



10 January 2022

Declaration: Where Youth-Inclusive Meets Youth-Driven

Ahead of the High-Level Global Conference on Youth Inclusive Peace Processes which will be held virtually in Doha, Qatar on January 20-21, 2022, the Canadian Coalition for Youth, Peace & Security (CCYPS) convened a pan-Canadian forum to outline young people's expectations for Canada's role in the implementation of the United Nations' [Youth, Peace and Security \(YPS\) agenda](#). Young people and youth-led/serving networks gathered in dialogue, with international YPS actors, to outline priorities that should be taken by the Government of Canada around the following key pillars: Participation, Partnerships, Prevention, Protection, and Disengagement and Re-integration.

We wish to see Canada as a critical actor in the YPS space, recognizing that youth are a distinct demographic and should be treated as such.¹ This includes both at the international level and domestically. Considering [Johan Galtung's concepts of positive peace and negative peace](#), it is our perspective that the United Nations' peace and security frameworks are applicable to our context; thus, we have a moral and ethical imperative to ensure the agenda is recognized, funded, and implemented at home and abroad. Young people are at the forefront of COVID-19 recovery, social justice, and social-equity movements, as well as progressive change. We must be recognized and meaningfully integrated in policy in order to ensure a better Canada. Hence, we ask that the Government of Canada prioritize the implementation of Youth, Peace and Security - in equal standing to Women, Peace and Security - within its [Feminist Foreign Policy](#) and through its domestic policies, included but not limited to the [2019 Youth Policy](#), the [2019 Anti-Racism Strategy](#), the [Calls to Action from the 2015 Truth and Reconciliation Commission](#), the [Calls for Justice from the 2019 Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls](#), and the eventual [Federal LGBTQ2 Action Plan](#).

We ask that the integration of YPS within Canadian policies and commitments be done through an intersectional lens, applying [Gender-Based Analysis Plus](#), as well as considering underlying barriers experienced by young people. Furthermore, we ask:

With regard to Participation:

1. That the Government of Canada initiate the development of a National Action Plan (NAP) on Youth, Peace and Security by 2023, co-created and co-led by youth civil society actors based in Canada. This includes in the drafting, costing and budgeting, monitoring and evaluation, as well as dedicated priority-setting and implementation of the NAP. That civil society actors falling within the YPS demographic be prioritized and considered as equal actors in all of the NAP processes, from its inception to implementation to monitoring. This includes funding youth civil society actors for their time in contributing to all stages of this process.
2. That the Government of Canada expands funding and support to Youth Parliaments, and other governance simulations, across the country. Particularly, that the Government places emphasis on

¹ Our definition of youth/young people includes all individuals aged 18 to 35.



opportunities for the civic engagement and education of young people, including those of minority or lower socio-economic backgrounds.

3. That the Government of Canada reinforces the role of young people in foreign diplomacy, including by reinstating the Canadian involvement in the [United Nations' Youth Delegates Programme](#).

With regard to Partnerships:

1. That the Government of Canada prioritize the YPS agenda by way of partnerships. To do so, we ask that it recognizes that no civil society engagement should be without young people. And to commit to ensuring stand-alone recognition of the agenda, as it has done with other thematic peace and security frameworks.
2. That the Government revise requirements for Federal Grants to ensure that young people can access funding for projects and initiatives, reducing the bureaucratic burden of organizational status and strict reporting. This could include increasing the accessibility of the [Canada Summer Jobs](#) program to allow eligibility to youth-led organizations that are not officially registered non-for-profits.
3. That under its Feminist Foreign Policy, the Government commit to actively engage in the [Group of Champions of Youth, Peace and Security](#) and invest in international YPS partnerships with other Member States, United Nations entities, and civil society organizations.

With regard to Prevention:

1. That the Government of Canada, at a minimum, double by 2023 the investment in the [Canada Service Corps](#)—including expanding the number of funded organizations—including the [Rising Youth Grants](#) model to ensure barrier-free and accessible funding for youth programming and initiatives specifically focused on low-income communities and mentorship of young people. We view Rising Youth Grants as a best practice in funding youth projects in a barrier-free way and to reduce administrative burdens on young people.
2. That the Government of Canada consult with actors advocating for YPS when drafting legislation related to digital privacy and the regulation of tech and digital industries in relation to online hate. We view the integration of a YPS lens in legislation regarding online hate and violence as a way to incorporate preventative measures in digital spaces.

With regard to Protection:

1. That the Government expand the age eligibility requirement from 21 to 25, inclusively, for the [Royal Canadian Mounted Police's National Youth Advisory Committee](#).
2. That the Government ensures the protection of young peacebuilders and activists in nonviolent action, including through YPS-friendly training for security and justice personnel in responding to social justice actions taken by young people.
3. That the Government pay particular attention to barriers experienced by young people who are survivors of sexual and gender-based violence in the military or security forces, especially in the growing response by the Minister of National Defence into military sexual misconduct.
4. That the Government include, in its Feminist Foreign Policy, provisions specific to the protection of young peacebuilders and their rights as young people, including with attention to those in civil disobedience or human rights actions.



With regard to Disengagement and Re-integration:

1. That the Government of Canada dedicate core funding to organizations, particularly grassroots organizations, and programs with a central focus on restorative justice practices. Significant funding should be allocated to youth-led organizations and networks in addition to organizations and programs focusing on restorative justice and healing at the community-level, particularly for those working with vulnerable or marginalized populations (such as newcomers, refugees, LGBTQ2+ or racialized young people).
2. That Canada's federal research entities, such as the [Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council](#), receive dedicated funding towards research to analyze the motives, root causes, and methods used towards the recruitment and engagement of young people in acts of violence or peace with particular consideration to the role of digital media and online spaces.

Signed by:

- Canadian Coalition for Youth, Peace & Security
- Ágora México
- Civil Society Platform for Peacebuilding and Statebuilding
- Coalition JPS-RDC
- International Association for Political Science Students
- ISOKO Partners for Peace and Gender Equality
- MENA Coalition for Youth, Peace and Security
- National Partnership of Children and Youth in Peacebuilding (NPCYP-DRC)
- University of Toronto Graduate Students' Union
- UNOY Peacebuilders
- YALI-RDC
- Youth for Peace DRC
- Youth for Peace International
- Youth Initiative Against Terrorism

As individuals:

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- Marissa Fortune, Member of the Canadian Coalition for Youth, Peace & Security
- Micaela Crighton, Member of the Canadian Coalition for Youth, Peace & Security
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- Natalia Valencia, Member of the Canadian Coalition for Youth, Peace & Security



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- Shayne Wong, Member of the Canadian Coalition for Youth, Peace & Security
- Tatenda Mhaka, Member of the Canadian Coalition for Youth, Peace & Security
- Zander Willoughby, Member of the US YPS Coalition