in short, an educational plan designed to realize and release the so-called demographic dividend. Additionally, much greater consideration needs to be given to the roles of youth and their organizations in the LSCE reform process and its implementation.

Parallel workshop 9: What works to fulfil adolescent Girls' potential?

51. During this session, participants discussed the main social norms in Arab states that prevent or deter young girls from reaching their potential, often leaving them prey to harmful practices like child marriage and female genital mutilation/cutting. These “norms” stem from the social construction of gender roles that perpetuate across the board in different socio-economic, ethnic and religious segments of society as a whole.
52. Participants agreed that states should do more to ensure a protective environment for adolescent girls that protects them from risk while investing in their skills to help realize their potential and make a reality of their aspirations. Such an environment should provide girls with equitable access to education, and a legal framework that punishes parents who don't send their girls to school and/or deny their daughters the power of choice. Such an environment should make a point of valuing the role of an educated mother who motivates her daughter to achieve her dreams at school, at work and in the family.
53. Participants proposed a series of programmes to support adolescent girls in the region that would: a) invest in girls' assets (health, social and economic); b) affirmative action programmes to offset

past discrimination and increase the number of girls enrolled in education and training -- especially in rural and remote areas; additional affirmative action programmes to be implemented by education and employment institutions that would take extra steps necessary to ensure access for young girls and their mothers to education and schools, (suggestions also included building girls schools near or in rural areas with girl populations and helping support impoverished families to keep their girls in school.

54. In recognizing the responsibility of governments and civil society to address and overcome obstacles in the way of girls fulfilling their educational needs and realizing their potential, participants listed some of the most common barriers to advancement faced by girls in the region, citing as the most egregious sexual harassment, child marriage and other forms of violence against young girls. To combat and overcome such practices, participants called for more programmes and campaigns to bring about behaviour change and cited a need for more educational programmes on sexual health including premarital and positive parenthood for young couples.

Parallel workshop 10: Youth entrepreneurship and employability

55. Discussion focussed on the culture of employment in the region and state support in legislative, financial and technical terms to help establish more youth-led enterprises and businesses. Participants agreed that despite a greater commitment and more resources being devoted to youth entrepreneurship, even greater efforts were required to address and overcome the cultural, legislative, policy and financial barriers that currently stand in the way of youthful aspirations.

56. For young entrepreneurs to flourish, the private sector for one needs to be more supportive of the spirit of youth entrepreneurship and innovation and it should commit to young people employability. Civil society organizations have a decided role to play in developing and supporting decent employment programmes for young people and enhancing the capacity of youth in the field of entrepreneurship. Participants stressed the importance of the education system when it comes to preparing future entrepreneurs with the necessary technical and soft skills and to come up with solutions to the unemployment challenge young men and women face in the region.

57. To promote more youth entrepreneurship in the region, participants suggested the following: a) building a strong enabling environment to promote and support entrepreneurship; b) cultivate youth employment growth through positive discrimination mechanisms based on age and gender; c) organize behaviour change campaigns to address the culture of work among young people and adjust and adapt technical and vocational training to respond to the needs of the job market; d) encourage youth innovation with technical and financial support and focus on young women's projects and on young people in underserved areas who lack access to information about funding opportunities; and e) introduce children at an early age to soft skills training in creative innovation.



Parallel workshop 11: Launch of the regional strategic framework on youth, peace and security in Arab states

58. Discussions focused on UNSC resolution 2250 (2015) on youth, peace and security and subsequent resolution 2419 (2018) on youth in peace building in the context of the regional strategic framework. The session aimed to validate and substantiate the framework with the backing and support of regional and country level interventions and advocacy actions.
59. Participants welcomed regional efforts to localize 2250 and other international legal instruments on youth, peace and security locally relevant in view of the urgent need to engage young people in peace building activities rather than be recruited and radicalized by extremist groups. They stressed that the resolution could provide the umbrella for all national youth efforts which would require a concerted drive to persuade government actors from the legislative, executive and judicial branches to agree on national plans incorporating the 2250 pillars of participation, protection, prevention, and partnership and disengagement and reintegration.
60. As to actualizing YPS, participants said it was time to move from discussions of the concept to implementation. Projects, initiatives and programmes furthering the five commitment areas spelled out in the resolution should get underway. This could best be done by launching a series of national dialogues involving youth and, for example, relevant national ministries dealing with youth issues plus legislative committees such as youth-orientated parliamentary committees. Working together they could help operationalize the resolution, develop a national plan for 2250 complete with identified partners

and allocated funding. These plans could serve as an overall template for of youth work in the states of the region.

Parallel workshop 12: Coalitions on youth, peace and security

61. Participants first discussed the gaps, challenges and priorities for youth, peace and security (YPS) work in the region. Subsequently, they emphasized the following issues: a) YPS work in the region is primarily focusing on education and awareness raising among community members; b) working on trust-building among local communities for peace and security posed challenges for youth especially when working in regions of different population groups/ ethnicities and languages spoken; c) the public perception of peace and security in some countries in the region is associated with a negative connotation of peace and/or security and d) funding and access to communities and areas in need of such activities in a common issue faced by youth groups and coalitions working on YPS in the region.
62. On the top barriers to youth inclusion in peace and security decision making, participants voiced the following: a) the lack of official role for youth for example in peace processes and if involved they are invited as observers; b) absence of a public mechanism for youth voices to be heard in national dialogue; c) the prevalence of hate speech and radicalization among some youth groups and; d) the region's climate of fear from terrorism which affects the continuity of programmes and interventions organized by youth.
63. After exchanging the views of youth work in peace and security in Arab States; participants called for a regional coalition on youth, peace and security where the membership is open to all

stakeholders in the field and with a yearly plan of activities and regular funding. This coalition can start with the membership of countries in conflict such as Syria, Iraq, Libya and Yemen and extend to other countries in the region.

Parallel workshop 13: Youth in humanitarian settings and fragile contexts

64. Participants in the session discussed how can we institutionalize youth's participation and better address their needs in humanitarian settings and fragile contexts in lieu of the international commitments outlined in the 2016 Compact for Young People in Humanitarian Action and UNSC resolution 2250/2015 on youth, peace and security.
65. On youth engagement in humanitarian preparedness and response, participants outlined actions on both fronts: on the system's/institutional level and on young people's needs and capacity as contributors and actors in humanitarian settings.
66. On the institutional level: a) it was suggested to governments and humanitarian organizations to adopt strategies for the systematic inclusion of young people at all stages of the humanitarian programme cycle at times of preparedness, emergency response, early recovery and reconstruction. In that regard, it is suggested especially for the crisis affected countries to establish a national youth advisory body to participate in all clusters meetings and national preparedness committee meetings and; b) to empower young people to lead the community mobilization and engagement needed for the specific steps of timely needs assessment, data collection and analysis on the needs of the affected communities to inform response efforts.

67. On young people needs and capacity to respond in humanitarian and fragile contexts, participants called for the following: a) equip young people with the needed support (both financial and technical) to develop and initiate innovative solutions to humanitarian needs on both local and national levels and; b) organize national and regional exchange programmes between young people working in humanitarian settings to foster knowledge and experience sharing and build a strong case for youth contribution in humanitarian settings.
68. Additionally, participants mentioned other areas in humanitarian contexts where young people could have stronger roles such as in social cohesion activities where more programmes are needed for refugee and displaced youth with young people from host communities. Finally, participants called for leaving no one behind in humanitarian response with a specific plea for the inclusion of vulnerable young people from marginalized locations in response and preparedness efforts.
69. Participants discussed the particular situation and needs of youth in humanitarian settings and other fragile contexts, noting that compared to other regions, the Arab region suffers most in this regard. Main recommendations included addressing these issues and needs: better data collection and analyses; developing and making youth-friendly services; and, engaging youth as actors, not just beneficiaries, in such programmes.

Parallel workshop 14: Youth and migration

70. Participants concurred that youth mobility and migration is a human evolutionary phenomenon. They noted that it contributes to a host country's economic development, since, in many instances, migrants take on unfilled

functions and jobs vital to the host economy.

71. Participants stressed the need for structured mechanisms that facilitate Arab youth migration. They also cited the need to create decent jobs for youth as a way to address unemployment, and they called for the provision of adequate health and protection services catering to the specific needs of young men and women on the move.
72. Noting that the economic and conflict situation in the region, was such that many young people found themselves considering illegal migration, participants suggested some measures that might help redress the situation: a) improve national education systems to respond to job market requirements; include modules at high school about risks associated with illegal migration; similarly, include success stories about youth in the curriculum; b) encourage sending and host countries agreements about border control, illegal migration and protection of young men and women; c) implement vocational training programmes for youth to improve their skills range and employment prospects and respond to labour market need in home countries as well; d) develop information and communication campaigns correcting common misconceptions about migration and promote success stories about youth who opted to migrate and were successful but also stories about those who stayed in country and realised their aspirations.

Parallel workshop 15: Role of youth in reinforcing social cohesion and tolerance

73. This session addressed the themes of social cohesion central to the framework of youth, peace and security as well as addressing the root causes of conflicts in the region such as the disintegration of the social fabric, intolerance and a lack

of respect for diversity. The resultant recommendations dealt with ways in which young people can be more engaged and integrated in community building and social cohesion activities and the practice of tolerance.

74. Participants pointed out the pressing need to address the issue of young Arabs lacking a sense of place and belonging and the implications of their reduced engagement in civic participation for the future of the Arab region. They suggested creating platforms or accessible spaces to promote social cohesion in all neighbourhoods, open to all community groups regardless of gender, age, political or religious affiliation or ethnicity. In this regard, participants stressed the importance of including minorities in all social cohesion efforts and insisted that programmes catering to all minority groups as part of enhancing social cohesion should be prioritized.
75. In order to address the root causes of the lack of social cohesion in Arab states, participants suggested working a two-front approach: a) constructive legislative suggestions to government that promote social cohesion and constructively involve youth in developing and monitoring the ensuing policies and laws and; b) reforming the educational systems and ensuring curricula adopt the regional Life Skills and Citizenship Education (LSCE) model and incorporate specific courses on social cohesion in schools.
76. Finally, participants suggested harnessing the power, prestige and potential of arts and sports to promote behaviour change and development with a view to initiating intercultural and inter-ethnic dialogue and sports at local and national levels. This approach, they believed, could effectively advocate for communities free from hate, discrimination, and tribalism.



III. Participants

77. The Forum was attended by some 250 participants from 20 Arab countries, more than half of the attendees being adolescents and youth (aged 10-29), Also attending were high-level representatives of Arab governments including Ministers, Secretary Generals and Director Generals; as well as members of parliament, youth networks and association and other civil society organizations, representatives from the private sector and academia, UN agencies and other international and regional development partners, plus experts and influencers among them actors, musicians and social media bloggers.



IV. Agenda

Day One: Wednesday 19 December 2018	
8:30 - 9:00	Registration
9:00 - 9:30	Introductory session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Nour Al Mahrooqi, Youth Representative, Oman • Mr. Anas El Gharbi, Local Youth Council of Assilah, Morocco
9:30 - 11:30	<i>Towards a new paradigm for young people in Arab states</i> Moderator: Mr. Samir Anouti , Regional Youth Adviser, Arab States Regional Office, UNFPA <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Khaled Louhichi, Independent Expert • HE Khaled Othman Muawiya, Minister of Youth and Sports, Sudan • HE Elias Hankash, Member of Parliament, Lebanon • Ms. Inas Dajani, Y-PEER ICYD International Fellow • Ms. Iman Lhrich, Mediterranean Forum for Youth
11:30 - 12:00	Coffee break
12:00 - 13:00	Official welcoming remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth Representatives • Mr. Yassine Isbouia, General Coordinator, The Mediterranean Forum for Youth – Morocco • HE Mohamed Benaissa, Former Minister of Foreign Affairs and Mayor of Assilah • Dr. Luay Shabaneh, Regional Director, Arab States Regional Office, UNFPA • Dr. Rachid Renga, Youth and Culture Adviser to the Prime Minister, Morocco
13:00 - 14:00	Lunch break
14:00 - 16:30	Parallel workshops: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reframing perceptions and building trust towards a new social contract between young people and state Moderators: Dr. Hana A. El-Ghali, Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs, and Dr. Bouthayna El Adib, Researcher on Youth, Tunisia <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elements of the envisaged new and inclusive narrative for young people in the Arab region Moderators: Dr. Anis Ben Brik, Director - Family Policy Department, Doha International Family Institute (DIFI), and Dr. Khaled Louhichi, Independent Expert <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective Modalities to better engage youth at grassroot-level Moderators: Ms. Charlotte Denise-Adam, Policy Analyst, Governance Reviews and Partnerships Division, OECD, and Ms. Mais Daoud, Crown Prince Foundation, Jordan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role of Arts and Media in promoting the envisaged new narrative Moderators: Ms. Arwa Gouda and Mr. Ahmed Magdy, Actors, Egypt <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinforcing concrete contributions of youth into achieving SDGs in their countries Moderator: Dr. Nada Elagaizy, Director, Department of Sustainable Development and International Cooperation, League of Arab States
Day Two: Thursday 20 December 2018	
09:00 - 11:00	<i>Innovation at the service of youth in Arab states</i> Moderator: Mr. Khaled Alharibi , Director, Impact Integrated, Oman <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HE Hassan Mohamed Kamil, Minister of Youth, Djibouti • Ms. Rabiaa Najlaoui, Youth Adviser to the President of the Republic, Tunisia • Dr. Rascha El Ragheb, Executive Director, National Training Academy, Egypt • Mr. Kareem Hassan, Managing Director, Bena Foundation, Egypt • Dr. Marwan Tarazi, Birzeit University, Palestine • Mr. Amr Dawood, Awarded Social Entrepreneur, Egypt

11:00 - 11:30	Coffee break
11:30 - 13:30	<p>Parallel workshops</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customizing a Regional Artificial Intelligence- based platform for youth in Arab states <i>Moderator:</i> Mr. Omar Momtaz, NOVO Canada, and Mr. Samir Anouti, Regional Youth Adviser, Arab States Regional Office, UNFPA • Innovation in adolescents/youth health and wellbeing <i>Moderators:</i> Mr. Elie Aaraj, Director, MENA Harm Reduction Association, and Mr. Rami Metwali, Director, Love Matters Arabia • New generation of life skills and citizenship education <i>Moderators:</i> Dr. Samir Jarrar, Independent Expert, and Ms. Stéphanie ERMINI, Programme Coordinator, Centre International D'Etudes Pedagogiques, France • What works to fulfil adolescent girls' potential? <i>Moderators:</i> HE Touria Faraj, Member of Parliament, Morocco, and Ms. Nihal Said, UNFPA • Youth entrepreneurship and Employability <i>Moderators:</i> Mr. Khaled Alharibi, Director, Impact Integrated, Oman, and Mr. Ramzey Ata, CSR Officer, Bank of Palestine
14:30 - 16:30	Market place and youth networking village
Day Three: Friday 21 December 2018	
09:00 - 11:00	<p>Youth, Peace and Security in Arab states <i>Moderator:</i> Mohammad Naciri, Regional Director, Arab States Regional Office, UN Women</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Samir Anouti, Regional Youth Adviser, Arab States Regional Office, UNFPA • HE Sahar Qawasmi, Member of Parliament, Palestine • Mr. Abdel Kader El Khissessi, Union for Mediterranean • Mr. Graziano Tullio, Youth Cooperation Programme, Council of Europe/North-South Centre • Dr. Rachid Renga, Youth and Culture Adviser to the Prime Minister, Morocco
11:00 - 11:30	Coffee break
11:30 - 13:30	<p>Parallel workshops</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch of The Regional Strategic Framework on Youth, Peace and Security in Arab states <i>Moderators:</i> Dr. Thabet Al Nabulsi, Secretary General, Ministry of Youth and Sports, Jordan, and Mr. Samir Anouti, Regional Youth Adviser, Arab States Regional Office, UNFPA • Coalitions on Youth, Peace and Security <i>Moderator:</i> Mr. Mohammed Serkal, Jssor Youth Organisation • Youth in Humanitarian Settings and Fragile Contexts <i>Moderator:</i> Mr. Iyad Nasr, Regional Director, ROMENA , OCHA • Youth and Migration <i>Moderator:</i> Ms. Hind Kinani, Regional Specialist, International Organization for Migration (IOM) • Role of Youth in Reinforcing Social Cohesion and Tolerance <i>Moderator:</i> Dr. Rachid Renga, Youth and Culture Adviser to the Prime Minister, Morocco
13:30 - 14:30	Lunch break
14:30 - 16:30	<p>Institutional framework for the Youth Forum in the Arab region <i>Moderator:</i> Dr. Luay Shabaneh, Regional Director, Arab States Regional Office, UNFPA</p>
16:30 - 17:00	Coffee break
17:00 - 18:00	Closing ceremony





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