



# General Assembly

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## Human Rights Council

Forum on Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law

First session

21–22 November 2016

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

**Adoption of the agenda and organization of work**

## Annotated provisional agenda

### Provisional agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work.
2. Creating an enabling environment for the effective participation of youth in public decision-making.
3. From formal to transformative participation of youth.
4. Participation of youth in sustainable development and human rights protection in specific contexts.
5. Moving the global youth agenda forward: the role of youth in shaping the agenda of the United Nations and regional organizations.
6. Concluding remarks.

### Annotations

#### 1. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

##### Venue

Pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 28/14, the Forum on Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law will hold its first session in Geneva in room XVII of the Palais des Nations, on 21 and 22 November 2016.

Participants in the Forum will have before them the provisional agenda contained in the present document to consider for adoption. A tentative schedule of work for the session is contained in the annex.

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### **Opening meeting**

The President of the Human Rights Council will deliver an opening statement, to be followed by statements by the Deputy Secretary-General, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the co-Chairs of the Forum on Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law.

### **Documentation**

All documents for the session will be made available on the webpage of the Forum ([www.ohchr.org/democracyforum](http://www.ohchr.org/democracyforum)).

### **Panel discussions**

After the presentations introducing the four topics on the agenda, an open discussion will be held, to which all participants will be invited to contribute.

During each panel discussion, specific consideration will be given to discrimination and the inequalities impeding the meaningful and effective participation of young women and girls in public decision-making, and of youth belonging to indigenous people and minorities, living in rural areas or with disabilities, or of youth who are migrants, stateless, internally displaced, asylum seekers or refugees.

## **2. Creating an enabling environment for the effective participation of youth in public decision-making**

The effective participation of youth in public decision-making is an essential element of representative, accountable and transparent State institutions. Discussions will focus on the legal and institutional frameworks required to enable youth to contribute to the formulation of or to influence public policies, and to hold policymakers accountable.

Discussions will also focus on the realization of all human rights without discrimination as a prerequisite to an enabling environment for the participation of youth in decision-making with regard to, inter alia, economic, social and cultural rights and the rights to freedom of opinion and expression, association, and peaceful assembly. The importance of creating a safe and conducive environment for civil society organizations and human rights defenders engaged in the promotion and protection of youth human rights will also be discussed.

The discussions will be aimed at helping participants to gain an insight into the challenges faced by youth in achieving meaningful participation in policymaking and political life, such as those posed by limited access to relevant information concerning matters affecting them, limited funding, social attitudes and incorrect perceptions of the role and capacities of young people to contribute to the public life of the State, and fear of reprisals.

A precondition for the effective participation of youth is their capacity and resources to exercise it. In the discussions, participants will consider the importance of education, training, capacity-building and empowerment programmes for youth on human rights, democratic principles and the rule of law as a precondition for their effective engagement.

## **3. From formal to transformative participation of youth**

Participants will review existing mechanisms designed to increase the political participation of youth in public decision-making processes and institutions at the local level. Discussions will include the identification of mechanisms to secure the access of young people to parliaments, and regional and local assemblies, and their participation in electoral system reforms, constitution-making processes and political parties. Strategies to engage youth throughout the electoral cycle and beyond will be assessed as a means to develop their long-lasting engagement as voters and citizens.

In discussions, participants will review initiatives to foster and support inter-generational dialogue and collaboration between youth and various stakeholders, including political leaders, national human rights institutions, policymakers and the media.

The role of social media and the use of information and communications technology (ICT) are widely recognized as a means to widen the democratic space and to improve participation. Participants will identify ways of translating online activism into long-term, sustainable participation of young people in decision-making processes. Discussions will focus on the current challenges with regard to e-participation, such as issues relating to inclusivity and the accessibility of ICT.

Participants will attempt to identify innovative examples of knowledge-sharing, information dissemination and debate, including online, aimed at strengthening the capacity of youth organizations to participate effectively in public decision-making.

**4. Participation of youth in sustainable development and human rights protection in specific contexts**

Discussions will focus on the role of youth in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. Participants will identify effective measures to create the space for youth to participate in the translation of the global agenda into national, regional and local policies, and to establish effective mechanisms to hold Governments accountable.

Participants will consider how a human rights-based approach contributes to greater recognition of and support for the role of youth in the prevention and resolution of conflicts.

Strategies and policies that have had a positive impact in scaling up the participation of youth in post-conflict and peace-building efforts (for example, in mediation and negotiations, rebuilding communities, justice and reconciliation processes, including transitional justice initiatives) will be discussed.

Participants will also identify concrete measures to ensure the participation of youth in designing and implementing strategies for preventing violent extremism and promoting social inclusion.

**5. Moving the global youth agenda forward: the role of youth in shaping the agenda of the United Nations and regional organizations**

Discussions will focus on mechanisms and initiatives at the international and regional levels that contribute to moving the global youth human rights agenda forward.

Participants will consider measures to ensure the participation of young people in the work of the United Nations and regional human rights mechanisms, including possible avenues to ensure that they are able to bring allegations of human rights violations before relevant mechanisms, and ways to ensure that issues relevant to youth are considered by the said mechanisms.

**6. Concluding remarks**

The co-Chairs of the Forum will present concluding remarks and recommendations for follow-up.

## Annex

### Schedule of work

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*Monday, 21 November 2016*

*10 a.m. – 1 p.m.*

*3– 6 p.m.*

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**Opening of the Forum on Human Rights,  
Democracy and the Rule of Law**

**From formal to transformative  
participation of youth**

- Welcome and opening remarks by the President of the Human Rights Council
- Message by the Deputy Secretary-General
- Remarks by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
- Remarks by the co-Chairs of the Forum on Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law

**Creating an enabling environment for the  
effective participation of youth in public  
decision-making**

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*Tuesday, 22 November 2016*

*10 a.m. – 1 p.m.*

*3– 6 p.m.*

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**Participation of youth in sustainable  
development and human rights protection in  
specific contexts**

**Moving the global youth agenda  
forward: the role of youth in  
shaping the agenda of the United  
Nations and regional organizations**

**Concluding remarks**

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