



World Federation of United Nations Associations

Ms. Nathalie Prouvez  
Chief  
Rule of Law and Democracy Section  
United Nations Office of the High Commissioner  
Palais Wilson  
52 rue des Pâquis  
CH-1201 Geneva, Switzerland

**RE: Input on Forum on Human Rights, Democracy and Rule of Law**

15 July, 2016

Dear Ms. Prouvez,

WFUNA welcomes the decision of the Human Rights Council to establish a forum on human rights, democracy and the rule of law under resolution 28/14, adopted on 26 March 2015. We particularly welcome the decision on the theme of the first session “Widening the Democratic Space: the role of youth in public-decision making”. Increasing youth participation in public decision-making is a strategic priority of our organization as reflected in our strategic plan. WFUNA, through its capacity-building programs and worldwide network, works constantly to increase the voice of youth in international decision-making. On the occasion of this Forum, organized under the framework of the UN Human Rights Council, we would like to submit the following recommendations:

On youth participation at the United Nations

Existing mechanisms for youth participation at the United Nations are weak at best. The UN Youth Delegate Programme, which allows youth delegates to attend the UN General Assembly with their national delegations, only includes approximately 25 member states out of 193. The Major Group of Children & Youth, established as a follow-up to Agenda 21, is a further mechanism for youth participation that focuses mainly on sustainable development processes. In the last few years several UN Agencies have created youth participation structures with varying success. To date, the UN Human Rights Council does not have an official mechanism for youth participation.

It is imperative that we move away from the approach where young people are given the opportunity to only speak on youth issues. Bringing youth perspectives to a different range of issues on the UN’s agenda not only ensures

**WFUNA**  
1 United Nations Plaza  
Room 1177  
New York NY 10017 USA  
+1 212 963 5610

**FMANU**  
Palais des Nations  
Room E4-2A  
1211 Geneva 10,  
Switzerland  
+ 41 22 917 3239

**WFUNA**  
121, Seoul Global Center Building  
38 Jong-no (Seorin-dong)  
Jongno-gu  
Seoul, Republic of Korea  
+82 2 6925 2695

**WFUNA**  
Rue Montoyer 14  
Bruxelles—1000  
Belgium

[info@wfuna.org](mailto:info@wfuna.org)  
[WWW.WFUNA.ORG](http://WWW.WFUNA.ORG)

legitimacy to these processes but also guarantees a better chance of success during policy implementation. Against this background, we would like to suggest the institutionalization of a mechanism for youth participation at the UN Human Rights Council. This mechanism could mirror the UN Youth Delegate Programme whereby youth representatives would be able to participate with their countries' delegation during the different sessions of the UN Human Rights Council.

WFUNA stands ready to support any efforts made by the UN Human Rights Council to engage youth substantially and meaningfully.

On youth participation at the Forum

In our view, for a Forum focusing on the role of youth in public decision making to be successful, it should include youth in its organization. A strong focus should be placed on giving space to global young voices, with gender and geographical balance, to reflect on the role of young people in decision-making at the international, national and local level. Additionally, while the Forum functions as a vital space for discussion and exchange of views, it should go further by offering concrete recommendations for member states on how to improve the status of youth participation at the international, national and local level.

Again, we welcome the decision to establish this Forum and we welcome all efforts by the UN Human Rights Council to strengthen youth participation. We will strive to contribute to the success of the Forum and look forward to our continued cooperation.

Yours Sincerely,



Bonian Golmohammadi  
Secretary-General