

Recommendations of the First Global Youth Forum for a Culture of Lawfulness

Tokyo, 9-10 October 2021

We, representing young people from around the world, participated in the First Global Youth Forum for a Culture of Lawfulness, in Tokyo, Japan, from 9 to 10 October 2021, to share our views, add our voice, and make recommendations for action,

Considering the overall theme of the Forum, “The Role of Youth in Achieving a Diverse and Inclusive Society” and convinced that young people have an essential role to play in achieving such a society, discussed two thematic agenda items: “Reaching the Age of Adulthood and Participation in Society” and “Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in the Post-COVID-19 World – Youth Participation in Achieving an Inclusive Society”,

Recalling that the concept of diversity and inclusion is at the heart of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular its Goal 16, which is an enabler and accelerator of progress on all the other Goals,

Recognizing that the COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant negative impact on youth education, employment, and mental health, that young people and future generations will suffer the most in the long-term socially and economically, and that, while young people are vulnerably affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, they can also play a catalytic role in building back better from the crisis and achieving a diverse and inclusive society,

Deeply appreciating and welcoming the initiative of the Government of Japan to convene the first-ever regular youth forum focusing on the themes around SDG 16, especially the rule of law and a culture of lawfulness, building on the success of the Kyoto Congress Youth Forum and the Kyoto Declaration adopted at the Fourteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice,

Being proud of and valuing a cultural diversity that provides wider perspectives and viewpoints, and appreciating the joint efforts to formulate solutions despite the differences in views and opinions, with the intention of achieving a diverse and inclusive society,

We, the youth, with energy, experience, passion and creativity, hereby recommend the

following to the United Nations Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice for its consideration:

Reaching the Age of Adulthood and Participation in Society

Reaching the age of adulthood

1. Governments should proactively engage with young people around the age of reaching adulthood from the perspective of promoting their participation in society as well as addressing social and cultural difficulties and concerns specific to these ages, and enhance support and care for young people who assume new responsibilities and are exposed to various risks upon reaching the age of adulthood;

Participation in decision-making

2. Governments should promote meaningful youth participation in decision-making in society and consider fostering youth leadership and youth role models, particularly on youth-related policies, including through making decision-making processes more inclusive such as holding town hall meetings, providing education to raise awareness on the importance of civic engagement among young people, and ensuring freedom of speech, including the right to peacefully protest;

Economic engagement in society

3. Governments should engage with relevant sectors to expand opportunities for and access to decent jobs, vocational training, internships with appropriate remuneration, career services and provide incentives to improve youths' skills as well as address discrimination in employment against young people, particularly young women and those with disabilities, LGBTIQ+, recognizing that the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the unemployment of young people, which is one of the major obstacles to promoting their participation in society;

Education and other social services

4. Governments should ensure equal access to quality education, including through scholarships, to provide young people with opportunities to acquire practical experimental experience and social skills, accustomed to needs of our times, such as communication skills, as well as other social services to care for the mental well-being of young people, recognizing that the COVID-19 pandemic has deepened the isolation of young people, thereby making their mental health issues more visible, and highlighting

the importance of connecting with others;

Use of social media

5. Young people should take more advantage of social media as platforms to express their ideas and opinions to a wider audience including the international community while taking steps to increase their understanding and knowledge on the use of appropriate and safe use of such media, including respecting the rights of others as well as the ability to identify and prevent the dissemination of “fake news”;

Better, safe and equal access to the Internet

6. Governments should promote the development of infrastructure in order to provide better, safe and equal access to the Internet for young people regardless of their situations, as well as their ability to use it, bearing in mind that such access is key to enabling young people to connect with the world and broaden their future prospects;

Solidarity in addressing global issues

7. Young people around the world should strengthen solidarity across borders to amplify their voices in order to address the challenges that the people on this planet face today, being aware that they also represent the interests of future generations;

Making youth voices heard

8. Governments, NGOs, and international organizations should take measures to provide more avenues for young people to have their voices heard, such as holding youth forums and youth councils that not only allow young people, regardless of any social identifiers or disabilities, to express their ideas and opinions, but also enable their recommendations to be presented, heard and carefully considered in relevant national and international forums, including the United Nations;

Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in the Post-COVID-19 World – Youth Participation in Achieving an Inclusive Society

Crime prevention and criminal justice policies and practices responding to pressing needs

9. National and local governments should become flexible in adopting crime prevention and criminal justice policies and practices, such as promoting the efforts of cooperating employers and mental counselling, recognizing the pressing needs of those who are in

dire need of support, bearing in mind the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on their educational opportunities, employment and career prospects, relationships with others, and mental health and well-being;

Addressing gender-based and domestic violence

10. National and local governments should explore measures, in cooperation with civil society, to secure shelters and access thereto for victims of gender-based or domestic violence, which have been aggravated during the COVID-19 pandemic, and strengthen cooperation among criminal justice institutions and related agencies to ensure prompt and proper responses to such violence;

Training of officers and staff to support children

11. Governments and international organizations should design appropriate training for officers and staff who interact with children in order to provide timely support to those who are experiencing violence or any form of abuse at home or exposed to such risks;

Supporting initiatives of young people to tackle challenges

12. Governments and international organizations should provide opportunities for young people to interact with governments and support initiatives of young people to tackle crime prevention and criminal justice challenges posed by the socio-economic gap and inequality widened by the COVID-19 pandemic, such as advocating the importance of the rule of law, becoming volunteer mentors or advisors for juveniles, creating media platforms to disseminate the voices of those who are in need of support, and promoting easy and friendly access to legal advice from those in close proximity with young people such as law professors, fellow law students and alumni;

Digital platforms for access to justice

13. Governments and other stakeholders from the private sector, in the context of corporate social responsibility, should consider providing funding on a consistent and sustainable basis to ensure digital platforms to improve access to justice and transparency, with a view to leaving no one behind, noting with concern that multifaceted barriers such as poor infrastructure or unequal affordability have deepened the digital divide amid the COVID-19 pandemic;

Education and awareness-raising for the safe use of ICT

14. Governments should promote efforts in education and curriculum development as

well as awareness-raising for the safe use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), recognizing that it can be used as a tool for easily spreading “fake news”, thereby amplifying prejudice, engaging in bullying and committing bias-motivated crimes, online sexual harassment and exploitation targeting children and youth, online fraud targeting those who are not familiar with such technology, and trafficking of women and children as well as trafficking of drugs;

Capacity building of criminal justice practitioners in tackling cybercrime and promoting youth involvement

15. Governments and international organizations should enhance efforts to build the capacity of criminal justice practitioners in tackling crimes using ICT and consider involving young people to share their knowledge and experience in this regard;

Utilization of ICT to promote crime prevention and social reintegration of offenders

16. Governments should consider taking innovative and creative measures, including for strengthening community networks, by coordinating with relevant sectors and local governments as well as the private sector and civil society, to promote crime prevention and social reintegration of offenders by taking advantage of the advancement of ICTs, such as providing networking opportunities and vocational interventions through social media and other creative media, carrying out web conferences for networking and capacity building, e-learning and virtual job fairs;

Advancing digital skills and connectivity

17. Government and business stakeholders should collaborate more to provide programmes, workshops and training courses on digital literacy skills and affordable connectivity for digitally illiterate young people and other vulnerable members of society as well as those who are at risk and in conflict with law;

Sharing good practices during the COVID-19 pandemic and other international cooperation

18. Governments and international organizations should share good practices and strengthen international cooperation in crime prevention and criminal justice carried out during the COVID-19 pandemic and provide, where appropriate and possible, technical assistance to those governments in need in order to bridge the global gap widened during the period;

Investment in, support for, and partnerships with young people

19. Government and international stakeholders should invest more in youth-led initiatives to create more platforms for young people to speak out and advocate the rule of law, provide more space for life-long learning and more assistance for youth movements in creating impactful projects with extensive financial support, and enhance partnerships with young people, especially in more gender and age sensitive policymaking.