

an integrated national health policy to address them, including the provision of youth-friendly health services and youth-run information centers.

- 7 Promotion of Human Rights: ensure human rights education and youth involvement in it. To that end, "Human Rights" focal points should be identified in each youth organization, a youth friendly publication on existing youth rights made available and a United Nations Special Rapporteur appointed.

The strongest demand of young people, clearly reflected throughout the Braga Youth Actions, is that they want to be considered as full and equal citizens, as serious and reliable partners in the conception, planning and implementation of policies and programmes in their community and their society in particular, of course, although not exclusively, those specially aimed at youth.

The Braga Youth Action Plan was presented to the United Nations Secretary-General, transmitted to the Ministerial-level Conference in Lisbon and submitted, with the Lisbon Declaration, to the United Nations General Assembly.

The implementation of the recommendation resulting from all the above documents requires that youth should be moved up in national policy agendas and youth issues mainstreamed into all policy making. The search for new directives presupposes:

- listening to young people
- engaging in a dialogue with them
- helping them to organise and frame their demands
- mobilising them as actors in the solution-seeking
- facilitating partnerships with other population age groups, and
- different actors in the public and private sector
- engaging them in the evaluation of given policies, as well as in their follow-up.

**"WE ARE NOT ONLY THE FUTURE, WE ARE ALSO
THE PRESENT!"**

National Consultation on Draft Youth Policy

organized by

**Youth Forum of
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and
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Key Developments on Youth Issues

YOUTH FORUM
CRCP

BRITISH COUNCIL
Pakistan

Key Developments on Youth Issues

I. The World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond

In 1995, at the time of the 10th anniversary of the International Year for youth, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted the *World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond* in order to reinforce action in favour of youth throughout the World.

This programme provides a policy framework and a list of practical recommendations to strengthen national actions and international cooperation in favour of youth. It contains proposals for action until the year 2000 and beyond, and seeks to promote and improve the wellbeing and facilitate the expression of young people. It identifies 10 priority fields, relevant to young people and in which they must be involved.

- 1 Education
- 2 Employment
- 3 Hunger and poverty
- 4 Health
- 5 Environment
- 6 Drug abuse
- 7 Juvenile delinquency
- 8 Leisure-time activities
- 9 Girls and young women
- 10 Full and effective participation of youth in the life of society and in decision-making

At the time of the 28th session of the UNESCO General Conference of November 1995, by resolution 28C/2.10, the Member States took into account this and recommended the adoption of a policy aimed at ensuring “*mutually advantageous participation in the implementation of the actions of the United Nations System for and with youth*”

II. The Lisbon Declaration

The first World Conference of Ministers Responsible for Youth took place in Lisbon, Portugal, at the invitation of the Portuguese government and under the aegis of the United Nations from 8 to 12 August 1998. This conference convened representatives from more than 140 countries, of whom more over than 70 were ministers.

The Lisbon Declaration, adopted on August 12 at the end of the Conference, expresses the commitment of the various governments to strengthen and tailor policy-related initiatives. A certain number of objectives were fixed by this declaration:

- 1 to enhance youth participation in all spheres of society
- 2 to ensure the right to development of all young people
- 3 to strengthen the role of youth in the peace-building process
- 4 to promote education, full employment and health
- 5 to address drug and substance abuse

the Declaration, with its eight chapters and eighty eight paragraphs, comprises seven recommendations of general nature to be translated into operational terms to guide the action of Member States. It is completed by the commitment of governments.

“to foster the further implementation of the World Programme of Action for Youth 2000 and Beyond, with the active participation of youth, ensuring that young people's unique perspective is reflected in our national policies and programmes”

III. The Braga Youth Action Plan

The Third World Youth Forum of the United Nations System was held in Braga, Portugal, from 2 to 7 August, 1999. At the end of five days of intense debate on nine topics, the Braga Youth Action Plan was adopted by over 500 participants, all members of Youth NGOs coming from 140 countries. This document is an expression of the concerns and aspiration of youth and in particular contains, in its introduction, the following declaration: “Young people can and should be part of the solutions to the problems in the world. Everywhere, young people and youth organizations show that they are not obstacles, but invaluable resources for development”

This action plan advocates integrated youth policies which are accorded a legal status, supported by legislative and administrative structures and backed by sufficient resources. The platforms of Youth NGOs are suggested as main interfaces in this effort and formal and informal consultative mechanisms are to be created to facilitate dialogue between government and these platforms. The topics discussed at Braga, and highlighted for their impact on the youth situation,

- 1 Poverty Eradication: establish the impact of the debt crises on young men and young women, aimed to render visible the contribution which youth could bring to the eradication of poverty through strengthened volunteerism
- 2 Participation: promote the participation of all young people, including youth with special needs, indigenous youth, young people living in extreme poverty and those requiring protection from violence, and facilitates the exchange of information and experiences between them.
- 3 Youth NGOs and the United Nations System: encourage a better flow of information, establishment of consultation and coordination mechanisms, and the full and effective participation of Youth NGOs in conferences, commissions, delegations, agencies, programmes and funds of the United Nations System
- 4 Education for the 21st Century: ensure that education be free at all levels and equally accessible to everyone; to this end a World Education Fund under UNESCO coordination should be created. Additionally, ensure the promotion of non-formal education as well as the incorporation of new areas with a view to enhancing employment opportunities
- 5 Employment for Social Development: emphasis programmes for disadvantaged youth and promote youth employment supported by a new integrated system of information exchange between Youth NGOs and the United Nations System which makes full use of modern information technology
- 6 Health and Development: identify the health needs of young people” formulate