Concept Note for International Youth Day 2023
Breakthrough to a Better Future

Date: Aug 11, 2023
Time: 6:30 - 8:00 PM [EDT]
Venue: Conference Room 4, UN Headquarters in New York City

Partners/Coorganizers: AFS Intercultural Programs, Permanent Mission of Malta to the United Nations & the UN Department of Global Communications

Event attendees: Open to the general public.
700 youth from over 80 countries will join as part of their attendance in the Youth Assembly.

Event title:
A Celebration of International Youth Day

Concept note
It’s been seven years since the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals were introduced. The world has only 7 short years left to make the SDGs a reality by 2030. Young people today feel a sense of gridlock; that progress is lagging behind. There are 1.2 billion young people around the world who will bear the brunt of the burden if we don’t make progress towards building a better future. Global challenges such as the Covid-19 pandemic, conflicts, climate change, learning crisis and surging unemployment have drastically impeded development efforts and led to the rise of inequalities in all parts of life, everywhere. There is both urgency and an unprecedented opportunity to tackle the challenges during this pivotal mid-point.

The United Nations Secretary General, António Gueterres states that "humanity faces a stark and urgent choice: breakdown or breakthrough. The choices we make — or fail to make — today could result in further breakdown and a future of perpetual crises, or a breakthrough to a better future." We must unite for global action to make a breakthrough in response to these challenges.

Our Common Agenda calls for renewal of solidarity particularly with younger generations, and the Youth 2030 Progress Report 2022 demonstrates how the UN system is working with governments in advancing global commitments for and with youth. This momentum should be accelerated to realize meaningful transformation for people and the planet before it’s too late.

In celebration of the United Nations International Youth Day, with the theme of Green Skills for Youth: Towards a Sustainable World, we will highlight the role of young people in coming together to amplify engagement and leadership in all areas of decision making and action, especially in creating an environmentally sustainable and climate friendly world. Youth must be at the forefront of obtaining green skills for the future as they can contribute to a green transition for a longer period of time.
Featuring keynotes and discussion between youth leaders, this event will bring together a dynamic group of young active global citizens and give them a chance to connect with the United Nations and one another.

This event is open to interested members of the general public, but will also serve to kickstart two days of discussions, skill-building workshops, networking, and ideation challenges at the Youth Assembly, with the support of experts and practitioners in the field. We hope that this celebration will be the first step in our young attendees' journey to make a breakthrough to a better future.

AFS is a leading global not-for-profit founded in 1915, with operations in 55 countries. Our programs develop active global citizens determined to make the world a better place.

The Youth Assembly, an annual event held since 2004 with 20,000 alumni from over 160 countries, is a platform for forward-thinking young people determined to accelerate the SDGs and create a better future for all.

Objectives and Outcomes:

- To hold the second in-person International Youth Day event at the United Nations since 2019
- To empower, encourage, and inspire youth action and impact in connection with SDGs around the world
- To consult youth and collect their perspective, proposals, and ideas for actions on the Global Goals.
- To engage youth in the UN system
- To compel youth to come together to voice out their perspectives on the Global Goals and the theme for International Youth Day: Green Skills