



AFRICAN EUROPEAN
YOUTH CONFERENCE
(AEYC)
22/23 OCTOBER 2022

REPORT





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**UNIVERSITÀ
DI TORINO**



1. Premise

Background

Last February, the Heads of State or Government of the Member States of the African Union (AU) and the European Union (EU) met for the **sixth European Union-African Union Summit** in Brussels. "A new, forward-looking and ambitious spirit emerged that must be the foundation of this special partnership between Europe and Africa" (Charles Michel, President of the European Council). The goal of the partnership is to achieve **solidarity** between the AU and EU in these categories: security, peace, sustainable development and prosperity.

We, as Y-IDEA (Youth for Intra-Dialogue on Europe and Africa), a **One Hour for Europe** project, in agreement and with the collaboration and active participation of the youth associations working on the partnership between the two continents, such as **GAP** (Young Activists for Participation) and others, in the occasion *inter alia* of the European Youth Year, believe that it is essential to also include the voice of young Europeans, Africans and the Diaspora in the relations between the two Unions.

The strong conviction that Africa is an increasingly important player on the international scene compels the European institutions to look to the African continent as an indispensable partner and a valuable ally in multilateral instances, in order to face common issues and challenges.

The assistentialism that has characterized past decisions must give way to proactive and creative shared choices in the economic and social contexts. Africa must be seen as an equal and active partner to give their own citizens a

prosperous and harmonious future. Indeed, we request the EU and AU to develop common efficient policies that integrate the two continents.

TARGET

For the reasons mentioned above, we decided to organise a conference where young people, who make-up the majority of the African by far, can be protagonists alongside the European youth and can discuss the state of EU-AU relations.

We wanted to include the youth aged between 15-35 years, who are interested in shaping and changing the narrative of the role of young people in the political space. We also aimed to target youth as well as youth groups, who want to have a seat at the decision-making table of the African and European relationship. As inclusivity is very important to us, we wanted to include people from diverse and minority backgrounds to better reflect society.

GOALS

This can be achieved by putting forward their own demands, starting with the need to include civil society and youth representatives in the official mechanisms in charge of implementing and monitoring the decisions taken during the Summit.

In addition, we want to build a common narrative upon the achievements of the European Youth Event and the May Civil Society Days that brought together stakeholders from both continents.

EXPECTED RESULTS

As a concrete outcome, we wish to permanently synergize the youth work and events on the Africa-Europe partnership with the view of being inserted in the follow-up mechanisms of the EU-AU Summit implementation. With this in mind, we issued, at the end of the conference, a programmatic document which was entitled the 'Torino Joint Communiqué' that represents the views of all the participants gathered under the name of the Youth Core Group.

2. Agenda

AFRICAN EUROPEAN YOUTH CONFERENCE (AEYC)

Designing a youth inclusive future for Africans and Europeans

22/23 October 2022

Aula Magna, Campus Luigi Einaudi, Lungo Dora Siena, 100 A (Saturday)
Cecchi Point, via Cecchi 17 (Sunday)
Torino TO, Italy

Languages: Italian, English and French

Location: 22/10 Aula Magna, Campus Luigi Einaudi, Lungo Dora Siena - 23/10 Cecchi Point, Via Cecchi n. 17

Audience: about 400 in presence and around 250 connected remotely

How it takes place: interactive conference

Organisers: Youth Core Group

<https://www.onehourforeurope.it/>

The speakers that will connect remotely are indicated with an asterisk.*

AGENDA

22 OCTOBER

09:30 - 10:00 - Solemn opening

SE Emanuela Claudia del Re*, EU Special Representative for the Sahel

SE Hana Hubačková, Ambassador of the Czech Republic in Italy, representing the EU Council

Brando Benifei*, MEP, Member of the Delegation for Relations with Mashreq countries (video message)

Ivano Martinetti, Councilor Secretary of the Piedmont Regional Council with delegation to the Regional Youth Forum

10:00- 10:45 - Introduction by the Youth Core Group

PANEL 1: EU-AU PARTNERSHIP: The way to go

10:45 -12:30

HE Giuseppe Mistretta, Director for Africa in the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Chiara Adamo*, European Commission, Acting Director of Directorate G: "Human Development, Migration, Governance and Peace", DG INTPA

HE Renzo Mario Rosso, President of the African Studies Center

Bitania Lulu*, former Youth Advisor of Commissioner Urpilainen

Marco Sicbaldi, European Youth Year Ambassador, journalist and member of the national board of PA Social

Questions to speakers, group discussion

12:30 - 14:00 Lunch

14:00 - 15:00

Panel Discussion: Commemoration of Africa Youth Day

Video from Ag. Director Prudence Ngwenya WGYD

Discussion on the theme of the year " Breaking the Barriers to meaningful youth participation and inclusion in advocacy". MEP Herzberger Fofana in view of the Panafrican Youth Forum on the topic of "Breaking the barriers to youth participation and inclusion in advocacy".

Participants: Elvis Yirenkyi Ayeh - Monitoring and Evaluation Associate

Sandzisile Madonsela - Policy Officer

Derrick Oduck Ochuot - Communications and Youth Engagement Officer

PANEL 2: Euro-African Peace and Security

15:15 - 17:15

Pierrette Herzberger Fofana, Member of the European Parliament,
Vice - Chair of Committee on Development, DACP and DPAP

Domenico Moro, Coordinator for security and defense, Centro Studi
sul Federalismo

Kiiza Hussein, Global Goodwill Ambassador and Chairperson of
Peace and Interfaith Harmony Youth Alliance

Asad Beg*, Team Leader, Africa 1 Division, European External Action
Service

Juuso Jarviniemi*, Vice President of Young European Federalists,
Europe

Anass Hanafi, Curator, Global Shapers Turin Hub

Questions to speakers, group discussion

PANEL 3: Migration and Mobility

17:30 - 19:15

Silvia Sinibaldi*, International Cooperation and Humanitarian
Director, Caritas Europa

Roberta Ricucci, Associate Professor at University of Turin, Sociology
of Islam, Sociology of Interethnic Relations and Sociology of
migration

Abdoulaye Fall, Founder Maingate for migrants (and job
opportunities)

Andrea Costa*, President of Baobab Experience

Lorenzo Mauloni, PhD student, volunteer of Baobab Experience

Fula*, Activist and rapper

Bassirou Sow*, Author of "Il Dottor vu cumpra', il viaggio delle
illusioni"

Abdullahi Ahmed, Author of "Lo Sguardo Avanti" and winner of the
European Commission's Altiero Spinelli Prize 2020

Questions to speakers, group discussion

Dinner and city guided tour
19:30 - Open End

AGENDA

23 OCTOBER

PANEL 4: Industrial development and access to sustainable energy

10:00 - 12:00

Youlin Zhao*, PHD Researcher, on "*China-Africa Cooperation on Blue Economy and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road*"

Allan David Emolot*, Independent Continental Youth Advisory Council of AfCFTA (ICOYACA), Chairperson

Denis Odhiambo*, AU - EU Youth Cooperation Hub

Alberto Majocchi*, Professor Emeritus of Public Finance, Pavia University

Andrea Longo, PHD student on application of human rights at sea in the fisheries sector

Olimpia Fontana*, Mario Albertini Fellow, Centro Studi sul Federalismo

Questions to speakers, group discussion

12:00 - 13:30 Lunch

PANEL 5: Civil Society and Inclusion, Human Rights, Youth Participation, Culture

13:30 - 15:30

Thomas Huyghebaert*, Head of Cooperation and Policy Section at the EU Delegation to the African Union, European External

Action Service

Musamba Mubanga, Senior Advocacy Officer, Caritas Internationalis
representing Caritas Africa

Everine Akello*, Assistant to the UN Aids Director for the European Union

Simona Riccio, LinkedIn Top Voice Italia and Social Media Marketing Strategist - Comitato promotore PA Social Piemonte

André Karl Joress Ebouaney, Specialized educator and Project manager at the Istituto dei Sordi di Torino

Riccardo Roba*, CONCORD

Sara Vaggi, Youth Engagement Specialist, UNICEF Italia

Ettore Bertelli, Emergency

David Wateu*, Co-Founder of Radio Kamite

Questions to speakers, group discussion

PANEL 6: Climate Change

15:45 - 17:30

Benazir Hilali*, CEO, Axle International, African Risk Compass

Nathaniel Jowitt*, COO, Axle International, African Risk Compass

Gabriele Casano, PhD student Unige & CIMA Foundation - C.E.S.I.

Mahalmoudou Hamadoun*, Director General of AGRHYMET Regional Climate Center

Gina Bonne*, Indian Ocean Commission (IOC)

Nogaye Mbengue*, Expert on waste management

Isha Vajpeyi*, PhD student and expert on climate issues

Questions to speakers, group discussion and writing recommendations

18:00 - 20:00

Writing and Adoption of the Torino Joint Communiqué

MAIN PARTNERS



**UNIVERSITÀ
DI TORINO**



gecap



VITTORIA
SCUOLA UNIVERSITARIA
PER MEDIATORI LINGUISTICI
TORINO

WITH THE HIGH PATRONAGE OF



sotto l'alto patrocinio
del Parlamento europeo



**Independent Continental Youth
Advisory Council On AfCFTA**



Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri
DIPARTIMENTO PER LE POLITICHE GIOVANILI E IL SERVIZIO CIVILE UNIVERSALE



YAS

YOUNG
AMBASSADORS
SOCIETY



ang
AGENZIA
NAZIONALE
PER I GIOVANI

ANG
CONSIGLIO NAZIONALE
DEI GIOVANI

SUPPORTERS



PANAFRICANDO
ASSOCIAZIONE PROMOZIONE SOCIALE



CENTRO STUDI SUL FEDERALISMO



ISTITUTO DEI SORDI
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TURIN



Movimento
Europeo
Italia

Fondazione
Italia
Digitale

FESTIVAL
DELLO
SVILUPPO
SOSTENIBILE
2022

Promosso da

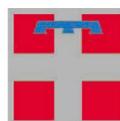
ASvis Alleanza Italiana
per lo Sviluppo
Sostenibile

ItaliaHello

PAsocial
ASSOCIAZIONE NAZIONALE
PER LA NUOVA COMUNICAZIONE

ecdpm

AIESEC



REGIONE
PIEMONTE

AMiStDeS

con il patrocinio

unicef
ITALIA

per ogni bambino

COMMON FUTURES
CONVERSATIONS



MEDIA PARTNERS



3. Opening Speeches

Carola Gritella (One Hour for Europe/Y-IDEA):

"I am 'partigiano', alive, and already I hear, in the consciences of those on my same side, the throbbing bustle of the city of the future that we are building. And in it, the social chain does not weigh on the shoulders of only a few, nothing is a hazard, or a fatality, but the intelligent work of its citizens. There is no-one watching from the sidelines while others are sacrificed, bled dry. I am alive, partisan. And, therefore, I hate those who do not take sides; I hate the indifferent." - Gramsci. I did not feel alone with the partisan friends taking the floor today after me. I did not feel useless with my friends from Africa and Europe sharing the dream of this Conference

and working restless for six months. I did not feel wrong hoping to bring the youth at the center of the institutional dialogue when few believed in us, and only now jumped in just because they realized this conference was becoming real: I see that we have an institutional government based on its image and advertisement. This should be unsettling, which means that the money spent for mere institutional appearances should be invested in concrete actions. The institutional bubbles should not be used as a corporate veil to become indifferent citizens. **Institutions need to open to the people** because they exist and work for the people, and particularly for the future of youth. The journey that brought us here is lit by the genuine desire to contribute to the Africa-Europe friendship and partnership. However, it is very disappointing that no institution concretely supported us and only gave a logo.

This is why **youth empowerment is necessary** in face of a system that is highly dysfunctional and led by slow elites that do not meet the high dynamism of society and need for action. The **synergised youth networks** and initiatives can be an answer to this problem because youth networks can target reality at grassroots level. We specify that we do not want to bypass institutions, we want to cooperate with them and start from the basis, which means targeting the people on the ground, to heal the problems common to Europe and Africa.

The first result of our work is the **African European Youth Conference** here in Turin and **we expect the next to be in Africa**. After the 6th EU-AU summit held in February, the **Joint Vision for 2030** issued by the EU and AU explicitly encourages all relevant stakeholders to continue to engage towards their **renewed Partnership**. And We want to be that relevant stakeholders. Accordingly, the 6 thematic Panels of the Conference will discuss crucial aspects of the European Union and African Union partnership and we will collect all the frank criticisms, suggestions and solutions in the final Torino Joint Communique', which is a programmatic document that will advocate youth empowerment and involvement in institutional decision making in the long-term. With pleasure and pride, I present to you the **Youth Core Group** which is a collection of associations and individuals that, among others, could not be here in presence, but made this project possible on a totally voluntary basis. My colleagues are going to present to you specific aspects of the EU-AU relations that are particularly relevant for them, and you will have the task to propose

credible solutions in the next two days. This is the moment to have your say and not be indifferent. Please Tessy, now the floor is yours. Thank you.

Tessy Li (One Hour for Europe/Y-IDEA):

Youth Engagement Discourse vs. Meaningful Youth Participation

Thank you again to all for being here! My name is Tessy Li, I'm 24 years old and a Master's student of Geography and Development of the Global South in Paris. I just want to say, we are so excited to have this conference, and we are proud to say that it is us, the members of the Youth Core Group, who have created this conference from beginning to end. While we have worked tirelessly to make this happen, working weekends, week days, many sleepless nights and sacrificing much of our time, energy, and social life, it is important to say that this conference would not be possible without collaboration, help, and support of so many people and institutions.

This is what I would like to talk about. Indeed, maybe you have noticed: many institutions, organizations, companies and in society, championing "the youth" has become quite trendy. Youth engagement, youth empowerment, youth representation - we hear these words more and more. And that's great! Right? We are finally benefitting from the legacy of the generation of young people that came before us, that fought for young people to have a say in important decisions on a local, national, and international level. They have successfully fought against the image of young people being too inexperienced, too naive, too idealistic, and too radical.

And finally, our voices have been heard! Right?

Well, as happy as we are to have this conference, these past months, we have seen what is often behind these big words, youth engagement and youth empowerment... It all looks nice on paper, but when it comes to real action, rather than with enthusiasm, us young people are often met with doubt and negative scrutiny, which often manifest in lack of response and follow-up, unanswered emails and requests, not to mention, unwillingness to listen, help, let alone support and fund. We have seen, not just over the course of the past months, but for many years, tactics of actors and partners of stalling, making us wait for their approval, stalling some more,

to tell us in the end that, oh, they “would have loved to help! But this is all so short notice.”

So, more than anything, we have seen that despite the narrative of key players in international affairs of wanting to engage youth, the seat at the decision-maker's table will never be given to us - we have to take it. Or, at least, we have to build our own table, where it is us young people that decide who can have a seat. That said, welcome to our table!

We are eager to discuss many important issues with you, one of them hopefully being: **How do we finally bridge the gap between the youth engagement narrative and its more sobering reality, to engage youth meaningfully and enable young people to express themselves and be truly involved in institutional decision-making?**

Milo Marco Lavina (MSOI Torino):

Thank you for the floor, I am Marco Milo Lavina a 23-year-old student of International Relations and today I would like to take this opportunity to share with you my thoughts on a topic that I am sure is close to the hearts of everyone in this room: the need to include young people in decision-making processes in the field of foreign policy.

During my career as a student, I have tried, along with many of my peers, to find a space where I can put into practice what I study. Ours is not a purely theoretical area of study as many believe: one needs experience in the field to be able to enter into the logic of political, economic and social mechanisms in order to truly understand the phenomena one is studying.

Personally, I consider myself lucky to study in a context like Turin, a context historically very close to the values of internationalism and international cooperation that offers many opportunities as witnessed by the presence of some of the conference's partner organisations: CESI, the CSF, One Hour for Europe, SIOI Piemonte to name but a few.

The commitment of these associations is fundamental in the careers of young people not only because they provide a space for academic reflection but also because they ensure a real space for debate that is useful for personal growth and the **creation of a critical conscience.**

A shining example of what I am talking about is the AEY Conference, a summit designed not only to provide an educational opportunity for

young people on the relations between the European Union and the African Union but to go further. In fact, this conference was conceived as the first stage of a long-term process that puts young people at the centre of contributing to the development of relations between the two organisations.

However, this is not the norm: in particular, it is not assured for young people to find opportunities to break away from the academic setting and find real opportunities to be involved in the decision-making process in foreign policy.

That is why it is an immense joy for me to see how institutions are increasingly engaging with young people at both national and European level. I take as an example one of the latest proposals adopted: the first **Youth Action Plan** in EU External Action promoted by the Commission and the High Representative to strengthen engagement with young people worldwide.

To explain the importance of this plan I will quote the words of the High Representative Josep Borrell: *It is our responsibility to ensure that young people have the tools and opportunities they need to fully develop and participate in everyday life. They are the adults of tomorrow, we must invest in their present and future*'.

Only time will tell how good this project will be, but the institutions must start from the same **principles identified by the European Union**: providing young people with up-to-date skills and tools by guaranteeing quality education; increasing the voice of young people in policies and decision-making; promoting opportunities for young people to network and exchange with their peers around the world.

A concrete example of this that I would like to mention here is the creation of the **Africa-Europe Youth Academy**, which provides financial support of EUR 50 million aimed at creating formal and informal learning and exchange opportunities for young people to network with actors of change in Africa.

However, this must only be the first step: with the world's youth population growing ever larger it is not enough for governments to aim to design responsive public policies where youths have a stake in the decision-making process. They must create enabling environments for political participation and civic engagement, so that youth become

accountable stakeholders and are able to rebuild their trust in public intuitions as platforms for change. We as young people are ready to do our part and we are sure that the institutions, if they agree to be guided by these values, will be able to contribute without letting us down.

Thank you for your attention

Giuliana Gentile (Youth Core Group):

THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 2250 ON YOUTH, PEACE, AND SECURITY AND THE ISSUE OF CHILD RECRUITMENT ON THE BATTLEFIELD.

In December 2015, the United Nations Security Council unanimously adopted a ground-breaking resolution on Youth, Peace, and Security recognizing that *“young people play an important and positive role in the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security”*.

Directed to Member States, five are the pillars for action identified by the UNSCR 2250,

1. **Participation** → to increase inclusive participation of youth in decision making at all levels for the prevention and resolution of conflict
 2. **Protection**→to implement the necessary measures to protect civilians, including youth, from all forms of sexual and gender-based violence
 3. **Prevention** → Member States should facilitate an enabling environment in which young people are provided adequate support to implement violence prevention activities. All relevant actors should promote a culture of peace, tolerance, intercultural and interreligious dialogue.
 4. **Partnership** → Member States should increase their political, financial, and logistical support that consider the needs and participation of youth in peace efforts.
 5. **Disengagement and reintegration** → disarmament, demobilization and reintegration activities must be considered, through youth employment opportunities and inclusive labour policies, investing in young persons' capabilities and skills.
-

As available in the document of the Resolution, the UN will work to improve the coordination and interaction regarding the needs of youth during armed conflicts and post- conflict situations, while the Secretary-General will carry out the progress of study on the youth, positive contribution to peace processes and conflict resolution.

During the adoption of the resolution, the security council has been recalling its resolutions on **Women, peace and security**, its resolutions on **counterterrorism**, the statements of its president on **post-conflict peacebuilding**, and the **protection of civilians** in armed conflict.

When someone can be defined as **youth**? There is no universally agreed international definition on the youth age group. However, according to the United Nations, "youth" are those persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years, without prejudice to other definitions by Member States.

What is the **world population** and what percentage do **youth** occupy? Today, we are almost 8 billion people on the globe and youth occupy 16% of it, precisely 1.8 billion.

What about the **African population**? The United Nations estimates it is equivalent to 16.72% of the total world population, and the median age in Africa is 19.7 years.

Concerning the third pillar, I would like to consider the delicate topic of child soldiers, an issue that involves the overall world, including Africa.

The world that we know today, from the states that we live in to the technology we use daily, has been greatly shaped by violent struggle, like conflicts over food, territory, powers.

Civilians once had no place on the battlefield, now the battlefield is almost incomplete without them.

Africa is almost considered to be at the epicentre of the child soldier phenomenon, with **Sierra Leone** case being the most instructive. The result appears to be an almost endemic link between children and warfare in Africa. A survey in **Angola**, revealed that 36 percent of all Angolan children had either served as soldiers or accompanied troops into combats. Similar patterns hold for children in Liberia: the United Nations estimates that

some 20.000 children served as soldiers in Liberia's war, up to 70 % of the various factions' fighting forces.

Of particular note, in Africa is the **Lord's Resistance Army in Uganda (LRA)**, renowned, or rather infamous, for being made up almost exclusively of children. It has abducted more than 14.000 children to turn into soldiers and, as it weren't enough, the LRA holds the ignoble record of having the world's youngest reported armed combat, aged five.

<<Don't overlook them. They can fight more than we big people... it is hard for them to retreat>>

- Liberian government militia commander.

In Somalia, boys from 14 to 18-year-old, regularly fight in warlord militias. In Rwanda, thousands of children are thought to have participated in the 1994 genocide. Child soldiers have become a common feature of the continent's largest conflict, the war in the DRC. The fighting started with the revolt led by Laurent Kabila. His army had some 10,000 child soldiers between the ages of 7 and 16. Estimates are that there are presently between 30.000 and 50.000 child soldiers in the DRC, as much as 30% of all combatants. Congolese child soldiers were known as *kadogos*, "little ones" in Swahili: they have been so prevalent that they even served in Kabila's Presidential Guard. Another wrinkle is that the problem crosses gender boundaries. Roughly 30% of the world's armed forces that employ child soldiers include girl soldiers. In the 1990s the civil war in Ethiopia, as much as 25% of the total opposition forces were females under 18. While they may be expected to perform the same dangerous functions as boy soldiers, many are also forced to provide sexual services or become soldiers' wives. For example, the LRA in Uganda, a self-proclaimed Christian resistance group, specifically targets girls considered more attractive for abduction. They are then "married" to the organization's leaders as spoils of war. If the man dies, the girl is then given to another rebel. In Angola, girl soldiers were labelled by the rebel group as *Okulumbuissa*, a lower social category which sanctions a man to impregnate the girl without having to assume paternity and responsibility for the child.

<<They picked me and took me away in the bush where I was forced to become a "wife" to one the rebels. Being new in the field, on the first night I

refused, but on the second night they said, "either you give in or death". I still tried to refuse, and then the man got serious and knifed me on the head. I become helpless and started bleeding terribly and that was how I got involved in sex at the age of 14 because death was near>>.

- B., age sixteen

How are child soldiers formed?

Case studies indicate that in the majority of conflicts a primary method of recruitment of children is through some form of **abduction**: homeless or street children are at particular risk, as they are most vulnerable to sweeps aimed at them, which prompt less public outcry.

As one young boy in the DRC explained,

I joined President Laurent Kabila's army when I was 13 because my home had been looted and my parents were gone. As I was then on my own, I decided to become a soldier.

Indeed, surveys of demobilized child soldiers in the DRC found that almost 60% originally joined armed groups because of simply **poverty**. However, conflict groups may also use **education systems** to glorify war, in order to induce children to identify with and join their organization. For example, in the late 1980s, the Education Centre in Afghanistan was located in Peshawar, Pakistan, and was operated by Afghan mujahideen. It produced a series of children's books that became the basis of primary education across the country when the Taliban took power. Across the board they promoted to youth the concept of violence for the sake of Islam. These ranged from teaching the alphabet to first graders through warlike examples, to illustrating mathematics to third graders with militant word problems.

<<One group of Mujahideen attack 50 Russian soldiers. In that attack, 20 Russian were killed. How many Russian fled?>>

Ironically, these textbooks were paid by the U.S. government grants¹.

¹ 1 Quoted in "Child Soldiers Square Up to U.S. Tanks", *Daily Telegraph* (London), August 23, 2004.

<<The speed of a Kalashnikov bullet is 800 meters per second. If a Russian is at a distance of 3,200 meters from a mujahid, and that mujahid aims at the Russian's head, calculate how many seconds it will take for the bullet to strike the Russian in the forehead>>.

- Word problem from fourth-grade Afghan textbook

My main questions are the following:

1. How can youth and the local, national, and international organizations work together to find effective strategies to prevent such atrocities?
2. Which actors can effectively report, without fear, these ignoble recruitments?
3. What are the measures youth and organizations can offer children without guardians, in order to avoid them to fall under the custody of war lords?
4. How can good education be spread and shared among families, especially families which are reluctant to or incapable of educating their child because of the extreme poverty they are obliged to live in? How can the warlords be left out of the education systems?

<<Yes, I am saying that it is too easy to blame the war, to hide behind the abstract entity we call war and refer to it as a kind of original sin, a divine curse. The discourse to be addressed is not about war. It is about the men who wage war, about the soldiers, about the oldest, most unalterable, timeless profession that existed as long as life has existed>>.

- Oriana Fallaci, Inshallah.

Luca Palis (Youth Core Group):

Good morning to our dear guests, that today will be joining us and this enormous audience, thank you really much, from the bottom of my heart for being here today (and we hope also tomorrow!)

In case you were wondering, I am Luca Palis, I'm 18 and I'm an afro italian guy. I am proudly here to represent the 2 continents that reside in me and to help them, through this conference, to express at their best their potential.

I came up here on this stage to open your eyes and, hopefully, your hearts on one of the topics I care about the most: the necessity to **abolish frontiers worldwide**.

In my long short life I think I made quite a few experiences, many of them are linked to the travels I've made. For example, I brought with me from Cuba, that even though you live in poverty and you don't have many "comforts" you are still capable of enjoying life in the small things. The LGBTQ+ community flag I saw in my trip to Amsterdam taught me that even more important than the fact that everybody should be able to live its life as they want is that the community's main role should be to protect those who are more fragile and maybe threads weaved together may seem useless to many people but it's actually one of the strongest tool ever because it gives visibility to people that used to live hidden to survive.

If you were paying attention before, you may have noticed that the examples are linked by a common topic, the fact that these **new knowledges were all gained during travels**, if I had stayed at home I may have seen the same things as the one I saw in person on my phone or on tv but ...Would have they been the same as when I saw the real thing? Trust me, the answer is "No! They wouldn't have been the same". Considering this I started reflecting on these events and my mind began to wonder how amazing it would be if everybody in the world could experience this, how amazing would it be if anyone could move freely wherever they want, without spending lots of money for transportation and without waiting interminable months, as we did in the past months waiting a piece of paper, better known as visa and experiencing a moment that may change their lives forever?

For example, our friend **Faouziatou Ibrahima**, a key guest of this Conference, really tried everything to obtain the visa. Helped and supported by all of us, she produced an excellent dossier and managed to deposit the visa request in due time at the French Embassy in Abidjan. However, afterwards it was the silence, no answer. The day of the Conference was getting closer and closer, and still no answer. Faouziatou tried to call the Embassy several times per day, but the line was always busy, and nobody was answering. She tried to go there physically, but the security guards didn't let her access the offices, not even come close to them. Therefore, our friend Faouziatou could not join us. This is

unacceptable. She was not even refused the visa for some reason. She was simply not given an answer.

Aya El Hail (Youth Core Group):

Mobility as a tool for youth empowerment

Good morning everyone. My name is Aya El Hail.

I'm an International relations student. I'm Italian with Moroccan origins.

So I grew up between these two continents (Italy and Morocco).

When I was younger, I was feeling connected but also in between these countries.

Sometimes I saw differences between them because people wanted to see them. Growing up I realised how much Africa and Europe were similar and I imagined how to connect them.

When I was younger I dreamed of this and a younger me would be proud.

Because I'm here, believing in this Project, with all of you and the AEYC organising team. Inside we are so different but so similar, like Africa and Europe. But...Something helped me to imagine this future.

Seeing other points of view, travelling, talking, connecting. That's international mobility and I strongly believe in mobility as a tool for youth empowerment.

Why? We can involve young people and people that are vulnerable and fragile sections of our society that need our attention.

I talk instead of NEET which means young people neither in employment nor in education and training.

Mobility can give them a lot.

In some countries of the world the percentage of NEET touches 40 percent. People who do not actively "seek" work because they view job opportunities as limited, or because they have restricted labour mobility, or face discrimination, .. structural, social or cultural barriers.

Why can mobility make a difference?

1 you can find someone who believes in you (how many times when someone believed in us, we felt stronger and not alone.)

Also for this project, people believed in us. And gave us tools and money to make it real.

2 knowledge. that they will use to work, in their life, and to try something new.

3 inclusivity (a project that fights racism and promotes diversity), these 3 points mean one thing: **EMPOWERING**

My dream is to see an Erasmus or a very similar project between our two continents.

I know it's difficult... But There is a quote which I strongly believe.

"where you live shouldn't determine whether you live."

Let's extend our vision and collaborate to build something new, young and inclusive

Benedicta Frema Schmitz (One Hour for Europe/Y-IDEA):

Hello everyone, It is an honour to be at the beginning of something great like this, honestly my speech is going to be more something which is on my heart. So this is rather going to be a heart-to-heart talk than a speech. And I'm already apologizing to my mum who told me to talk to you in the nicest way possible so that you think I'm smart. But why would my mum tell me this? It's because she understands the structure of society very well, she understands that if I present myself as not nice or polite enough that I will be surely put into a box. And as my mum, she wouldn't want that for me. But again why would she tell me this? Simple answer: **racism**.

A more specific answer is structures in the mind of 100 and 1000 of people, its structures which were put in place globally and still have a huge effect on how in a lot of cases not in all, European view Africa, Africa view Europe, Europe views Europe and so on. The question is how do we get out of that cycle which is at the end of the day harmful for literally everything that we are trying today? The answer is to **unlearn how we were taught to see the world by dedicating ourselves to learning THE African history before colonisation, because Africa is more than the history the white men told us**. Africa is more than a place where you can show how good of a person you are. It is a common thing, for example that people tend to use Africa as their good dead card. I have observed how harmful and shameful this is. So if you are here to show the world how good of a person you are you are here with the wrong intentions. The first president of Ghana Kwame Nkrumah said in 1970 quite a time ago that "Africa is viewed as the infant of the world".

Our friend Fao was denied from coming from Africa to Italy, even though she had an excellent resumé and filled all the enquiry to be here as a speaker with very valuable intel for this conference, but she didn't seem

worthy enough to receive an answer. So today I'm asking you.... Is Africa still viewed as the infant of mankind??

Thank you

The Youth Core Group especially thank Rok Kozelj for his commitment and dedication to youth empowerment.

4. Summary of the topics discussed during the panels

PANEL 1 EU-AU PARTNERSHIP: The way to go

During the Panel discussion the speakers underlined that young Africans are drivers of positive change, indeed they want quality education and healthcare because these are the keys to build a strong future. They want to live in a stable environment where the change of government is democratic and the political parties have the same positions as men and women in families or at work. Young people also want to travel and see the world, this was also referred to in the EU and AU Summit that emphasized equality between partners and the need to burst mobility.

However, since the last EU-AU Summit the world has changed significantly already. Russian aggression to Ukraine was a dramatic development favoring violence and colonial practices. Africa's approach is central as the 54 countries at the United Nations form a critical mass in shaping positions to counter aggressive actors. It is important that AU and the EU enhance multilateralism, whose aim is to compromise different interests, in a moment when it is under attack even at the United Nations. The consolidation of common values is at their core and thanks to this core the international rules-based system is defended, which is what protects Africa and Europe from violent wills and chaotic fragmentation. The challenge comes from new actors such as Russia, Gulf States or Turkey having different approaches to Africa because the EU and AU are the only entities that truly care about good governance, the rule of law and human rights.

The Speakers stressed that the EU and AU are cooperating in many fields. There are committees of young people that exist already and in the Summits between the EU and AU the youth has been involved many times. Education, climate change, job creation, peace and security are fundamental for Europe and Africa as well. For example, in terms of cooperation of investments and peace and security the EU and AU are making great efforts to stabilize the two continents. One of the outcomes of the document is to propose to the EU Commission to create a roadmap to explain all the things that the EU and the AU do together in order to improve stability, growth because it is impossible that we talk about colonialism. There is disappointment but there is the Global Gateway plan that looks to the future. The investment from Europe to Africa is 240b while the investment of China is 40b. The AU and EU needs to explain to the youth what they are doing to clarify their common commitment to young students. We also live in the area of communication revolution, where social networks are used by everyone. For the EU this means to understand how to spread positive messages to the African people and vice versa. To let the voice of the people be heard is for sure a positive driver for the change we look for.

The African countries and civil society criticised the Partnership that is top down and that the priorities seem more adapted to the European than African Agenda. Notwithstanding these tensions, the last Summit had concrete deliverables. These deliverables enhance commitment for vaccines, the renewed commitment for peace and security, these deliverables include non classic donors, they put in center digitalisation and climate change. These last two points are controversial because in some African countries it is difficult to have electricity and Africa still regards carbon fuels as a reliable energy source. The effect of Russian aggression on energy politics needs to be seen, as like its impact on the green transition that is needed to stop the destruction of our planet. To conclude, peace and security studies say that security cannot be found only by Africans themselves, this is clear in the Sahel region, we must cooperate for a peaceful future in both continents.

PANEL 2 Euro-African Peace and Security

The European lesson makes us understand how an analysis of the origin and of the causes and of the instabilities of countries in conflict with each other is essential for building a path that has peace as its objective. A relevant issue is the economic and monetary union of Africa. African countries have different supranational institutions moving towards it.

However, security in the African continent is the precondition to allow the economic and monetary union and then, political union. The African Security must be autonomous in order to avoid that foreign powers can destabilise the Continent, hence internal conflicts must be stopped to enhance internal stability. Major initiatives are necessary such as: 1. a plan to boost resilient development based on the IMF Special Drawing Rights, 2. To create a European-African Community for Maritime Security, 3. Revitalization of multilateral organisations, 4. Create a Joint Commission made up of the EU Parliament and the Pan-African Parliament to find solutions to shared threats.

Furthermore, job creation, inclusivity and education are keys to avoid violent societies and extremism. There are many young women and men exposed to terrorists that contravene international norms. Peace and security is possible only if humans have basic human and children rights respected as housing, food, life, health, employment and social services as their first choice over violence. Good governance should be promoted to fight corruption and organised crime which steals wealth from society and causes poverty.

Disinformation and fake news needs to be countered with a strategic plan. For example, these were used in the Great Lakes regions to deceive rural populations creating false narratives.

From an EU-AU point of view, national bilateral agreements between Europe and Africa are sometimes counterproductive, a more coordinated direction of agreements and treaties between the two continents would bring greater benefits to peace and security.

Regional institutions, such as the African Peace and Security Architecture, must be the first to provide solutions to continental problems. For these reasons, peace has to be financed to flourish more than what war is, with staff and long-term capacity building.

PANEL 3 Migration and Mobility

One of the main controversial topics between the relationship between the African Union and European Union is related to migration and mobility. Europe has a long history of migration and young second generation migrants are part of European society, however, they need to be recognized as such. The city needs to be “owned”, in the sense that the presence of young people must be heard and the prejudices and stereotypes that are linked to this specific social group must be dismantled. Education is fundamental but it needs to be followed by active actions that involve youth. Indeed, sustainable programs must be implemented, and to achieve this youth need to become an active part in the political arena. Advocacy and commitment are the key to achieve this goal. In order to achieve this representation, agency must be built, maintained and cultivated. Migration is fundamental because it contributes to the labor market. Besides, there is still discrimination towards people from African states from an educational perspective, given that their degree is not recognized here. From a political perspective, it is fundamental to address FRONTEX and its violence at the European borders towards immigrants. Besides, there is the need to reconsider the Dublin regulations and fill the void of public institutions when dealing with migrants.

PANEL 4 Industrial development and access to sustainable energy

Allan David Emolot looked at the creation of the African Continental Free Trade Area, describing this as an opportunity for the creation of a single market, for industrial development and for women emancipation. He underlined the centrality of the youth in this project.

Denis Young observed how Africa was until now left outside economic globalization and stressed the necessity to acknowledge the role that the continent could have, considering its richness in young people but also in natural resources. He underlined that Europe should adopt a non patronizing approach, in order to improve its relationship with Africa.

Alberto Majocchi focused on the issue of urbanization, a phenomenon which is extremely significant and widespread in the African continent. He observed that this dynamic could lead to a further marginalization of the poor and he thus insisted on the necessity to cooperate in order to find solutions which preserve a balance within the cities, but also between them and the rural area.

Youlin Zhao looked at the EU-China-Africa cooperation, observing its evolution in the last two decades. She stated that this trilateral cooperation can be considered strategic, as the different parts have complementary interests and capacities.

Andrea Longo put his attention on the fishing sector and in particular on the weaknesses of the cooperation between Africa and the EU in this area. He affirmed that the EU in Africa is responsible for ignoring the social dimension of its action and for the disrespect of human rights.

Olimpia Fontana focused on the centrality of manufacturing to increase employment in Africa. She stressed the importance of investing in transport and energetic infrastructure, and the need to develop sustainable energy production.

PANEL 5 Civil Society and Inclusion, Human Rights, Youth Participation, Culture

Civil society and inclusion, human rights, youth participation and culture are a fundamental part of each society and their importance needs recognition and advocacy also at the institutional level. Both the European Union and the African Union consider them in their policies.

Thomas Huyghebaert focused on innovative projects: It is important to learn how to shape innovative programs and create space for young people. The youngest need to be better represented by youth projects in which they need to be part.

Everine Akello (Programme Officer, International Political Affairs|UNAIDS) Focused on the importance of SDGs and the goal of 2030. The institutions need to create a space for genuine participation and create a community network to accelerate the youth participation because focus on young people means investing in the future.

Musamba Mubanga (responsable principal du plaidoyer, Caritas Afrique)

focused on the priority of the education because EU and AU need to create a partnership on the youth education

Simona Riccio (Linkedin Top Voice Italia et Social Media Marketing Strategist - Comitato promotore PA Social Piemonte) focused on the gap gender and inclusion, underline the importance of the partnership between EU and AU to solve the problem

André Karl Joress Ebouaney (éducateur spécialisé et chef de projet à Istituto dei Sordi di Torino) focused on sensorial disabilities and the need to help them by building an education system where they can feel safe at school.

Riccardo Roba (CONCORD) focused on the access to information about what the EU and AU put into the table of negotiation and the importance of sharing concrete policies.

Sara Vaggi (spécialiste de engagement des jeunes, UNICEF Italia) focused on the importance of sharing the information on young policies and making the youngest be an active part in drafting new regulations.

Ettore Bertelli (Emergency) focused on the importance to increase peace through actions of young people and the cooperation between States.

David Wateu (cofondateur de Radio Kamite) focused on youth participation as the key to access information. It's important to give young people the possibility to design a youth inclusive future for Africans and Europeans because "the way of youth can change the world".

PANEL 6 Climate Change

Nogaye Mbengue, Expert on waste management:

Talking about climate change is talking about inequality in case of means and global issues need a global response. These include the need for mitigation & adaptation. There are often two camps, in regards to where one stands in wanting to deal with greenhouse gases.

Climate change can be seen as a train where everyone is called to jump on board, as it is related to all train lines. Africa can board it like the rest of the world, but it's not as easy, because of the continent's means. It is also at a strong disadvantage, as it contributes to only 7 % of the worldwide emissions rate, which is the least of all continents. There might also be

some impediments for Africa, as some areas are following the west in their development, without learning from its mistakes.

Waste management is also a great topic and problem, as it is related to agriculture, energy, etc. and also allows many reasons for impediments. These include the lack of political will (also due to culture), the import of garbage without these countries being able to deal with their own (e.g. open landfills), as many countries are overwhelmed and import toxic waste even though there are standards against it. The private sector also plays a role in delocalizing industries, which are main actors of climate change and there also is the lack of harnessing African scientific knowledge on climate resistance to help the matter, which would be an instrumental tool. Things which need improvement are the lack of research of ecological patterns of society and the distributions of patents.

Benazir Hilali, CEO, Axle International, African Risk Compass:

The data of increasing numbers of refugees correlates with that of the least peaceful areas. It is important for us to not reproduce colonial power dynamics, also in light of the upcoming COP (COP 27), by assessing priorities and issues, understand topics on the global perspective and assess the culture to get a better understanding of data and knowledge.

We also have to ask ourselves questions like “What do we mean when we are talking about adding the youth perspective?” and “What can we bring as experts in the field, finding innovative solutions together (anticipation, prevention and management)?”

All in all, there is a great need for more data.

Nathaniel Jowitt, COO, Axle International, African Risk Compass:

There is a need for new data and new data sources (which also includes looking backwards and looking historically). A problem which we are facing is a silo of data, which also leads many analyses to rely on secondary data. If the data is the same, then answers are also the same. This shows us that there is a need for new data sources, as we miss crucial comments and insights (they are often biased, involve expert analyses and not the general public). This leads to the questions of how one can solve problems if one doesn't even know what they are, what people perceive to know and how a crisis can be prevented.

There has been a recent project on African risk reduction, which also focuses on climate change with digital quantitative data, where consultations are also run. It is important to create connections with organisations in contact with rural areas to also reach people there. When questioning the people in those areas, respondents mentioned the climate and armed groups as major problems. Community leaders are often seen as a positive influence in these communities, which might play an important role in the risk reduction process.

In Cape Verde, water scarcity has been identified as a weakness, so sustainable solutions and models for that need to be scalable and relatable.

Mahalmoudou Hamadoun, Director General of AGRHYMET Regional Climate Center:

AGRHYMET is based in Niger and is the climatic center for the western African region. It was created in 1973 after a devastating drought as a response for practical solutions of climate change. It is a major concern for the world and western Sahel (13-member states), as meteorology, hydrology and other scientific disciplines in the center are related to the food supply in the region.

The data converted is essential to inform the decision making distributed to partners. It is important to stick to indicators, especially to those needed for crops, like crop monitoring (tracing traveling locusts).

Cadre Harmonisé (Harmonized framework) is their tool that classifies the severity of food and nutrition insecurity in the region and is also in coordination on an international level with multiple actors (NGOs, States).

Gina Bonne, Indian Ocean Commission (IOC):

The island dimension and climate justice are fields that often tend to get overlooked. The capacity to absorb foreign aid is also not always assured. Mechanisms and policies must include all political actors (including youth).

As they are some of the most affected areas of climate change, the importance of elevating the oceans to a main area of attention in the climate change discourse is rising. Critical infrastructure is needed in these countries' systems, as destroyed marine ecosystems (lost land for climate change) are concentrated and spread in the coastal areas. This

results in forced migration, VISA issues and the question on how people can survive.

The Blue Economy is a good approach, as it is linked to ocean resources. There also is an exclusion from financing, because it is affected by critical economies. The AU-EU partnership must create simple mechanisms for capacity building and it is important to include the issue of climate change from a young age, with e.g. projects in schools and internships, to create awareness through means like projects.

Gabriele Casano, PhD student Unige & CIMA Foundation - C.E.S.I.:

Africa is responsible for a very small fraction of carbon fossil emissions, but has to shoulder a disproportionate amount of the consequences of climate change.

Governments really need to understand priorities and climate change is one of them. There also needs to be a balance between externalities and people's needs. Funding actors or institutions who can study climate change might be one of them.

5. Torino joint communique'

Torino Joint Communique'

Following the first edition of the "African European Youth Conference" that took place in Torino, Italy, on Saturday 22 October and Sunday, 23 October 2022

We, the young people from Europe, Africa and the Diaspora, united in the "Youth Core Group", met in Torino (Italy) on the 22nd and 23rd October 2022 to convene the first edition of the African European Youth Conference.

Following the proceedings of the Conference, we hereby decided to issue the following Joint Communique' by declaring what follows:

AU – EU relations

1. To create a road map of all the established tools of cooperation between Africa and the EU, consisting in a clear framework of follow up on the policies and strategies about development and its effects;

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2. Create policies that are carried out by young people in a multicultural and multilevel way in order for the institutions to work side by side with young generations (according to the motto “think globally, act locally”);
 3. Enhance cooperation and coordination among all interested actors (i.e. associations, NGOs and individuals) by creating a funded platform, aimed at connecting Europeans and Africans.

Peace and security

4. The European Union and African Union should have a common policy and a common approach regarding cooperation on security issues, by taking into account the multi-dimensionality of security from the economic, political and social point of view; in this regard, bilateral agreements between States must be avoided;
5. With reference to the above, we call for a better use of the already existing instruments, such as the African Peace and Security Architecture, rather than creating new tools that would bypass the multilateral dimension;
6. We urge for an immediate and systematic inclusion of youth in conflict prevention, peace mediation, peace building, diplomacy efforts, as foreseen by both the UN Resolution 2250 and the EU’s Youth Action Plan; in this regard, we call on creating a youth African - European consultation mechanism on peacebuilding and conflict prevention;
7. We recognise that the root causes of terrorism and violent extremism are linked to the absence of State and related basic services, such as education, employment and the general wellbeing, that create fertile grounds for recruitment of young people by terrorist organisations. We urge, therefore, both the European and the African Union to prioritise these aspects;
8. Furthermore, we call for more investment on prevention and fighting of terrorism by providing more tools to regional institutions, including by training the African forces, providing equipment and exchanging information;

Migration and mobility

9. The European and African Union have to work together to achieve a Schengen-like area for students. Therefore, we urge to create an ad hoc committee to work on a swift and effective establishment of such an area; furthermore, the possibility to obtain the visa should not mostly depend
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on how the economic relations between continents work. Given the current lack of transparency of many European consular representations, we strongly stress the need for clear visa procedures, reactivity and clear and timely answers on visa demands;

10. The mentioned ad hoc committee should be made up of Members of the European and of the Pan - African Parliament in equal proportion, as well as of civil society representatives;

11. We urge to reinforce the existing students', professors' and researchers' exchange programmes by also creating a specific academic visa that should be easily accessible;

12. We have an educational aim to permit to understand that the African and European youth have a lot of common values; therefore, we call on strengthening the European - African social programmes, including promotion of projects as the "Youth Exchange"; in particular, we want to increase integration between the new African and European generations by reinforcing exchanges among youth networks, associations, organisations and platforms;

13. The ad hoc committee suggested above should strongly control the work of Frontex and similar agencies and entities. It should sanction any violations of human rights and monitor the private institutions dealing with migration management, without letting them bypass public authorities;

14. These are only a few examples of the unfair treatments that many youths are facing despite the so-called partnership. There is a need to engage in a partnership of mutual respect;

15. The Commission, furthermore, must work to achieve and overcome the issue of police brutality, without letting private institutions take the responsibility of checking on them;

16. Frontex and other institutions working on the coasts need to be controlled and sanctioned if any right or rule is broken. The European Union must have a common way to integrate migrants, on a multi-national level, assessing all African migrants and asylum seekers as well the possibility to peacefully integrate in case of their migration to Europe, assessing their human rights as happened in and done for Ukraine;

Industrial development and sustainable energy

17. The European Union should strengthen the partnership with the African Union by

operationalizing the Global Gateway;

18. The EU should promote the African Continental Free Trade Area and African monetary union, with particular sensitivity towards economic initiatives that empower African women and youth and create decent job opportunities, thus bringing richness in terms of internal migration and wealth, diversification of regional value chain and global supply chain resilience, in addition to agriculture resilience;

19. The EU and AU should foster infrastructure investment in order to equilibrate the imbalances due to the urbanisation trend in Africa and promote decentralised development as an alternative growth model which considers the development needs of marginalised areas, including through public - private partnerships, to counter the current accumulation of wealth in few richened areas;

20. The trilateral cooperation between the African Union, the European Union and third parties can be a cost effective method to promote sustainable development considering the strengths of each actor and avoiding conflicts;

21. The EU and AU should support local agriculture to reach food sovereignty through low environmental impact production;

22. The UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights enshrined the accountability of companies and investors in African countries that need to be conscious of the growing focus on human rights both on land and at sea. The use of companies' subsidiaries as a corporate veil should not avoid company's accountability for human rights breaches, including the rights of the child, specifically child labour;

23. We call on the EU to promote an effective transfer of technology for the promotion of renewable energy excellency in Africa, with particular focus on solar energy and hydrogen;

24. We urge for an immediate, coordinated and unified reallocation of resources from the General Allocation of Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) through the creation of an ad hoc instrument that would allow for their rechanneling from the EU to AU;

25. The young people from difficult socio-economic backgrounds should receive fixed quotas of microcredits from the public and private institutions of EU and AU to promote their entrepreneurship projects;

Civil society and inclusion, human rights, youth participation and culture

26. We stress the importance of good governance and sound and accountable resource management, including efficient anti corruption policies;

27. We strongly stress the importance of inclusion as a holistic concept that foresees visa facilitations on both sides, participation of people with disabilities, justice for all and urge both AU and EU to setup appropriate frameworks for making inclusion a reality;

in particular, we wish to raise the attention to the diaspora population, that is often facing discriminatory treatment on both sides;

28. We call for a reinforced youth participation in public life and governance. We especially highlight the importance of universal youth participation to elections. We urge, in this context, for an establishment of independent electoral commissions that pay attention to the effective inclusion of young people in the electoral processes; we also call to reinforce the EU initiative for an online youth consultations platform on the African-European partnership;

29. We stress the immediate need to promote and support education at all levels, including the need to enhance social media education to promote inclusion, fight disinformation and hate speech; in this framework, we attach particular importance to education systems that develop critical thinking and value curiosity;

30. We call on the AU and the EU to promote fora for political dialogue among youth; in this framework, we encourage the support to youth platforms as the one originated from the African European Youth Conference;

31. We recognise the importance of culture for self - awareness and urge for a swift restitution of cultural goods;

Climate change

32. In order to contribute meaningfully to the mitigation and adaptation of the effects of climate change and in order to ensure climate justice we believe that the EU and AU should allocate concrete funds to follow up on policy promises. Specifically we propose:

- the allocation of 20 percent of all EU development cooperation funds to projects devoted to fighting climate change and its effects;
 - the creation by the EU and AU of a joint fund to finance African and European private actors engaged on the African continent in the energy transition to green energies.
-

33. The EU and AU should strengthen partnerships for exchange and enrichment of the scientific and academic community in order to enable African universities and institutions to develop their own solutions and knowledge by drawing on European knowledge and practices, without being subjected to them.

34. We believe that as of now the EU and AU should work on a special procedure for "climate refugee" recognition and visa issuance in order to address the phenomenon of forced migration caused by climate change.

We hereby declare to follow up on the content of this Communique' and to transmit it to all the relevant stakeholders for any appropriate action on their side.

The Youth Core Group Torino, 23 October 2022

6. Personal comments

Rok:

What was your favourite moment at the conference/ most memorable moment or a speech that you really liked ?

The Conference was a milestone achievement, and all the content was very valuable, so it is difficult to express a preference for one or the other event. If I need to choose a specific moment, then I would say that my favourite ones were the opening speeches of the young people, because they expressed themselves openly, honestly and wholeheartedly. It was their moment, probably a first of this kind. They earned it with ownership of the Conference and hard work to organise it. They fought for an ideal, they fought for their friends and the team, to accomplish something meaningful together. They will remember it all their lives. This is why it was my favourite moment..

Where do you see the importance of the AEYC?

I see AEYC as a potential start, not as a one shot event. A start of a process, already delineated in the run up to the Conference, of creating a

platform of youth organisations and networks from Africa and Europe (including diaspora associations) able to harmonise and coordinate the existing youth activities, and liaise with other actors, State and non – State ones, for the work on specific dossiers and topics, according to the needs and priorities.

What would you like to critique, where do you see the potential to work more efficiently ?

It is clear that the organisation of such a demanding event cannot be without hiccups. I will not make a critique to this or that organisational aspect that could have gone better (and certainly will go better the next time). Rather, where I see the potential to work more efficiently is in the follow – up to the Torino Joint Communiqué’ , adopted in the wake of the Conference. Its implementation necessarily requires a continuous work both with the African partners on specific strands (such as democracy building, shrinking space for civil society, land grabbing, etc..), and at the level of dialogue with other stakeholders, including institutions, for a meaningful inclusion of youth in decision making processes. I believe this will constitute the next major challenge for the young AEYC organizers and will put in value the acquis of the Conference, if successfully tackled.

Tessy:

What was your favourite moment at the conference/ most memorable moment or a speech that you really liked?

One of my favorite moments was actually at the very end of the first Conference day after the last panel had finished. It was late and everyone was tired, but we still felt that elation that we had actually done it. We experienced many trials and tribulations throughout the day, but thinking about all the obstacles we had successfully overcome together made me very excited about what we could still achieve together, on the following day and way beyond.

Where do you see the importance of the AEYC?

AEYC is so important as it is a pioneer in an entirely volunteered self-organized African-European youth conference. It is a strong sign of

young people coming together across continents and paving their way to the decision-making tables in solidarity with global youth and civil society at large.

What would you like to critique, where do you see the potential to work more efficiently?

We made this conference happen within six months, which took exceptional effort, energy, and time for everyone who was involved. We can and will work more efficiently by starting early and implementing the many lessons learned from organizing the first AEYC.

Lisa:

What was your favourite moment at the conference/ most memorable moment or a speech that you really liked?

I really enjoyed the panel 3, about mobility and migration. In particular, the speech made by the president and by the volunteer of the Baobab experience. It was a powerful moment, because not only generic data and knowledge were provided, but there was also constructive criticism of European and Italian migration policies, a strong, fair, reasoned criticism told through stories of real people.

In addition to greatly appreciating the speeches of the various experts, I was very touched by the opening speeches of the young conference organizers, who passionately emphasized issues suffered by European and African youth, making their voices heard.

Where do you see the importance of the AEYC?

AEYC brought young people from different cities scattered between Europe and Africa to meet, to get to know each other, to dialogue. It was a great opportunity for growth and discussion. I think that "Inclusion" has been the guiding principle of this project, and I believe that the importance of AEYC lies precisely in this, in the inclusion of people, of projects, of dreams that are different from each other but accumulated by the same values of solidarity, freedom and democracy.

What would you like to critique, where do you see the potential to work more efficiently?

In my opinion we would need to improve the participatory aspect of the audience, and it could be done by better managing time and space,

including the virtual one. Having more space for discussion among young people would allow new perspectives to emerge, and potentially new, more representative solutions to different problems.

7. Pictures and Videos

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1mI5EDNOXjWzjVy35YSN86Q8bjaYNJ-lr>

https://drive.google.com/drive/u/6/folders/1f64bA83JpYBI_iLmIWUsVoKZo-6riYe







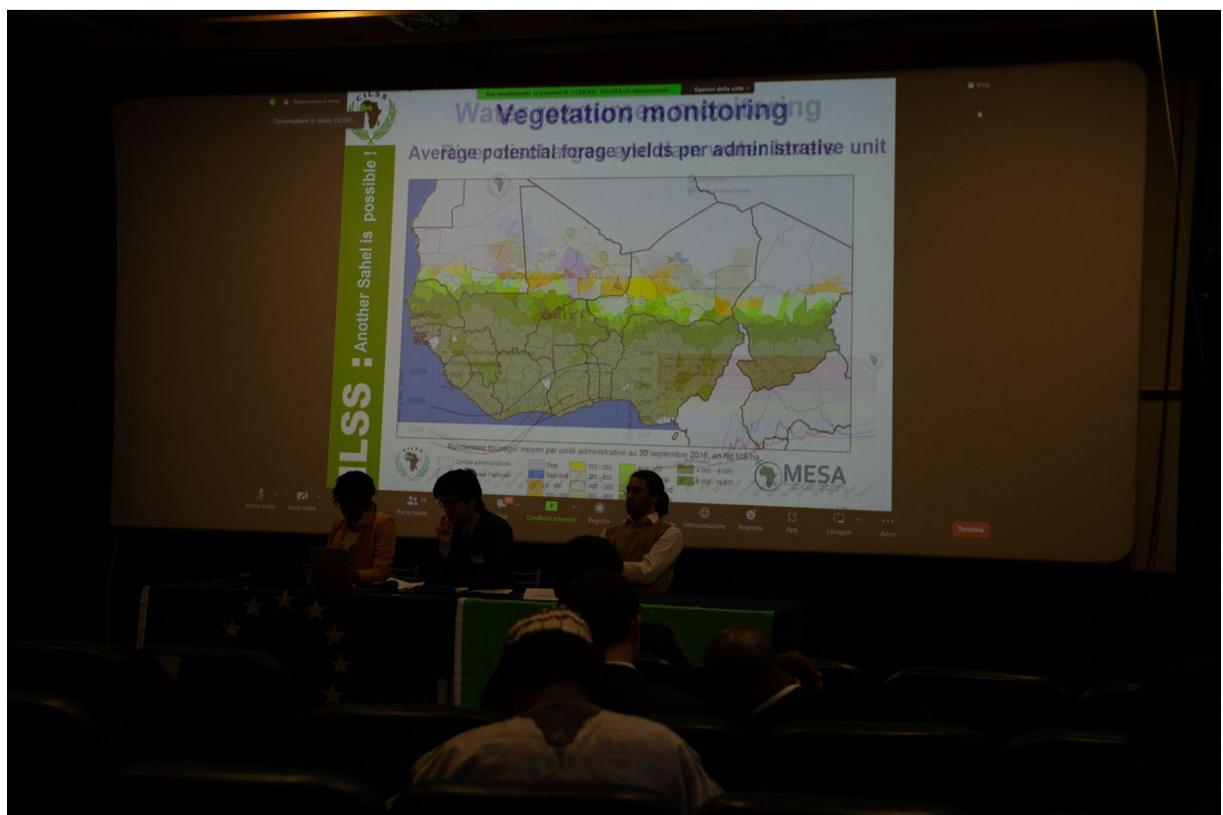














Thank you to all the young people that want to make a positive change in Afro-European relations and their concrete supporters.

Youth Core Group