



ماعت للسلام والتنمية وحقوق الإنسان
Maat For Peace, Development, and Human Rights

“From Saying to Doing”

Youth, Peace and Security Agenda & its Application in the Arab Region

With Egypt as a Model



Youth,
Peace &
Security

PREPARED BY: ALI MUHAMMED

EDITED BY: SHERIF ABDUL-HAMID

Introduction

Security Council Resolution No. 2250 represented a fundamental shift with respect to young people as essential actors in the peacebuilding process. It is the first Resolution of its kind issued by the Security Council, in which the Council adopts an approach that enables young people as a major partner in issues of security and peace. The Resolution acknowledged the positive role Youth play in preventing and resolving conflicts, and combating violent extremism that may lead to terrorism. Security Council Resolution No. 2250 was followed by a set of resolutions such as Resolution No. 2419 of 2018 and Resolution No. 2535 of 2020, which constitute the basic building block in the Youth, Peace and Security agenda. We can add to these resolutions a set of relevant studies and guidelines such as the independent study on Youth, Peace and Security, entitled “Lost Peace” and the guiding principles for youth participation in peacebuilding, all constitute the current general framework for the Youth, Peace and Security agenda. However, in any case, in this study we will address Resolution 2250 and refer to the subsequent resolutions based on it, to measure the extent to which the Youth, Peace and Security agenda can be implemented in the Arab region, with Egypt’s implementation of Resolution 2250 as a model.

The adoption of Security Council Resolution No. 2419 of 2018 for emphasizing the need for the meaningful inclusion of youth in peace processes, is consistent with the fourth pillar of Resolution 2250 of 2015. In, 2020 the Security Council adopted Resolution also, which called for taking real steps to activate the Youth, Peace and Security agenda, including a request for the United Nations to improve capacity building and technical guidance related to Youth, Peace and Security.

Resolution 2250 defines “youth” as people in the age group from 18 to 29 years, taking into account differences in the definition of youth at the national and international levels. The United Nations defines youth as people aged 18 to 24 years for statistical purposes, but in any case the United Nations takes into account the different definitions of youth adopted by member states.¹ This report is concerned with the extent to which the Resolution has been implemented in the Arab region, where nearly 60% of the population is under thirty, given the five pillars of Resolution 2250, which are; Participation, protection, prevention, partnerships, demobilization and reintegration. Taking Egypt as a model for implementing an eight-goal roadmap of formulated by Maat, can be implemented in the near future, contributing to the realization of the Youth, Peace and Security agenda. Maat notes, in general, the small number of countries that pledged to develop national action plans to implement the Youth, Peace and Security agenda, compared, for example, to more than 50 countries that pledged to prepare similar plans for the Women, Peace and Security agenda. Maat calls on Arab countries to adopt national action plans to implement the Youth, Peace and Security agenda based on the three Security Council Resolutions outlined in the table below.

¹ <https://bit.ly/34L36Ts> الشباب والسلام والأمن: كتيب إعداد البرامج، تحالف الشباب والسلام والأمن، ص 1، على الرابط التالي:

Agenda 1: Youth, Peace and Security Agenda

Youth, Peace and Security Agenda		
Resolution 2535	Resolution 2419	Resolution 2250
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Developed concrete steps to activate the Youth, Peace and Security agenda, including a request for the United Nations to build capacity and youthful guidance on Youth, Peace and Security; •Emphasized the need to promote an enabling and safe environment for youth working in the field of peace and security; •Urged the parties to the conflict to protect civilians, including youth, in accordance with international law, including the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and their Additional Protocols of 1977; •Acknowledged the importance of exploiting the digital space to participate in dialogue, accountability and transparency, and noted that the Internet can be used to spread misinformation and threaten and attack youth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Came to emphasize the need for the meaningful inclusion of youth in peace processes; •Stressed the role of the right to education in achieving peace and security and developing youth capabilities; •Reaffirmed the need for states to respect human rights, including for all young people within their jurisdiction; •Acknowledge the role of youth in the sovereignty of a culture of peace and dialogue between cultures and religions; •Stressed the importance of developing youth policies that can contribute positively to peace building, including achieving economic and social development; •Called on Member States to take action to encourage youth participation in rebuilding areas devastated by conflict, providing assistance to refugees, internally displaced persons and victims of war, and promoting reconciliation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Resolution 2250 Is a fundamental shift with respect to young people as essential actors in the peacebuilding process and conflict prevention. •It includes five basic pillars, namely participation, protection, inclusion and partnership, and demobilization and reintegration. Activating these pillars may lead to the inclusion and participation of youth in peace building processes. •Called to invest and build the capabilities and skills of young people to meet the requirements of the labor market by providing educational opportunities that encourage the promotion of a culture of peace. •Encouraged Member States to involve local communities and non-state actors in developing strategies to combat extremism that could lead to terrorist operations.

Five Pillars of Security Council Resolution 2250 and the Extent of Implementation in the Arab Region

The Arab region is replete with problems that undermine development and unwise policies that dim the future of these young people. The Arab region suffers from several armed conflicts and external interventions that impede peace building. Young people in the Arab region are not immune to the problems of the societies in which they live, which is reflected in a state of general frustration that pushed the youth away from peace, creating a fertile ground for extremism to penetrate to some of these youths. It made them to join these extremist groups and armed militias, without neither working to promote youth participation at all levels, nor following protective and preventive frameworks that encourages young people in the Arab region to reject extremism and renounce violence. They will proceed in ways that are inconsistent with the Youth, Peace and Security agenda, hindering its full implementation. Adopting approach that increases youth participation in developing, implementation]]n, monitoring and evaluating youth-related laws and policies would lead to significant progress in implementing the pillars of Resolution 2250 and the Youth, Peace and Security agenda in general.

First: participation

Participation is a basic human right, which has had been clearly stressed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. It is an essential pillar of achieving sustainable development goals and a guarantee that no one is left behind, and this principle was reaffirmed in Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security.²

In the Arab region, there are negligible legal obstacles to the political and institutional participation of young people. Voting age in most Arab countries is 18 years, and the average age of eligibility to run in parliamentary and legislative elections is 26 years.³ However, in light of the availability of legal frameworks that do not impede the political participation of young people, the Arab region records low rates of youth participation in policy-making, participation in decision-making circles, and parliamentary representation⁴. It seems that the reluctance to participate in politics is a shared responsibility by youth and governments. Young people are frustrated with the outcomes of the political process in the Arab region, and are regarded not serious about participating in the formulation of public policies, and this requires changing the culture of stereotypes. Maat, therefore, shares the opinion of the Secretary-General of the United Nations that the marginalization of youth leads to mistrust and frustration, and contributes to insecurity at the national, regional and international levels. Besides, extremist groups may exploit the frustration and anger resulting from the youth exclusion and recruit more young people.⁵

² القرار 2250، ص 4، على الرابط التالي: <https://bit.ly/34Kzwhc>

³ مكتب تقرير التنمية البشرية في المنطقة العربية، ص 145، على الرابط التالي: <https://bit.ly/3JdUcwS>

⁴ Regional Interventions Action Plan for Arab States 2018 – 2021, United Nations Population Fund, Page 4, Available at the following link: <https://bit.ly/3oB8jLi>

⁵ Youth and peace and security Report of the Secretary-General, Available at the following link: <https://bit.ly/3ryz3aF>

Maat noted some good practices in the context of youth political participation. In Kuwait, for example, 30 members under the age of 45 took seats in the 50-member Kuwaiti National Assembly.⁶ In Oman, the 36-year-old Bin Hilal al-Ma'awil chaired the Shura Council⁷. In Tunisia, young people won about 23% seats in parliament⁸, although the measures initiated by Tunisian President Qais Saeed to freeze the parliament's work in July 2021, based on the text of Article 80 of the Constitution, have limited political gains that the youth obtained.⁹

As for participation in the peace negotiations, Maat noted that peace negotiations are limited to the parties to war and armed conflict and the exclusion of youth, which may not contribute to achieving peace in the end. Young people, in contrast to the parties to the conflict, are not bound by political agendas, and seek to heal the wounds of politics and promote peace-building processes. In Libya, a youth initiative called "Together We Build It" led the way to preventing the monopoly of participation in peace negotiations by older men in negotiations aimed at concluding sustainable peace agreements or even temporary agreements. This initiative highlighted the stereotypes that prevent women's involvement in peace negotiations, which can be widely circulated in the majority of countries suffering from armed conflict.¹⁰ Enhancing the participation of young people, especially young women, at the negotiating table is a key part of achieving sustainable development goals and building secure societies in order to achieve lasting peace, whether in their countries or conflict areas, which aims to achieve the objectives of the SDG 16 on justice, peace and strong institutions.

Maat noted that armed conflicts often affect the empowerment of young people in the Arab region, and encourage structural barriers that pose a stumbling block for their participation in decision-making places or in the public policy-making process. For example, in Yemen, the outputs of the Comprehensive National Dialogue Conference (NDC) in which all parties to conflict participated in, provided for the representation of youth by 20% in all state bodies¹¹, which is has not yet been achieved. The unrecognized Salvation Government in Sana'a is devoid of any youth component according to the United Nations definitions for this age group. Likewise, the internationally recognized Yemeni government, which was formed based on the 2019 Riyadh Agreement¹² between it and the Southern Transitional Council in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, devoid of youth and women representation alike.¹³ The adoption of specific quotas for young people in the laws of parliament and local administration would enhance their participation in the

⁶ الأغلبية للشباب في برلمان الكويت الجديد، الرؤية، 6 ديسمبر 2020، على الرابط التالي: <https://bit.ly/3gxX2kb>

⁷ Youth participation in national parliaments, Inter-Parliamentary Union, Page 32, Available at the following link: <https://bit.ly/3HEX1qh>

⁸ ارتفاع نسبة الشباب في البرلمان التونسي، قناة الحرية، 20 نوفمبر 2019، على الرابط التالي: <https://bit.ly/3oExhmf>

⁹ تونس: قيس سعّيد يمدد قرار تعليق عمل البرلمان "حتى إشعار آخر"، فرنسا 24، 24 أغسطس 2021، على الرابط التالي: <https://bit.ly/3oBoPEI>

¹⁰ End the Monopoly on "Peace", together we built, Available at the following link: <https://togetherwebuildit.org/end-the-monopoly-on-peace/>

¹¹ وثيقة الحوار الوطني الشامل، ص 149، على الرابط التالي: <https://bit.ly/3ujsAM3>

¹² نص اتفاق الرياض كاملاً بين الحكومة اليمنية الشرعية والمجلس الانتقالي، متاح على الرابط التالي: <https://bit.ly/3gE3eqC>

¹³ المرأة اليمنية.. الهامش المحذوف من حكومة المناصفة، هودج، على الرابط التالي: <https://bit.ly/3suesUi>

political and decision-making process, and this measure would push towards achieving the pillar of participation in Security Council Resolution 2250.

Second: protection

Youth protection is an essential pillar of Security Council Resolution No. 2250, in accordance with the principles and provisions of international human rights law, ensuring the rule of law and achieving sustainable development goals. Maat notes the shortcomings of protection mechanisms for young people from vulnerable groups in the Arab region, especially refugees, migrants, journalists in conflict areas and young women.

1. Young immigrant

Migrant youth, like adults, suffer from a lack of protection mechanisms. Migrant workers' access to justice in countries of destination faces structural obstacles that worsen their chances of obtaining effective remedies, or obtaining adequate and prompt reparation for the harm they have suffered, as identified by the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants. These obstacles include the failure to investigate complaints submitted by migrant workers about their exposure to human rights violations, including complaints of delays in receiving their due wages, complaints related to the seizure of passports and identity cards and the threat of forced deportation to countries of origin, in addition to the lengthy procedures and intransigence in paying compensation even after obtaining court rulings.¹⁴ In addition to the imposition of fees for filing complaints, which forces some workers in many cases to turn a blind eye to violations and refuse to file complaints in the first place, which undermines the rule of law and the achievement of justice. These obstacles undermine the implementation of the pillar of protection in Resolution 2250, making its achievement an unattainable goal, which calls for reconsideration by governments to deal with immigrants in a holistic manner.

2. Journalists in conflict zones

Young journalists in areas of armed conflict are subjected to a range of restrictions and abusive practices that are entirely inconsistent with the protection mechanisms offered to journalists under international human rights and humanitarian law, including the United Nations Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and Combating Impunity. This contradicts the three Resolutions subject of the report, including Resolution 2250, which stressed the adoption of a human rights-based approach that respects the rights of civilians in compliance with international law, including the four Geneva Conventions and their protocols, which has not been achieved. In Yemen, for example, four journalists have been languishing on death row, waiting for their sentences issued by the Specialized Criminal Court in Sana'a to be carried out, they are the two journalists Abdul-Khaleq Omran (35 years old), Akram Al-Walidi (31 years old), Harith Hamid (29 years old), and Tawfiq Al-Mansoori (34 years old). The Houthis did not respond to the appeals of international

¹⁴ عمل دائم بدون أجر: نضال العمال الأجانب في قطر من أجل العدالة، منظمة العفو الدولية، ص 11، على الرابط التالي: [https://www.amnesty.org/en/wp-](https://www.amnesty.org/en/wp-content/uploads/sites/9/2021/05/MDE2207932019ARABIC.pdf)

organizations and civil society organizations that called on them to abolish the death sentences against journalists who were detained on trumped-up charges, according to the allegations of these journalists' lawyers, in flagrant contradiction to the United Nations plan on the safety of journalists and the issue of impunity.

In an extrajudicial killing, two young journalists, Mahmoud al-Otmi, and his wife, journalist Rasha al-Harazi, were subjected to an assassination attempt that led to the killing of the wife along with her unborn baby. Her husband was seriously injured, and was transferred to the German International Hospital of Aden in Aden Governorate, where he was found suffering from shrapnel in his back, fractured bones and damage to an eye. Journalists continue to suffer and receive threats for their peaceful work, in light of absence of any protective tools that would ensure their safety. These practices violate what was called for in Security Council Resolution 2250 that parties to the conflict should provide protection to civilians, including youth, in conflict areas. It can be said that this pillar of protection is still not achieved in the Arab region, and specifically in the areas of armed conflict. Investigation in cases of threats and intimidations to which young men are exposed is almost nonexistent, which exacerbates violence against young people and contribute to widening the gap between them and their communities.

3. Young women on the internet

Women, especially young women, are exposed to many risks due to their ignorance of using the Internet and the ways to report violence that they are exposed to on the virtual world. In the Arab region, 49% of young women who use the Internet confirmed that they do not feel safe from online harassment, according to the report of the United Nations Women's Organization entitled "Violence against Women in the Digital Space: Insights from a Multi-Country Study in the Arab Countries." The report indicated that "36% of Arab women who have been subjected to electronic violence advised to ignore the incident, while 23% of them were blamed, and 21% of them reported deleting their social media accounts."¹⁵ This confirms the existence of shortcomings in the protection mechanisms provided for women in the digital space, which calls for reconsidering the activation of these mechanisms, whether at the level of law or in practice.

Third: prevention

Youth, Peace and Security Agenda, including Resolution 2250, calls on stakeholders to consider creating mechanisms to promote a culture of peace, tolerance as well as intercultural and interreligious dialogue, as a proactive measure that prevents youth from engaging in violent activities, adopting extremist thoughts and the prevalence of hate speech. The establishment of these mechanisms is also provided for in the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

Nevertheless, Maat noted that the call for the establishment of these mechanisms has been stagnant, and has not gone beyond being mere calls for which no executive decisions were issued.

¹⁵ Violence against women in the online space: insights from a multi-country study in the Arab States, UN Women, November 2021, Available at the following link: <https://bit.ly/3GDryDB>

In Egypt, for example, despite the Egyptian Constitution's call for equality in Article 53 In rights, freedoms and public duties, and prohibits discrimination on the basis of religion, ideology, sex, origin, race, color, language, disability, social level, political affiliation, geography, among other variables, and considers discrimination and incitement to hatred a crime punishable by law, and despite the last paragraph of the aforementioned article provided for the establishment of an independent anti-discrimination commission to put the text of the article in practice. However, the establishment of the anti-discrimination commission did not occur until writing this report.

Some draft laws were submitted by civil society organizations to establish the commission, such as the proposal for a "draft law for the Commission to Combat All Forms of Discrimination" presented by the Women's Issues Support Center within the framework of a more justice project for Muslim and Christian women.¹⁶ Maat had called in previous publications to speed up the pace of work for the establishment of the commission. In Lebanon, a plan was drawn up based on promoting intercultural dialogue through building the capacities of students and schools to achieve reconciliation among youth in an atmosphere characterized by violence and conflict.¹⁷ However, it was still an incomplete plan and did not implement the Youth, Peace and Security agenda, and Resolution No. 106/67 adopted by the United Nations General Assembly.¹⁸

Prevention efforts in the Arab region must focus on steps, including;

- Refining the local legislative framework and passing laws to combat hate speech;
- Creating a partnership-based mechanism among stakeholders, including civil society, that widens youth participation in efforts to curb violent extremism;
- Shifting from "saying to doing" and translating the pillars of Resolution 2250 of the Security Council into the general policies of Arab countries and in the national legislative framework.

Fourth: Partnerships

The establishment of partnerships is of particular importance in the context of the implementation of basic human rights, and partnerships. The fourth pillar of Resolution 2250 emphasizes the importance of these partnerships in the Youth, Peace and Security agenda. It represents the establishment of new partnerships and the strengthening of existing ones with youth and giving priority to partnerships with Youth organizations, networks and initiatives is an astonishing development that may lead us to make progress on the Youth, Peace and Security agenda.

But these aspirations should be supported by effective policies, which are far from reality at the present time, especially with regard to establishing partnerships with youth organizations, where youth-led organizations operate with very little funding, as about 49% of these organizations operate with less than \$5,000 annually. And only about 11% work on more than

¹⁶ مشروع قانون مفوضية مكافحة كافة أشكال التمييز، منشورات قانونية، على الرابط التالي: <https://bit.ly/3nzHYGZ>

¹⁷ Follow-up to the Declaration and Program of Action on a Culture of Peace, Para 20, Page 8, Available at the following link: <https://undocs.org/A/68/2.16>

¹⁸ Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 17 December 2012, Available at the following link: <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/67/106>

100,000 US dollars.¹⁹ It seems that this is far from what was called for by Resolution 2250, which urged Member States to increase their financial, technical and logistical support that takes into account the needs of young people and urges them to participate in building peace in conflict and post-conflict periods.

In addition to limited funding and meager access to resources, youth-led organizations need training and capacity building to monitor and evaluate their work in order to maintain the sustainability of these organizations. Youth-led organizations have also expressed the need to establish and expand relationships, partnerships, and exposure to regional and international platforms to enhance their skills, build networks, and share best practices and lessons learned, which may enrich the work of these youth organizations in the Arab region.

In addition to the member states and international organizations reduce of funding provided for youth organizations, youth organizations also have a special responsibility in the limited funding provided to them due to a set of obstacles, including;

- The decrease in the number of employees and youth volunteers in some of these organizations and the lack of knowledge of the nature of donors, in addition to working in contexts where funding is limited.²⁰
- Shortcomings in the formulation of proposals for receiving funding, for example, according to many youth organizations, proposals for receiving funding is the most difficult challenge they face when requesting funding. Reports explained that this is due to the technical language used in requests for proposals, and perhaps the most difficult aspect when writing the proposal is to set the budget, especially with regard to youth organizations that have not managed funds before.²¹
- Some youth organizations work on the ground with local communities, and see that they do not need a website or social networking sites, however, this can provide an obstacle when these organizations try to obtain funding, as potential donors and partners cannot find these institutions in the electronic space,²² and the presence of a website and social media for these organizations is one of the indicators of achieving the principle of transparency and disclosure, the most important principles of governance of civil society organizations according to the United Nations Development Program.
- A range of donors are asking organizations to submit technical reports that appear to be very challenging. These include semi-annual and annual reports, regular financial reports, and audit reports, and to work with monitoring and evaluation frameworks that use technical language that does not match the expertise of the staff of these organizations.

¹⁹ Mapping a Sector: Bridging the Evidence Gap on Youth-Driven Peacebuilding, United Network of Youth, Available at the following link: <https://bit.ly/3gyBUdI>

²⁰ Investing in Youth Impact, CHOICE for Youth and Sexuality, Page 30, Available at the following link <https://bit.ly/35QInhE>

²¹ Ibid

²² Ibid

Youth organizations may feel an additional burden to meet these requirements, and often these organizations do not have the capacity to provide in-depth reports on their work.²³

- The lack of volunteering culture in the Arab region. Only 9% of the 15-29 age group volunteer with organizations, compared to 14% in Sub-Saharan Africa, the latter of which is ranked as one of the regions with the lowest rates of volunteering for youth.²⁴

Fifth: Demobilization & Reintegration

Demobilization and reintegration is the fifth pillar of Resolution 2250 of the Security Council on Youth, Peace and Security. It urges all actors to develop plans for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, and this Resolution specifically concerns young people who have joined terrorist groups, and the need to include them in any steps that would sustain peace and lay down arms.

In the Arab region, this pillar is of particular importance, especially in limiting the prevention of young people from returning to armed and extremist groups again, by strengthening efforts aimed at addressing the aspirations of these young people who previously joined armed groups. The Libyan Program for Integration and Development is a good example of this. When Libya launched what is known as the "Plan for Returning to Life", it included, among other things; training and integrating Libyan youth into development projects after disarming the militias who were involved in joining them. The Libyan Ministry of Labor is tasked with implementing the integration plan within the "DDR Disarmament, Demobilization, Reintegration" project, which means "disarmament, demobilization and reintegration", meaning the rehabilitation of young people who have joined armed militias by training them and integrating them in factories, companies, and small and medium projects. However, the progress made by this plan is still limited and did not exceed a few young people who were reintegrated into the labor market, and there is still an urgent need to continue efforts to demobilize and reintegrate these young people into the labor market. In Sudan, African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), in cooperation with the Sudan Disarmament Commission and the United Nations Development Program, supported the demobilization and reintegration process of about 500 young fighters, including 85 women, most of whom are fighters from the eleven armed movements that signed agreements Peace in Darfur, as well as from the Sudanese Armed Forces,²⁵ and more programs and projects that are adopted by United Nations bodies and agencies with the help of Arab countries experiencing a state of armed conflict to contribute to more integration processes for young people in this region and to rehabilitate them again.

²³ Ibid, Page 32

²⁴ مصدر سبق ذكره، ص 145، على الرابط التالي: <https://bit.ly/3JfejuK>

²⁵ UNAMID supports demobilization of former combatants in North Darfur, UNAMID, 11 Jan 2018, <https://bit.ly/3gB68N2>

An eight-goal roadmap based on the Youth, Peace and Security agenda to enhance the role of youth in Egypt

Maat presents a roadmap with eight goals that has been formulating recently. Perhaps these eight goals, which are based on the pillars of Resolution 2250 of the Security Council, will contribute to achieving the Youth, Peace and Security agenda.

The first goal: increasing the rate of public participation of young people in the political process and in the state's administrative apparatus

In Egypt, there are about 60 elected representatives in the two chambers of the Egyptian parliament who are less than 35 years old, which is still low²⁶ and represents about 7.8% of the members of the Egyptian Parliament without regard to the appointments of the Egyptian president, who is allowed by law to appoint no less than 5% in the House of Representatives and about 30 % of the members of the Shura Council. The law allows those who are 25 years old when opening the door for candidacy to run in parliamentary elections, but the percentage of those in the age group from 25 to 29 years old, which is the youth category, according to the definition of youth adopted by Egypt does not exceed 2%, according to the Union's statistics International Parliament.

At the level of youth representation in the state's administrative apparatus and in decision-making centers, there are no statistics available, which calls for the state to provide data on youth representation in decision-making centers and in leadership positions. The National Youth Academy, which was established based on Presidential Decree No. 434/ 2017 to qualify youth leaders to enter decision-making centers and the state's administrative apparatus in order to achieve the pillars of Resolution 2250 and the Youth, Peace and Security agenda. The meaningful participation of youth is an integral part of any human development plan in its broad sense.

Suggested Action

1. Amending Article 5 of the Law on the Exercise of Political Rights and Parliament Law No. 46 of 2014 amended by Law No. 140 of 2020, increasing the quota for youth in electoral districts, which amounts to 16 seats out of a total of 568;
2. The necessity of making available data related to youth representation in the state's administrative apparatus and in leadership positions.

The second objective: Conducting local council elections, including allocating 25% of the seats in these councils for youth

Local councils aim to bring the central authority closer to the popular base and enable citizens to participate effectively in decision-making that may be reflected in their daily lives, according to the Human Rights Council's advisory group. Article 180 of the Egyptian constitution stipulates that "each local unit shall elect a council by direct secret public suffrage, for a period of four years," with at least a quarter of the number of seats allocated to youth under 35 years of

²⁶ أعضاء مجلس النواب: نسبة الشباب داخل البرلمان غير مسبوقه، أخبار اليوم، 12 أغسطس 2021، على الرابط التالي: <https://bit.ly/3LnK46u>

age. This article referred the organization of these elections to the law, however, despite the approval of the constitution in 2014 and in 2019, local administration law continues to exist in the Egyptian parliament. Issuing the law will emphasize strengthening the participation of young people in public and political life, in line with the first pillar related to ensuring the participation of young people In Security Council Resolution No. 2250, which gives the state, by extension, the ability to overcome the challenge set by the National Human Rights Strategy, which was among the challenges mentioned in the third axis of the strategy, the sub-item on youth, related to the need to enhance the political and societal participation of youth as stipulated in the constitution.

Suggested Action

1. Issuing the local administration law and stipulating the percentage of youth representation mentioned in the constitution. The law must clearly stipulate the organization, powers, and jobs. National legislation should also clearly define the responsibilities and powers of central and local government authorities in relation to each other.

Third Objective: Protecting young refugees and asylum seekers in Egypt

A huge number of refugees, whose number, according to Egyptian official statistics, is about 6 million, 40% of them are young people, have been forced to seek refuge in Egypt recently, due to the spread of violence and armed conflict in their countries. These refugees seek protection in the countries of destination, after they lost it in their own countries. The provision of social protection for these refugees, whether at the level of health and education services, would create more stability in society, and contribute to a reasonable extent in achieving the pillar of protection for all contained in Security Council Resolution No. 2250, as it is an indispensable pillar of the Youth, Peace and Security agenda.

Suggested Action

1. Continuing the efforts made by the Egyptian government to include refugees, especially the youth category, with economic and social rights.

Fourth goal: protect young people outside the education and employment sector by integrating them into the labor market

The Human Development Report in Egypt for the year 2021 “Development is a right for all” issued by the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development in cooperation with the United Nations Development Program recognized that there is a group of young people who lacks evidence of their needs in the labor market,²⁷ and it is important to note that those outside the education sector are not small, and this category is excluded from the labor market, which is reflected in the increase in their poverty, and their stay for long periods of time unemployed limits their participation in the labor market. The report, similar to other international experiences,

²⁷ تقرير التنمية البشرية في مصر: التنمية المسيرة والمسار، وزارة التخطيط والتنمية الاقتصادية بالتعاون مع برنامج الأمم المتحدة الإنمائي، سبتمبر 2021، ص 128، على الرابط التالي:

<https://bit.ly/3f8QE1>

suggested that the Egyptian government support the private sector with a portion of the wages for training this category for a specific period of time in order to motivate the private sector to operate this category and rely on them later.

Suggested Action

1. The inclusion of the new labor law, which is being discussed in the Egyptian parliament, with provisions to support this category of uneducated and unemployed youth

Fifth Objective: Incorporating the Human Fraternity Document and the United Nations Action Plans calling for the prevention of violence and combating hate speech in higher education curricula

Education represents a highly effective preventive and protective tool in limiting the involvement of young people in violent extremism and recruitment. Some people argue that there are educated terrorists, but this cannot be generalized or viewed as a rule. Therefore, Maat shares the Secretary-General of the United Nations the opinion that education is an effective social engine towards peace and resistance of extremist ideas.²⁸ Therefore, incorporating the principles of the Human Fraternity Document and United Nations action plans, especially the United Nations plan to prevent incitement to violence, into global education curricula in Egypt, would contribute to widening university youth's horizons, and thus encourage peaceful coexistence and renounce of extremism.

Suggested Action

1. An executive decision was issued by the Minister of Higher Education to integrate the Human Fraternity Document and the United Nations plans calling for the renunciation of violence and the rule of dialogue in university education curricula.

Sixth Objective: Preparing a national action plan on the implementation of Security Council Resolution No. 2250

Despite the adoption of Resolution 2250, which represented a fundamental change in the perception of youth as an actor in peacebuilding by the Security Council more than six years ago, awareness of the five pillars of the Resolution is still little in the Arab world, and Egypt is not an exclusion. Therefore, initiating consultations to prepare a national action plan based on the Youth, Peace and Security agenda, beginning with Resolution 2250, would indicate Egypt's position of integrating the pillars of the decision into the state's public policies, legislation and local laws. Hence, defining the priorities of this plan based on the pillars included in the Resolution: participation, protection; protection; Partnership, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, It would be a positive sign in the context of publicizing and implementing this Resolution in a sustainable manner. The Finnish action plan represents a model that Egypt can follow in implementing Security Council Resolution No. 2250.²⁹

²⁸ Youth and peace and security Report of the Secretary-General, Para 38, Page 8, Available at the following link: <https://bit.ly/3ryz3aF>

²⁹ Youth, Peace and Security: Finland's National Action Plan 2021–2024, <https://bit.ly/34Pm1wl>

Suggested Action

1. Initiating the preparation of a national action plan for Youth, Peace and Security, following a participatory approach through which work is coordinated, efforts are mobilized, and all stakeholders are involved in formulating this plan and contribute to its implementation whenever possible.

Seventh Objective: Support the establishment and reconciliation of youth organizations and initiatives, especially those working to build peace

Egypt has made progress in regulating civil work in accordance with Law No. 149 of 2019 and the executive regulations of the law. The law came after pressure and discussions by civil society organizations that expressed their objection to Law No. 70 of 2017, due to its unprecedented restrictions on civil work in Egypt. In response to these demands to repeal Law No. 70 of 2017, President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi responded to the demands of civil society, and called for opening a societal dialogue to reconsider the law, in which representatives of non-governmental organizations, NGOs and youth participated. The dialogue ended with the issuance of Law No. 149 of 2019 and the executive regulations of the law, which was in line with the constitutional text, and the new law represented the beginning of a true partnership between the state and civil society and included a range of advantages that may help civil society organizations push towards achieving sustainable development goals in partnership with the state to respect and improve human rights.

However, Maat notes the bureaucratic restrictions imposed by the administrative authority on the registration of youth organizations and the lack of awareness of registration methods and the reconciliation of conditions in accordance with Law 149 of 2019, especially in the regions. Maat hopes that the decision to extend the regularization of the status of NGOs, which was approved by the Council of Ministers on January 19, 2022 to become January 11, 2023 the last period to reconcile the status of NGOs, will be an opportunity to establish more youth organizations and reconcile the status of the existing ones.³⁰

The national strategy for civil society organizations to be issued should include an emphasis on partnership between the state and civil society organizations in general and between the state and youth organizations in particular.

Suggested Action

1. The Ministry of Social Solidarity launched campaigns to build capacities and educate leaders of youth initiatives and organizations on how to reconcile the situation and encourage the Ministry for youth to move forward in establishing youth organizations
2. The national strategy for civil society organizations to be issued must include an emphasis on partnership between the state and civil society organizations in general and between the state and youth organizations in particular.

³⁰ مجلس الوزراء يوافق على مد فترة توفيق أوضاع منظمات المجتمع الأهلي لمدة عام، اللجنة العليا لحقوق الإنسان، 19 يناير 2022، على الرابط التالي: <https://bit.ly/3GMwSF2>

Goal 8: Creating opportunities for sustainable communication between youth, political leaders and decision-makers in Egypt

Youth forums and conferences provide a favorable opportunity for networking between youth and government leaders. The sustainability of these events can strengthen the partnership between youth and executive officials. These forums allow government leaders to closely understand the obstacles facing youth and consider solutions to these obstacles. The National Youth Conference, which first edition was launched in 2016, represented a model that could be followed in this context,³¹ and the eighth and final edition of the National Youth Conference was held on September 19, 2019, before the Coronavirus pandemic and since then the conference has not been held.³² These conferences are of great importance in opening bridges of communication between young people in Egypt and political leaders. These conferences resulted in a number of recommendations related to youth, which the Egyptian state responded to a number of, including a recommendation to release a number of young people from prisons and to pardon groups of young people who were imprisoned due to participation in demonstration, public opinion, and expression, but they were not convicted of violent acts.³³ Based on this recommendation, a presidential pardon committee was formed to release a large number of young people.³⁴

Suggested Action

1. Resuming the holding of the National Youth Conference and implementing the previous recommendations issued by it.

Recommendations

Finally, Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights recommends the following:

- Governments, with the support of international partners, should find ways to promote youth-related issues, particularly in political participation, decision-making positions and representation in national parliaments;
- Taking specific steps to improve education, tackle unemployment, and address other issues of concern to young people, both at the level of law and in practice;
- Member states should increase the funding allocated to the implementation of the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda, in particular supporting the access of youth organizations to more additional resources;
- The necessity of adequate representation of youth in conflict areas in the Arab countries in peace negotiations;

³¹ المؤتمر الدوري الأول للشباب، رئاسة الجمهورية، 10 ديسمبر 2016، على الرابط التالي: <https://bit.ly/3rFWnDF>

³² المؤتمر الوطني للشباب.. منصة الرئيس السيسي لتمكين قادة المستقبل، أخبار اليوم، 12 أغسطس 2021، على الرابط التالي: <https://bit.ly/3JeGDxa>

³³ لم يتركوا أعمال عنف أو إرهاب.. تفاصيل عمل لجنة العفو الرئاسي عن الشباب المسجونين، صدي البلد، 12 أغسطس 2021، على الرابط التالي: <https://bit.ly/3rGUGG4>

³⁴ العفو الرئاسي عن شباب قضايا الرأي، الهيئة العامة للإستعلامات، 15 مارس 2017، على الرابط التالي: <https://bit.ly/34OVqzB>

- The need for governments to develop plans to adopt specific quotas for young people in the laws of parliaments and local administration in a way that enhances their political participation;
- The necessity of encouraging Arab governments to establish platforms for consultation between executive leaders and youth organizations.