

# YOUTH BULLETIN

## May 2011

*Bringing Youth News From Around The World*

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### UPCOMING EVENTS—APRIL-JUNE

DATE	EVENT	VENUE	MAIN ORGANISERS	ABOUT	CONTACT
27-29 JUNE	11th Melaka International Youth Dialogue	Melaka, Malaysia	World Assembly of Youth	<a href="#">Website</a>	+60-62322711/1817 office@way.org.my

## BOTSWANA: Khama must call fresh elections – BNFYL

GABARONE, May 18 - President Ian Khama should dissolve Parliament and resign, president of the Botswana National Front Youth League (BNFYL) has said.

Speaking at a conference called by opposition parties' youth leagues in Gaborone yesterday afternoon, Kagiso Ntime said that it is clear that the current government has collapsed.

Asia

"Effectively there is no government. When you assess the factors that make up a government, you can see there is none. Khama must call for fresh elections," he said.

Further, Ntime said President Khama must let the nation know whether he has declared a state of emergency in Botswana. He said government's refusal to grant applicants permits to march or assemble shows that there is a state of emergency in the country.

Government recently refused

to grant opposition parties a permit for a planned mass demonstration to show solidarity with public service workers who today go into a full month of striking in protest at a salary freeze. Rallies that the BNF and the Botswana Congress Party (BCP) regularly hold at the Gaborone Bus Rank have also been banned, Ntime said.

The press conference at which he spoke had also been scheduled to take place at the Civic Centre, but at the last minute Gaborone City Council officials refused to let the people who had assembled for the conference into the city hall, citing security reasons.

Ntime called the current situation in the country a serious crisis, saying that there is no one running the government. "Everything is dictated by events, we don't know what could happen next. There is no rationality in terms of decision-making," he said. He charged that government has also lost credibility be-

cause Cabinet ministers facing corruption charges.

The BNF youth leader said as opposition party youth leagues they demand that all students who have been detained for rioting be released with immediate effect. Further, he said that they demand that government should give answers as to what they are going to do about Form Four students who have, up till now, not been taught partly due to the late release of their Junior Certificate (JC) results as well as the current strike.

They also demand that Minister of Education and Skills Development Pelonomi Venson-Moitoi should be charged with inciting students to violence.

"Before she said anything there was calm, she went on TV and undermined students' integrity," he charged.

Venson-Moitoi recently went on Botswana Television (Btv) and accused politicians of inciting students to revolt, following a demand by Lobatse Secondary School stu-

dents to be taught. After that student riots have spread over parts of the country, including Molepolole, Mochudi and Ramotswa. In Molepolole and Mochudi police had to be called in to control the students, but ended up firing teargas instead on them. This prompted Venson-Moitoi to close all public schools in the country.

For his part, president of the BCP Youth League Lotty Manyapedza said he was disappointed that organisations that purport to advocate for human rights and the rights of youth have been silent.

"We expect Botswana National Youth Council (BNYC), Childline and Ditshwanelo the Botswana Centre for Human Rights to be speaking out, but they haven't said anything yet," he said, adding that the youth have been the most affected by the on-going public service strike.

[mmegi]

## GAMBIA: A walk to register campaign aimed at youths crucial to ensure large voter turnout' says the NYC

BANJUL, May 23 - The National Youth Council has called on the youths to register in large numbers ahead of the upcoming presidential elections slated for November 24. This call was made on the launch of the council's 'to register campaign' which took place last Friday. According to the executive secretary of the council, Mr. Marcel Mendy, the campaign is aimed at sensitizing the youths and educating them on the importance attached to voting. He added that they believed that they should come up with a durable and structured programme that

would drive the youths of the country into action to exercise of their civic and political rights.

He said that the 'to register campaign' is part of the council's effective schemes to bring young people together especially in discharging national responsibilities. He stated that his body realized through statistics that many youths did not take part in the previous elections which evince their indifference in carrying out their political and civic rights. He noted that the campaign is aimed at reaching out to every young person in the country with

the support and collaboration of other youth networks, organizations as well as associations.

This, he said, would be done through discussions involving the youths in various localities by conveying to them the importance of voting which is a form of participation in national development. He added that the campaign is indeed a colossal task since half of the population has not yet registered, which is the support the council needs from other stakeholders as well as youth groups. He said that the duration of the registration exer-

cise should measure up to a mass registration of every youth in the country that is eligible to vote but tellingly that has not been the case so far.

He stated that the first week of the registration exercise has evinced the need for people to come out in their large numbers and register as time is ticking fast towards the end of the exercise. "The council is poised to trek the length and breadth of the country informing and educating the youths about taking the registration process seriously. We want other youth associations to actively

participate in this campaign by engaging their various localities so as to encourage the youths to register. This is because the council does not want to witness a replica of the poor turnout of young people in the last elections," he said.

He said that National Youth Council (NYC) is not using this campaign as a bandwagon of politicking to campaign for a particular political party but rather to enable them fulfill their mandate as the citizens of this country. "The campaign must not be mistaken as a political endeavor to secure favor for a particular political party but it is only meant to make young people realize that they must not be indifferent to what they have to do as their responsibility as well as right. It is an action that is purposefully to communicate with the youths through the use of the media and also other means of communication so that the end result is that they register and cast their votes," he indicated.

Also speaking at the launching ceremony, the Ministry of Youth and Sport, Mr. Sutay Jawo, said the NYC is a council that belongs to all Gambians through which it can affect the participation the youths in all development activities in the country. He said that the 'to register campaign' is not about a political campaign since the council is not a political entity. He added that the council saw the need for all Gambians to register massively in practice of their civic and political rights. This function, he said, indicates his commitment, as well as that the NYC, to the importance they attach to elections. He stated that since the youths constitute the bulk of the population and also the impetus for change, therefore, they should be responsible in selecting their own leaders. "Voting plays a crucial role in our drive towards development by electing leaders that would be able to champion our development activities. It also shows our commitment to adequately

fulfill our duties as patriotic citizens who are duty-bound to national development," he said.

He also noted that collecting the voter's card by registering alone is entirely different from going to the polling stations to vote since some people would just register but they would not vote on the day of elections. He said that this act would not account for any difference in choosing our leaders and does not tally with the attitude of a good citizen who is committed to his national duties. He challenged the National Youth Council to, by way of the campaign; endeavor to reach out to the grassroots level to disseminate positive messages regarding the importance of election.

According to Fabakary Kalleh, the chairman of the council, the theme 'walk to register campaign' indicates a need for the council to coordinate young people into action in order to change the current voter apathy shoring up in the country. He said

that in order for the youths of the country to act as a force to reckon with in terms of development, they must make their presence felt in the decision-making process of the country of which elections is a part. He stated that the youths always claim to be social justice advocates in issues of common national interest, noting that social justice can only be ensured through their participation, productivity as well as reward when that development is achieved. He challenged the members of the council who would be taking part in the campaign to be wary of the problems that could be bred by elections and therefore avoid confronting those they would be sensitizing, especially those who are difficult people. He said that the various youth groups should also participate in the campaign through their own localities so as to ensure easy monitoring of the activity.

[today]

## GHANA: National Youth Council cries for help

KOFORIDUA, May 17 - The Eastern Regional Co-ordinator of the National Youth Council (NYC), Mr Paapa Adjei Kyeremeh, has said the duty of the government to unearth the potentials of the youth had been taken for granted by politicians as seen happening in the National Youth Employment Programme (NYEP).

He said the NYEP activities had been politicized based on the fact that its co-ordinators were appointed by the incumbent government.

Mr Kyeremeh told the GNA in an interview that this had caused the youth who had already been employed in the

programme to be dismissed and new ones appointed.

Mr Kyeremeh said this could jeopardize the future of the youth and could not make the objectives of the programme to be realized.

"Anything about youth welfare should not be politicized. It creates problems for the youth in the long run and the aim of the programme will, as well, not be achieved," he said.

Mr Kyeremeh said the NYC was established to empower the youth with skills and that was the reason why the NYEP was made an arm of the NYC.

"However, politicians have made it seem the NYEP is the mother body and the NYC, an arm. They are concentrating on the NYEP for their own parochial needs."

He said the government had provided the NYEP Co-ordinators with vehicles to facilitate their work whereas "we at the NYC have no car to work with."

Mr Kyeremeh said as a Regional Co-ordinator of the NYC, he had to board public transport to do his co-ordination duties.

"I cannot attend most programmes especially when I

am invited. I give excuses because 'T & T' provided is not enough to take me there."

He expressed grief that most of the district offices of the NYC had no computers except a typewriter each and added that staff capacity in the various offices was very low.

"Each of the district offices has only two staff members; a Co-ordinator and a Typist and the regional office has only five."

Mr Kyeremeh said the biggest problem confronting the NYC was lack of funds for programme execution at both

the regional and district levels, adding that since the beginning of the year, the council had not embarked on any activity due to lack of funds.

He appealed to the government to give some attention

to the council to ensure that funds were regularly provided for activities to empower the energetic and future leaders of the country.

Mr Appiah Kweku Boateng, the New Juaben Municipal Coordinator of the council,

called on the national leadership of the NYC to be up-and-doing to ensure that funds were got from the government to enable the district offices of the council to perform actively.

"We are paid to work but we

are not provided with implementations to work with, when you give somebody salary and you do not give them implements to work with, you have done nothing" he said.

[modernghana]

## KENYA: Turnout in Youth Elections

KISUMU, May 18 - The National Youth council elections started with a high turnout in Kisumu as youths trooped to polling centres to vote for their representatives. At various polling stations in the town, aspiring youth leaders were assisting one another. However, there was confusion in the voting venues with some voters showing up at the wrong centres.

In Migosi sub-location top contenders, including National aspirants Ben Odongo and Elvis Anyona, volunteered to

transport youths to their polling centres saying they wanted them to elect a strong representative. In Kisumu North district, the aspirants were assured of winning the six slots as there were only six contenders.

A contender Gabriel Amollo said, "We have nothing to worry about to make us stay at the polling centres, everybody is a winner, so we have no reason to lobby since everybody will be elected." The sub location elections were scheduled yesterday

and another location polls in Wednesday before the division polls on Friday. Earlier on, the youths engaged in a fierce campaign with state of the art vehicle criss crossing the constituency to woo voters to the district level but got disappointed when the ministry changed the election date for location and division level by a week after each level of election.

Kisumu East district youth Officer Timothy Kajwang said the dates were extended

from two days to one week after every election to allow for proper lobbying among the aspirants. However, the aspirants criticized the decision saying it has brought confusion among the youths who had set their scheduled for campaigns.

[allafrica]

## NIGERIA: Group Lauds Evacuation of Corps Members

ADO EKITI, May 19 - The National Youth Council of Nigeria (NYCN), Ekiti State Chapter, has commended Governor Kayode Fayemi for evacuating 200 corps members from Bauchi following post election that rocked the northern parts of the country. It also showered encomiums on the Governor for giving state burial to the late Seun Adewumi, a youth corps member from the state who was killed in Bauchi State. The NYCN in a letter signed by its Chairman, Mr IbukunOluwa Oluwole and addressed to the Governor, Dr Kayode Fayemi and made available to the press on Tuesday also commended the state government's decision

to sponsor the education of the siblings of the slain corps member.

The late Adewumi who hailed from Ogotun-Ekiti in Ekiti Southwest Local Government Area was accorded a state burial by the state government on May 6, 2011. Oluwole in the letter entitled: "Ekiti State of Our Dream: Hope of the Ekiti Youth Restored" said the gesture has convinced the youths of the state that the Fayemi-led administration has their interest at heart.

The youth body equally expressed satisfaction with the evacuation of 200 youth corps members of Ekiti origin who were serving in Bauchi and Kano States in

the wake of post-election mayhem which rocked the northern states.

The NYCN declared its readiness to support the Fayemi-led government towards the sustenance of peace needed to engender socio-economic development of the state. "We must be quick to inform His Excellency that the youth of Ekiti State are aware of your commitment to youth development which is evidently enough from the variety of developmental programmes embarked upon by your administration.

Also, your experience in nation building through selfless service is our major source of inspiration that the challenges ahead.

"The council will therefore appreciate it most if His Excellency could please consider a quarterly Youth Interactive Forum where your desire for youth development will further be strengthened. "While we are reaffirming our commitment towards the sustenance of peace in Ekiti State and support your administration in the quest to reposition the state towards socio-economic and political development among the comity of states in Nigeria, we wish to once again thank His Excellency for restoring our hope for a brighter future."

[allafrica]

## RWANDA: Muhanga youth resolve to fight unemployment

MUHANGA May 21 - Youth leaders in Muhanga District say the problem of unemployment will be addressed through the creation of new youth development projects in each Sector.

A youth gathering held in Nyamabuye yesterday resolved that each Coordination Committee of the National Youth Council should come up with action plans and projects aimed at creating jobs.

"This is the only way we can address the existing problem of unemployment, among the youths. Each committee will be trained and acquainted with project management

skills," Léontine Uwera, a National Youth Council Commissioner said.

Uwera also noted that youth should start using the media effectively to publicise their respective social and economic activities.

"The media is very important in youth development and we intend to work with each sector to promote media activities and advocacy on their projects," she said.

Youth representatives observed that unemployment is partly caused by lack of work experience and skills. However, Uwera noted that the Youth Council is working

alongside the government to provide favourable and equal opportunities in the job market.

The outgoing team of Muhanga youth leaders also handed over office to newly elected committee members. Hodari Nsengiyumva, the outgoing youth representative, handed over to Tharcisse Kabatsinda, who promised to spur development.

"The new team will be committed to propelling development activities and this will be achieved through collaboration and sharing information as a team," Kabatsinda vowed.

Nsengiyumva highlighted the

achievements of the outgoing team which include starting up cooperatives, establishing a youth savings scheme (COOJAD) with Rwf830.000 in savings, formation of clubs to fight the Genocide ideology and HIV/Aids awareness, among others.

He requested the new team to utilise its position and influence in the District Advisory Council to advocate for youth empowerment.

"The aim is to have a self reliant youth able to uplift their welfare in life and communities," Nsengiyumva maintained.

[in2eastfrica]

## SIERRA LEONE: Forthcoming Peace building Commission visit: A Critical Moment for Sierra Leone

FREETOWN, May 18 - That time is here again for the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) led by Ambassador John McNee, Chair, Sierra Leone Configuration to take stock of the strides the country is making in its Peacebuilding programmes. The delegation will be in Freetown from May 23-27. The main objectives of the visit this time round among others include following up on existing commitments, monitoring progress, and identifying future contributions to key peacebuilding priorities in Sierra Leone.

The delegation will in particular discuss with relevant stakeholders how the Commission can best assist the country prepare for free, fair and peaceful elections in 2012. The Peacebuilding Commission with Ambassador John McNee as Chairman is mandated by the United Nations Security Council to assist Sierra Leone in its post-conflict reconstruction programme. The Commission

has been engaged in doing just that by bringing together all actors, marshalling resources, advising on and proposing integrated strategies for post-conflict peacebuilding and recovery.

The Peacebuilding Commission has made several visits since Sierra Leone was placed on the agenda together with Burundi, and the Commission is impressed with the country's performance so far. Sierra Leone with support from international donors has implemented a comprehensive Security Sector Reform (SSR) Programme to build the capacity and professionalism of national security institutions such as the Sierra Leone Police, the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF) and the Office of National Security (ONS). A number of frameworks and strategies for peace and development, such as Sierra Leone Vision 2025, the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRSP), the Peacebuilding Consolidation Strategy

(PCS), the Improved Accountability and Governance Pact (IGAP), and the report of the TRC, have contributed to the achievements made thus far and continue to guide the process for recovery and stabilization.

The visit is critical for Sierra Leone and the peacebuilding process given the challenges the country continue to face in the area of youth employment, illicit drugs trafficking and Governance. But more challenging is the 2012 elections and the funding gap of \$174 million of the Multi-Donor Trust Funds. This high level delegation is likely to draw huge attention from national stakeholders including civil society organizations and the media as these two key issues will be high on the agenda for discussion.

Clearly, government has made a strong case in previous engagements with the Peacebuilding Commission, one of which was through a

video conference arranged by the office of the Executive Representative of the Secretary-General (ERSG) prior to the routine meeting in New York in March this year. The Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Hon. Joseph B. Dauda on each occasion appealed to the Peacebuilding Commission on behalf of President Koroma and the country to increase their commitment in the resource mobilization drive. Minister Dauda told the Commission in New York that Sierra Leone had made significant gains since the 2007 elections, but also highlighted that the PBC's support was still welcome and needed. To attract international investment, he said, the country requires tangible short-term support to the public administration system and public sector reform. Partnerships with key partners in the sector were needed to ensure effective functioning of the newly created National Youth Commission.

Minister Dauda said the PBC could play a vital supporting role as Sierra Leone manages its natural resource wealth, including new discoveries of oil and other minerals. The Minister noted that the PBC could support Sierra Leone beyond the allocation of the initial donor funding. He said the PBC had the ability to improve the efficacy of internationally funded projects, for instance by sponsoring special donor round tables for specific programmes and themes.

Re-echoing the Minister's message the Executive Representative of the Secretary-General (ERSG), Mr. Michael von der Schulenberg lauded Sierra Leone for being steadfast in its peacebuilding effort. Noting the progress Sierra Leone had made since the end of the civil war, Mr. von der Schulenberg called on the Members of the Configuration

to 'invest in success'. The ERSG noted that the international community should seek to broaden the donor base and diversify funding for Sierra Leone, and called attention to the budget problems that the government had experienced due to payment delays from international partners.

It is obvious that the Peacebuilding Commission will arrive in the country with these messages firmly in mind. The burden of optimism rests squarely with both Government and the Chair of the PBC and they should continue to urge contributing members to dip deep in their purse to fill in the funding gap of the Multi-Donor Trust Funds. The message of the ERSG that the PBC should 'invest in success' is a pointer in that direction—support for the preparations of the 2012 elections, including enhancing political dialogue

and encouraging participation of women and the civil society in political processes. Also, helping Sierra Leone fight corruption and drugs trafficking, improve natural resources management and address youth unemployment. Support should also be given to help government continue its work in improving gender equality and providing better access to justice.

All of these programmes do not come cheap and so substantial amount of money is required for their successful implementation. Although the usual accolades often showered on Government by the PBC for bringing peace and stability is encouraging, it is not enough. What really matters now is an increase in funds so that Sierra Leone can sustain the hard earned peace. Government must now come bold and make a strong case

yet to member states of the PBC during the forthcoming visit by simply urging them to do more in their resource mobilization drive.

The PBC is a large family and consists of friendly countries including the United Kingdom, United States, Canada, Indonesia, Spain, Portugal, Japan, China, Australia, China, Italy and several others, and each has played a vital role in helping Sierra Leone move forward and they are happy to do more even. The message of the Executive Representative of the Secretary General, Mr. Michael von der Schulenberg that the PBC should 'invest in success' cannot be ignored if Sierra Leone is to remain a model of emulation in the history of post-conflict development in the sub-region.

*[Awareness Times]*

## SWAZILAND: SNYC to host youth forums

MBABANE, 9 May - The Swaziland National Youth Council (SNYC) will host regional youth forums for the first time since its establishment seven year ago.

Through these forums, the SNYC seeks to encourage active youth participation in national development, and to also get valuable information on how challenges hindering youth progress can be overcome in the kingdom. SNYC Chief Executive Officer Maxwell Jele announced this during a press conference held at the council's offices at Dlanubeka building yesterday. He said the forums would be held in partnership with the ministry of youth affairs and culture at venues to be announced in due course. The Manzini regional dia-

logue would be held on June 6, while the Shiselweni youth forum would be convened on June 9.

The dates for the Lubombo and Hhohho have not yet been finalised, but would be held in the next quarter of the financial year.

"The SNYC has in the last couple of months been busy finalising an operational plan for the 2011 financial year, which has since been completed and ready for implementation. However, the organisation is presently mobilising resources for the cost effective projects which may require more logistics to be put in place before being considered for implementation.

The organisation has approved the rolling out of the regional youth forums to

reach out to a wider percentage of the Swazi youth with intent of engaging them with the development of their constituencies," said Jele. He said during the forums they would also respond to the outcry from some members of parliament that there was a need to familiarise the youth with national documents like the national development strategy Vision 2022. On another note, he said they would be resuscitating the Club 29 Youth wing of the Smart Partnership after being mandated by the office of the Smart Partnership Secretariat headed by Martin Dlamini. "As part of the operational plan for the 2011 financial year, the SNYC will revive Club 29 which seeks to empower young leaders with skills to prosper them in their

various endeavours," said Jele.

The guidelines of the club have been finalised and a multi sectoral steering committee representing all links of the smart partnership movement has been identified.

*[observer]*

## AUSTRALIA: Big two weeks real hit with youth

WALGETT SHIRE, 26 May - Youth Week 2011 in Walgett Shire has been hailed by our young people as the best ever!

The national event to celebrate and recognise the valuable contribution young people play in our communities was extended to take place over two weeks instead of the usual one week.

The week extension accommodated the amount of programs staged across the Shire.

Walgett Shire youth development officer, George McCormick, said "over the last few years this event has got bigger and better with a substantial increase of young people, community members and organisations offering input and support into programs, high-quality initiatives and opportunities for our young people".

2011 Youth Week included a variety of events and opportunities which were identified, planned and implemented in partnership with our Youth Council and Youth

Development Team as well as local, regional and state organisations.

"The second week coincided with the Walgett Aboriginal Medical Services 25-year celebration and we were fortunate to receive grant funding from Ministry of Transport to transport young people from Lightning Ridge and Collarenebri into the event," Mr McCormick said. This year the Youth Council focused on opportunities around the key areas of physical fitness, health and well being, education, awareness of services and strengthening community partnerships and relationships.

Events included world-class entertainers and performers including Musicians Making A Difference, (Rap dance, singing and music workshops), Jack Zammit (Australian ranked BMX rider), Sean Choolburra (dance and comedy workshops) and other quality performances from Troy Cassar-Daley, Jimmy Little and other well known entertain-

ers.

Competitions included pool, table tennis, dance, fishing and other games.

Dance parties in all larger centres recorded more than 400 young people attending and engaged.

A standout of the program was the Fairness and Awareness Youth Forum staged in the Council Chambers.

This event saw 39 young people from across the shire participate in presentations from state legal services, and other local service providers, in a bid to increase awareness of their rights and responsibilities.

This event was hailed by the NSW Aboriginal Legal Service as an outstanding success with their service intending to replicate the model throughout NSW.

"The two-week period was full on and we thank all individuals, service providers and young people of our Shire who assisted to make this the best Youth Week ever," Mr McCormick said

"As in previous years local

service providers partnered with council in local based activities and initiatives which included girls only events, U play the DJ, family violence awareness programs, environmental projects involving cleaning the river systems with a Carp Muster in Collarenebri and cleaning off the graffiti from the Walgett Skate Park." All events were incident free with attendance figures totalling 1554 young people participating in Youth Week across the Shire.

Youth Council Chairperson, Marcus Weatherall of Walgett, said "it was an awesome two weeks ... every day an event focusing on young people was happening across our Shire, the whole two weeks were mad!

"On behalf of the Youth Council we thank all for your support ... and we have already begun planning for Youth Week 2012".

[theridgenews]

## BAHRAIN: Empowering young

MANAMA, May 16 - A NEW five-year strategy to develop and empower Bahraini youth was launched yesterday.

It is designed to address the demands of young Bahrainis by bridging the gap between education and employment, as well as enhancing key skills such as IT and languages.

Organisers said it came at a vital time, given the role of Arab youth in uprisings across the region.

"The pre-launching of the strategy comes at a very critical time for all people in the Arab world, especially with the political unrest we have seen in Tunis, Egypt, Bah-

rain, Yemen and Libya," National Youth Strategy director Amal Al Dossari told a Press conference.

"What happened and the changes in the Arab world were led by the young people, so it is high time governments paid more attention to their development in terms of living.

"But it isn't the sole duty of the government, we as a society should help young people obtain their potential and live in a secure and stable environment that helps obtain professional development."

The second National Youth Strategy 2011-2015 is the result of a joint project between the United Nations

Development Programme's (UNDP) and the General Organisation for Youth and Sports (Goys). It follows on from a 2005-2009 strategy and has been put together, based on contributions from young Bahrainis, government ministries, non-governmental organisations, private sector, parliament and other stakeholders.

Ms Al Dossari said the programme was vital, since 63 per cent of the population was under 30.

In addition to equipping young people with skills they need to succeed, the strategy also focuses on promoting Bahraini culture and citizenship and helping universities,

government bodies and private sector respond to the needs of younger generations.

Ms Al Dossari said about 10,000 young people had been involved in drawing up the strategy, with around 800 participating in depth.

She hoped it would be officially launched by Supreme Council for Youth and Sports president Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa soon.

UNDP resident representative and UN resident coordinator Sayed Aqa told the Press conference at UN House, Manama, that youth development must be a top priority.

"The UNDP believes that

youth development reinforces sustainability, stability and meeting national aspirations," he said. "No nation can prosper without taking into account the needs of its young population and utilising their innovative expertise. "The strategy advocates promotion of the culture of be-

longing to the nation and common future for all Bahrainis. "It aims to bridge the gap between education and employment, and link education with creation and innovation. "All activities will be evaluated through a continuous participatory process under

Goys' leadership." He said Bahrain's human development record, particularly youth development, was an example to the rest of the region. "Now that Bahrain adopts the second strategy with all the lessons learned from the first, I believe that the kingdom

will emerge even stronger on a forward looking partnership between government, private sector and civil society organisations to consolidate fairness, effectiveness and efficiency," he added.

[gulf daily news]

## IRAN: Iran present national plan on drug prevention

TEHRAN, May 18- Iran's national plan on drug prevention was presented to the diplomatic community Tuesday in a meeting facilitated by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Tehran.

Held at the UNODC premises, the meeting brought together senior officials from the Iranian Drug Control Headquarters (DCHQs) and representatives of diplomatic missions members of the so-called Mini-Dublin Group, a press release issued by the UN Information Center (UNIC) said here on Wednesday.

This group is a flexible, informal consultation and coordination mechanism aimed at sharing information and discussing policies to tackle regional and country-specific problems of illicit drugs production, trafficking and demand. Members of the Mini-Dublin Group in Tehran include the 27 member states of the European Union, Australia, Canada, Japan, Norway, the UNODC, as well as Turkey and the Russian Federation, who participate in an observer capacity.

Hamidreza Sarami, Director General of Iran's Drug Control Headquarters for Prevention and Cultural Affairs, provided an overview of Iran's drug prevention plan

during the meeting. The objective of the five-year national plan (2011-2015) is "to reduce the emergence of addiction through the provision of preventive services targeting 40% of the national population in four key settings: family, educational system, workplace and community".

During recent years, the Islamic Republic of Iran has stepped up drug prevention programs. "An increasing number of targeted population groups have been reached by awareness raising and capacity building measures undertaken in line with international good practices", Sarami added. Increasing life-skills, additional financial resources and involvement of community-based organizations and non-governmental organizations also feature prominently in the new drug prevention plan.

"Drug prevention efforts and results in the Islamic Republic of Iran are less known than the country's achievements in the field of counter-narcotics" stated Antonino De Leo, Resident Representative of the UNODC Country Office in the Islamic Republic of Iran. He explained that "evidence-based programs, which have been set in motion by national authorities over time, deserve

to be acknowledged and supported by an increasing number of national and international partners". "For every dollar spent, good programs for prevention among youth can save up to nine dollars or even more if costs resulting from crime, unemployment and ill-health are counted" he added.

The meeting was held as part of a series of gatherings that UNODC plans to host to facilitate dialogue and promote cooperation between the Mini-Dublin Group and the DCHQs. Future get-togethers will focus on other important topics, including drug treatment and rehabilitation of drug users, HIV control amongst drug users and prisoners, counter-narcotics enforcement, and alternative to imprisonment.

"Such dialogue", De Leo added "will have a two-fold objective. Firstly, it will provide the international community with the opportunity to better comprehend Iran's drug control challenges, policies and results. Secondly, it will allow a review of good practices and lessons learned from Iranian and international experiences".

UNODC drug use prevention activities in the Islamic Republic of Iran are part of a new integrated program of technical cooperation on

drugs and crime (2011-2014). This program was developed in a participatory way with the Mini Dublin Group and Iranian authorities in 2010.

Through capacity building and the provision of expertise, UNODC aims to facilitate dialogue at the bilateral, regional and international level, as well as to promote international standards and United Nations good practices.

UNODC drug prevention interventions will support national plans to address all forms of drug abuse (e.g. cannabis, amphetamine-type-stimulants and opiates). National drug demand reduction, HIV control and harm reduction programs will be strengthened through specific evidence-based actions. A specific component has also been designed to strengthen capacities of NGOs in the areas of drug demand reduction and HIV/AIDS prevention and care.

The launch of the UNODC integrated program of technical cooperation on drugs and crime in the Islamic Republic of Iran could not have been possible without generous contributions from the Government of Norway and the Government of Denmark.

[irna]

## MACAU: Cultural events to enhance youths' identity

MACAU, May 5 - A national cultural week to commemorate the May Fourth Movement is being organised by several youth associations in Macau with the aim to reinforce locals' national identity.

The Macao Youth Federation and the Association for the Promotion of Chinese National Unity have invited nearly 80 young people from the mainland, Taiwan and about 30 Chinese ethnic groups to come to Macau and participate in the activities. Between today and Saturday, the participants both from outside of Macau and local schools will visit various attractions in the territory, gather in an evening party, visit different types of

schools and carry out national cultural exchange activities. They will also attend a seminar and a carnival where the ethnic dance groups will perform.

A student drawing and a photography contest are also taking place. The opening ceremony for the series of cultural events was held yesterday at the Science Centre and was presided over by Chief Executive Fernando Chui Sai On. Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture Cheong U and the president of the Legislative Assembly Lau Cheok Va, were also amongst other officials and guests. The Youth Federation's vice-chairman Tai Va Ho recalled in his speech that the activi-

ties aim to enhance local youths and residents' understanding of China's "colourful national culture" and to promote the "spirit" of the May Fourth Movement, which represented "patriotism, progress, democracy and science". On the other hand, in response to the Labour Day protest staged by a group of private school teachers who mainly demanded the same wage as their counterparts in public schools, Cheong U told reporters on the sidelines of yesterday's ceremony that he believed the framework of the career regime for private school teachers, after it is passed at the legislature, will manage to solve the problems.

He added the government respects those teachers who express their demands through "peaceful and rational means" and has been "very much concerned" about Macau's education since the establishment of the SAR. The secretary stressed that the government will continue to reinforce communication with teaching staff and related associations in the future. He added, although there is no labour relationship between the private school teachers and the government, attention will be paid to their professional status and welfare.

*[Macau daily times]*

## MALAYSIA: Proposal for youth parliament already in the works – Director

MIRI, May 20 - Youths in the country might get to attend parliamentary sessions where they can debate on issues affecting them and the country.

Youth and Sports director Selihin Kachon said the working papers on the proposed youth parliament had been presented during the meeting of the National Youth Consultative Council on May 10.

"The proposal was presented during the recent Majlis Perundingan Belia Negara which I attended recently. The proposal will be tabled in parliament this year, and once passed in parliament, our youths will have this important avenue to debate matters affecting them," Selihin told reporters after the opening of Divisional

Level Youth Conference yesterday.

The half-day conference was officiated by Sibuti MP Ahmad Lai Bujang.

Selihin said the conference was one of a series held throughout the state as a platform for youths to exchange and discuss matters and problems affecting them. On Ahmad Lai's suggestion that the department hold a similar conference for youths in rural areas, Selihin assured that it would be carried out as proposed.

"It will not only include youths but parents so they will be well informed on issues affecting youths and the various opportunities available such as educational training and funds as well as job opportunities," he said. Meanwhile, Ahmad Lai in

his speech reminded youths of their role in nation-building.

He said youths must play their part, not just stay at home to surf the Internet and use social network like Facebook to spread lies and criticise others, particularly leaders of the country.

"I myself as former youth leader, had a fair share being branded an ineffective leader, equivalent to the Malay proverb, 'pemimpin tidur seperti anjing kurap di kaki lima'," he admitted.

"I know there are many productive youths in the country. But I can safely say here that those who only know how to criticise are mere spectators and non-productive themselves, like the proverb 'Rumput di tepi jalan, hidup segan mati tak mau'."

Ahmad Lai urged conference participants to make use of the knowledge gained to rally for support from other youths in their area, and find a way to bring them into the mainstream of development.

Miri Resident Antonio Kahti Galis who is the organising chairman of the conference also spoke at the function. Some 60 youths from various government agencies and youth organisations in Miri attended the half-day conference.

Divisional Youth and Sports officer Daniel Batin presented a paper on 'Youth's current development and future direction'.

*[the Borneo post]*

## PHILIPPINES: PNoy invited to grace national youth confab and regional anti-drug summit in Bicol

DAET, May 17 -President Benigno Simeon Aquino III is slated to keynote the 19th National Youth Congress on Drug Abuse Prevention Education (DAPE), groundbreaking of President Corazon C. Aquino Boulevard and Anti-Illegal Drugs Regional Summit here this month.

Mayor Tito Sarion said that the youth congress on May 26-29 is jointly sponsored by the National Youth Coordinating Council (NYCC) on DAPE, National Youth Commission (NYC), Dangerous Drugs Board (DDB), provincial government of Cama-

rines Norte and local government of here.

He said that the national youth gathering with the theme “Encompassing the Emerging Trends in Youth Anti-Drug Prevention” will be participated by hundreds of youth of various youth organizations and Sanguniang Kabataan (SK) coming from the different parts of the country.

The four-day national event will include plenary sessions and community emersion to come up with an Action Plan that will carry out programs and projects for youth devel-

opment and empowerment. Meanwhile, the provincial government headed by Governor Edgardo Tallado is also preparing for the activities on May 29, the groundbreaking ceremony of President Corazon C. Aquino Boulevard in Barangay Bagasbas here renamed from Bagasbas Boulevard.

It will be recalled that last month a resolution was passed by the Sanguniang Panlalawigan renaming the Bagasbas Boulevard to President Aquino for her contributions in this country.

A meeting of the provincial

Technical Working Group (TWG) was conducted last week in preparation for the Anti-illegal drugs Regional Summit slated on May 28-29. President Aquino is expected to be in this province for the said activities on May 29, 2011. (MAL/RBM, PIA Cam-Norte)

[pia]

## ARMENIA: National Youth Policy Council Meeting

YEREVAN, May 12 - The National Youth Policy Council by the Prime Minister met today in the Office of Government, chaired by council head, Prime Minister Tigran Sargsyan.

Deputy Minister of Sport and Youth Affairs Arsen Karamyan reported on the national youth report drafting activities. The paper was

said to be a fundamental document for the implementation of a targeted youth policy. It will help assess the policy impact. The Prime Minister decided to set up a task force entrusted with the coordination of national youth report preparation and publishing works. The group was directed to submit a complex program of activities within a month's time

and report back on the process during council meetings.

The council next heard a report on preparation of the first pan-Armenian young businessmen's congress. It was assigned to establish a task force for the organization of the congress. Within a month's time, the group will submit a complex organ-

izational program and will report back on the process during council meetings.

The meeting has also discussed the online system of grant applications and the activities of "Yeritasard" online periodical.

[isria]

## ENGLAND: Booming youth population brings new way of thinking to Blackburn

BLACKBURN, 20 May - It is one of Celtic mythology's most alluring legends, the place where youth is eternal. And according to figures released by the Office for National Statistics, Blackburn, where every fourth person is aged under 15, is the closest thing the UK has to the Land of Youth. New immigration from the Commonwealth and a wider demographic of young parents over the past 20 years have presented Lancashire's old cotton and engineering powerhouse with major challenges – but also a new lease of energy and life. Worries about the cost of meeting school, health and other social needs which dominated local debate 10 years ago are being displaced by the positive impact of one of the highest concentrations of young people in any UK local authority.

"I speak up and give them my take on things, of course I do," says Amy-Louise Hyatt, a 17-year-old childcare student who is currently serving as Blackburn's "youth MP". She was voted in by students, schools and youth groups, and sits as a full member of Blackburn and Darwen coun-

cil's executive board. This involves her in making important decisions about multimillion pound budgets, a responsibility that 21-year-old Sanjat Zamir also embraced during his stint as a governor of Blackburn College last year. Rated "in a class of its own" by Ofsted two years ago, and now going for university status with more than 3,000 students already taking external degrees, the campus is one of several informal "capitals" of the huge youth population. "This is very obviously a young town – you see that in the streets," says Zamir. "It goes without saying that we need to get involved in the way the place works. The message has got across that young people aren't just a problem. The rest of the town actually wants us to have a say in what goes on."

The courting of the young has been a long-term strategy, says Gladys Rhodes, strategic director of families for the council and one of a team that has worked on the issue for a decade. "We've known about the demographic for quite some years. It became clear that we had an exceptional number of young

parents who are very settled here and want to bring up families of their own in Blackburn," she says.

The large British Asian population in the town - 24% - has swelled the numbers with bigger than average families, but veteran observers such as Sir Bill Taylor, former council leader and youth worker, believes all communities in the area can see the positives. He says: "Converging cultures mean there's less of a difference. And what everyone has in common is a sense of the youthful energy and optimism we have – and which we need to encourage and not disappoint."

Debating the issue at the college, with deft chairmanship from Hyatt and one of her defeated rivals, Natalie Tomlinson, the teenagers make it clear where their priorities lie. Out of the dozen young people taking part in the debate only Zamir is tempted to go travelling and maybe not return. For the others, Blackburn is where it's at. "It's home," say members of the group in succession. "You know where you are, the family's here, it's just, well, comfortable."

Like all the Lancashire 'B

towns' - Burnley, Bolton, Bacup, Blackpool - Blackburn is less grim than its image elsewhere can suggest. The green Pennines enfold it; there are gastropubs, a quaint canal and - for all the remaining challenges of declining "old" industries - a growing private sector.

"We wouldn't be here without that," says Peter Little, executive director of Youth Zone, a £6m update of the old youth club concept inspired by the successful refurbishment of Bolton Lads and Girls Club down the road. Painted bright orange, the centre opens in November in the shell of one of the world's first municipal power stations, encouraged by the council but led by local business volunteers and an active board of young people. Money and mentors from firms such as Euro Garages, one of the UK's biggest forecourt sellers which grew from a British Asian newsagent's shop in Blackburn, are bolstered by council investment. You can see the practical results of this investment at Livesey children's and all-age centre, one of 13 in the borough. Created as the borough realised the way its demo-

graphic was going, the centres preceded Labour's Sure Start initiative. They have also been protected from spending cuts in this year's

budget. The "all-age" part of the title adds a coda to Blackburn's youth story, as pensioners and the middle-aged mix

with the kids in Livesey's cafe and library. Gladys Rhodes's family services job spec, you see, includes not only special responsibility

for youth, but her town's elderly population as well.

[guardian]

## FRANCE: At the OECD Forum 2011, Better Policies for Better Lives also for youth?

PARIS, May 24 - The OECD's 50th Anniversary Forum began in Paris today, bringing together world leaders, policy makers and civil society stakeholders to share policies and ideas. Under the theme of "Better Policies for Better Lives", participants will discuss issues such as new sources of economic growth and jobs, gender equity, the environment, and global development.

The European Youth Forum President, Peter Matjašič welcomed the special

attention paid to young people during the Forum, as underlined also in the opening speech of OECD's Secretary General Angel Gurría, who stated that the current plight of youth was evidence that the economic crisis was still far from over, describing high youth unemployment and labour market drop out rates as a "tragedy".

For the occasion, the OECD unveiled a refreshing new interactive index that lets people measure and compare their lives in a way that goes

beyond traditional GDP numbers. The Your Better Life Index allows citizens to compare lives across 34 countries, based on 11 dimensions such as housing, income, jobs, education, life satisfaction and health. Working in all areas that affect young people's lives, the Youth Forum knows that quality of life cannot be reduced to simple GDP numbers, and therefore welcomes new ways of assessing the life of citizens. The lives of young people are however different to that of wider society, and more

data is needed to assess their very own situation and challenges.

[youth forum]

## MALTA: Empowering our youth

VALETTA, 28 May - Last Monday, students from various secondary schools teamed up with Members of Parliament and leading officials of the European Commission and the European Parliament to take part in a debate, staged to mark Europe Day, at the House of Representatives. The students' contribution was well prepared and well delivered and from the contributions they made, it was obvious that they were well-informed on the subjects discussed, namely the environment, education and volunteering. Considering that we were celebrating Europe Day, and that the EU has dedicated this year as 'The Year of Volunteering', the subject proved to be an automatic

choice for discussion. When EU Commissioner Vivianne Redding launched the European Year, she pointed out that three out of 10 Europeans are involved in voluntary work, while a document issued by the NSO shows that 27,000 people in Malta devote an average of 23 hours a month to voluntary work in various sectors. Society is enriched by voluntary work and as such needs continual involvement from members of the community, including our young people. Volunteering increases the sense of community in a society, as it promotes social cohesion and solidarity. Conversely, the individual will benefit from a sense of fulfilment and although volunteering has no monetary

reward, an individual can gain new skills that may well be useful for career progression. Young people's activism, community involvement and engagement must be nurtured for a better future, which is why one of the main tasks of Aġenzija Żgħazagh is to mobilise them. The government firmly believes that our young people not only need to be more qualified and skilled, but also truly empowered to be active and to contribute to society. The Voltours programme organised by the youth agency is yet another novelty, giving those interested in volunteering an opportunity to gain much-needed experience through visits to voluntary organisa-

tions and through meeting experienced volunteers. It was to this end, in fact, that Aġenzija Żgħazagh was launched earlier this year. Our youngsters are continuously encouraged to be more active and to participate in decision-making processes. In addition to the students' councils that now exist in every school, the eko-skola committees and the Youth Parliament, Aġenzija Żgħazagh has joined with the National Youth Council to organise the Local Youth Councils (LYC) and 360 young people have participated in this over the last two years. Such projects and programmes introduced in this legislature and managed by Aġenzija Żgħazagh have not

only filled a vacuum but are also showing positive results. The agency has also started organising discussions on important topics and only a couple of weeks ago representatives of our

youth organisations were invited by the agency and the Pensions Reform working party to a detailed presentation and the following discussion about pensions reform launched recently by

Minister Dolores Cristina. This was yet another opportunity for young people to contribute to a discussion that is high on the priority list of the national agenda. After all, it is the sustainabil-

ity of pensions for future pensioners that we are trying to safeguard.

*[independent]*



■ In the service of youth

■ Worldwide

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## NEVIS: Ministry of Youth Continues to Develop Young People through Social Programmes

NIA-CHARLESTOWN, 9 May - Chatterbox, Nevisian Pearls, Positive Moves, Bikes not Bombs and Reading Starts With Us “help to develop the young people of Nevis.”

The social programmes, together with developmental initiatives such as summer job attachments and homework assistance, are geared towards “mobilising the young people of the country to positive action.”

This is the view of Nevis’ Minister of Youth the Honourable Hensley Daniel, who, during a recent address, commended the Youth Division within the Department of Social Services for its “unwavering commitment to the development of young people.”

Chatterbox, described as “an

interactive programme for young people to share their views,” airs weekly on Nevis Television’s Channel 8 and is hosted by Youth Development Officer Ms. Shoya Lawrence.

The Nevisian Pearls Programme, according to Minister Daniel, “helps to equip young girls to increase their capacity to make sound decisions” while Positive Moves “targets males to promote positive action on their part.”

“Character building and personality development” is the focus for the Bikes not Bombs programme with the presentation of bikes, to students, as incentives for good behaviour.”

The summer job attachment scheme, Minister Daniel highlighted, continues to place upper-level secondary

school students in the employment industry to prepare them for “the world of work.”

The reading starts with us programme which “builds a culture of reading in the society,” has brought families closer as “parents and children learn to read together” while the homework assistance programme “better equips young people to perform at school.”

In his government’s quest to “transmit a wide range of learning opportunities to facilitate lifelong learning and to safeguard the country against poverty and underdevelopment,” the Youth Minister challenged Nevisians to “be more positive in their thinking.”

“Let us look at ourselves as a society: look at what we are

doing for the young people and look at how we can redirect today’s young people.

“As we go forward, we need people at all levels of education and training to establish a sound base for economic development,” Minister Daniel said.

In addition to serving as Youth Minister, the Honourable Hensley Daniel holds responsibility for health, gender, culture, sports, community and social affairs, trade and industry and information technology.

[sknvibes]

## USA: Westfield Y recognizes two with ‘Youth of the Year’ award

NEW JERSEY, May 19 - The Westfield Area Y presented “Youth of the Year” awards to Carrie Bilenker and Alex Iuliano at the Y’s Annual Meeting. Youth of the Year is awarded annually to two high achieving teens who participate at the Y.

Bilenker began participating in the YMCA New Jersey Youth & Government Program during her freshman year of Cranford High School. Since then she has increased her involvement, becoming Senate Clerk, Commissioner of Labor and Economic Development and finally the Youth Governor of the State of New Jersey for the 2011 Youth & Government Conference.

She has also participated in the YMCA Model UN program as both a delegate and the Chair of Legal A throughout the past four years as well as serving as President of Cranford High School’s Model UN program. In school, she is an active member of the Theater Department, the Mock Trial Team, Concert Choir and the women’s service club, Visible Woman. This past year her Mock Trial Team won the county championship and she was chosen to represent the YMCA as a member of Youth Service America’s National Youth Council. In 2010 Bilenker participated in a civic program, the American Legion Auxiliary’s Girls State and then went on to be a Senator at Girls Nation and had the distinction of being

elected Girls Nation President.

Alex Iuliano has been a member of the Westfield Area Y’s Leaders Club for three years. He has completed one year of Leaders in Training and two years of Counselors in Training over the past three summers. He enjoys volunteering around the Y and outside of the Y. He is also a first degree black belt in Tae Kwon Do and an Assistant Instructor teaching others martial arts.

The Westfield Area Y would like to congratulate Carrie and Alex on their exceptional achievements. They were able to maintain honorable grades, while at the same time, being an asset to the

community.

The Y is the nation’s leading nonprofit committed to strengthening communities through youth development, healthy living and social responsibility.

[nj.com]

**ABOUT WAY**

The World Assembly of Youth (WAY) is the international coordinating body of national youth councils and organizations. The full members of WAY are national youth councils. WAY has 120 member organizations from all continents.

Founded in 1949, WAY has general consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations and works in close cooperation with several UN agencies including UNAIDS, UNEP, ILO UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF and WHO.

WAY works for promotion of youth and youth organizations in program areas such as: youth employment, environment, human rights, democracy, population, health, drugs, community development and leadership training.



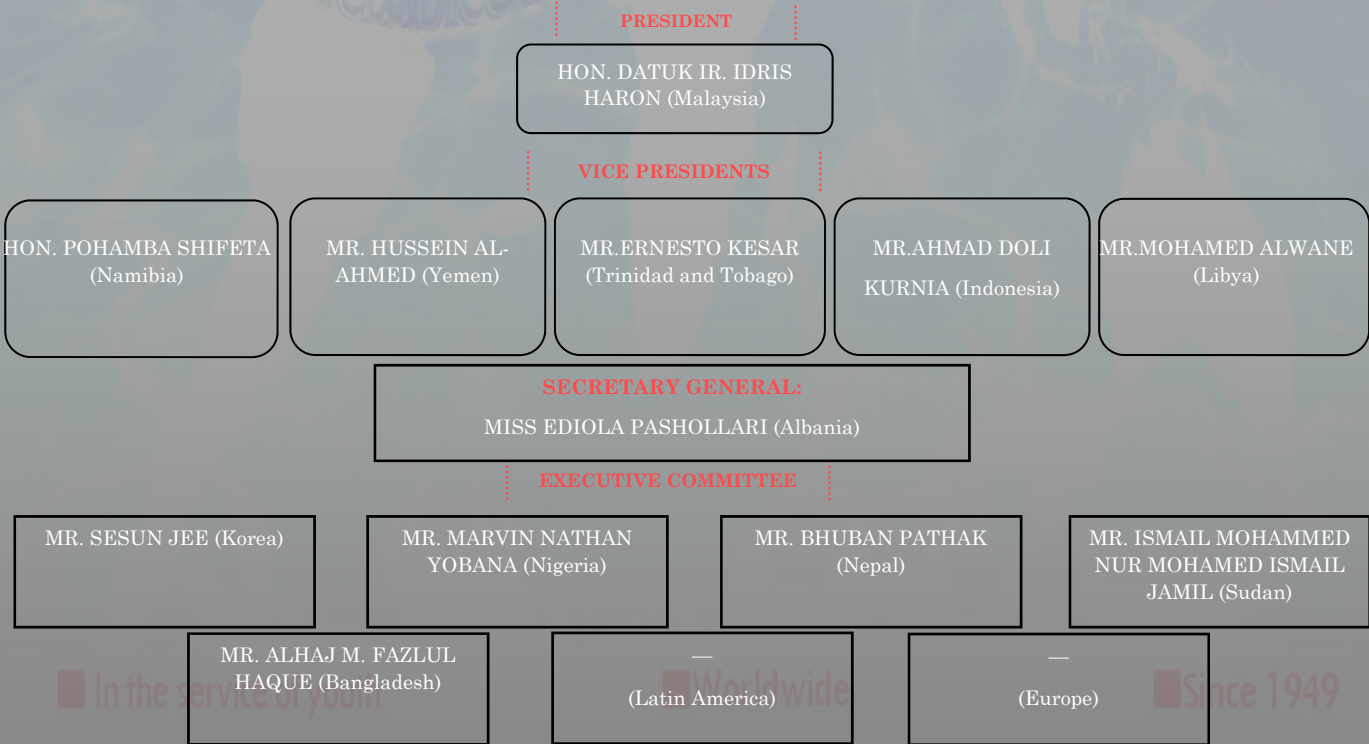
World Assembly of Youth  
 Assemblée Mondiale de la Jeunesse  
 Asamblea Mundial de la Juventud

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**World Assembly of Youth Organization Chart**



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