

THE UN AGENDA 2030 FOR YOUTH: A PATH TO DISARMAMENT, PEACE, AND DEVELOPMENT

Sarah Elizabeth Anderson and James Alexander Thompson

Founders and Chair of the Dialogue on South Sudan and Sudan Forum in Canada and Panelist for the Prairie Research Associates (PRA)

Abstract: The UN Agenda 2030 for Youth represents a visionary initiative that underscores the vital role of young people across various sectors of society. It serves as a powerful catalyst, encouraging youth to actively engage in conversations addressing critical global issues, notably disarmament. The primary objective of this agenda is to advocate for disarmament and foster an environment conducive to peace, security, and development. Achieving these objectives necessitates a collective effort, collaboration, and cooperation among nations to secure a promising future for the world's youth.

Disarmament efforts are a strategic investment in the realization of the UN Agenda 2030 for Youth, which aims to empower young individuals to become productive and responsible members of their communities and nations. This paper delineates a practical roadmap for implementing disarmament initiatives, thereby reshaping the trajectory of young people's lives on a global scale.

The paper is structured as follows:

Youths and Disarmament in a Nuclearized World: This section sheds light on the critical interplay between youth and disarmament in a world marked by the proliferation of nuclear weapons. It underscores the importance of involving young people in disarmament efforts to safeguard their future and the planet.

UN Agenda 2030 for Youth and Disarmament: The second section delves into the nexus between the UN Agenda 2030 for Youth and the imperative of disarmament. It elucidates how this agenda serves as a vehicle for promoting disarmament as an essential element in achieving sustainable peace and development.

Canada's Role in Advancing the UN Agenda 2030 for Youth: This section examines Canada's significant contributions and responsibilities in furthering the goals of the UN Agenda 2030 for Youth, particularly in the context of disarmament. It highlights Canada's commitment to international cooperation and peacebuilding.

Conclusion: The fourth and final section provides a comprehensive conclusion that synthesizes the key insights and takeaways from the paper. It emphasizes the urgent need for global cooperation in disarmament efforts, underlining the transformative potential of the UN Agenda 2030 for Youth in shaping a brighter future for young people worldwide.

In essence, the UN Agenda 2030 for Youth and its synergy with disarmament efforts hold immense promise for fostering peace, security, and development on a global scale. By actively involving young individuals in these initiatives, the international community can work together to create a world where youth can thrive, free from the specter of armed conflict and insecurity.

Keywords: UN Agenda 2030, youth, disarmament, peace, development

Introduction

The UN Agenda 2030 of youths is an initiative that echoes the recognition and importance of youth in many spheres in society. Indeed, it motivates young people to engage actively and participate in the conversation of

issues that are of paramount importance in today's society, such as disarmament. The aim is to call for disarmament and create an appropriate environment for fostering peace, security, and development. This requires collective engagement to collaborate and cooperate by taking actions to guarantee a promising future for young people. However, calls for disarmament are an investment for young people to realize an agenda in 2030 for youths to become productive members in their respective communities and nations. This means developing a practical initiative to undertake the disarmament to redefine the path to dignify the standard of living among young people globally. The paper is arranged as follows. The first section focuses on the youths and disarmament of the nuclearize world, the second section discusses UN Agenda 2030 of youths and disarmament, and the third section discusses Canada's roles & UN Agenda 2030 of youths and the fourth section concludes.

Youths and Disarmament of Nuclearize World

Disarmament is a prerequisite to the implementation of the youth's initiatives. The United Nations Security Council Resolution 1379 calls on UN agencies to provide special consideration to achieve the reintegration of affected youths in the conflicts (McMullin: 744). Therefore, "reintegration" should be accompanied by comprehensive programs to create opportunities domestically and internationally. The Former President of the United States of America, Barack Obama, reverberated the importance of youths as an agent of denouncing the nuclearize world since it compromises the future of developmental programs, primarily when resources directed toward nuclear development (2011: 2 speech). Similarly, the UN's Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration Standards (IDDRS) pointed out that appropriate child protection and prevention, particularly UNICEF) inclusive interventions. However, nuclearization and militarization are a real threat to the future of the world and, in particular, youths who are often faced with adverse effects. With the practical measures of disarmament, nothing could be far from the truth that the youth have a critical part to play in raising awareness and developing new strategies or interventions to address or mitigate the threats from weapons of mass destruction and arms and their proliferation. I heartily concur with the idea that supporting young people as a catalyst for peace and security has to be a priority.

Youths and disarmament

The disarmament is a process of collaborative and cooperative to chart the path of implementing the agenda for young people. The UN SDGs Summit 2015 entailed that human development is central to the SDGs, which would eliminate extreme poverty and hunger, reduction of all poverty to ensure the concept of 'leaving no one behind' (UN SDGS, 2015: 4). Equally important, the alarming figures that 1.3 billion people live on less than US\$1 per day, 3 billion people live on less than US\$2 per day; 800 million people malnourished, 1.3 billion people without clean water, 2 billion people without sanitation, 2 billion people without electricity; and 1.4 billion people exposed to dangerous of pollutions (Ladan: 43).

Indeed, with the increase in population, there is an increase in the number of youth. Therefore, the youth are a significant segment of society that cannot be ignored in the pursuit of security. The UN agenda 2030 of youths may find it difficult to succeed because of global inequality as nations are not operating on equal footing. Some are severely lagging, and some are quite advanced economically, technologically, and politically. The effects of climate change are severe, given 1.4 billion people who are at the stake of pollutions, which creates vulnerability among the weak communities and nations (Ladan: 42). This calls for disarmament to redefine and channeled the resources into reducing environmental risks to mitigate the 21st-century's challenges. The UN Secretary-General António Guterres stated during the launching of the United Nations' new disarmament agenda, entitled "Securing Our Common Future," had emphasized three agenda priorities; a, disarmament to save humanity, b, disarmament that saves lives and c, disarmament for future generations (Guterres' speech, 2018).

Canada & UN Agenda 2030 of Youths

Canada's position is known globally for the promotion of its values - freedom, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law, justice, development, and humanitarian assistance. These values could be translated to the UN agenda 2030 of youths to implement the five priority highlighted in the "UN Youth Strategy 2018". To be more specific, Canada's values could be reflected in *how Canada can engage to further increase and empower youth participation in the disarmament?* The UN Agenda 2030 of youths illustrates that when youths are empowered, they can play a significant role in shaping society and ensuring security and progress. Therefore, the youth can significantly influence policies and change the conversation at the national and global level! Some specific recommendations for Canada's youth engagement and empowerment towards current trends include but not limited to the followings:

1. Canada has a stake domestically. The Child and Family System (CFS) should end an apprehension of the indigenous children. Children are the ones that become youth and youth are the ones that become adults. Ending this practice is abandoning the continuation of the neo-colonial era of separating children from biological parents and families. According to the *Globe and Mail* (2018) and the *Canadian Press* (2019), Indigenous children in CFS account for 52.2 percent of children in foster care in private homes. However, Bill C-92 proposed to prevent an apprehending of Indigenous children from their families. In Canada, the CFS policy of separating children may undermine the call for the UN Agenda 2030 of youths;

2. Canada, immigration is leading globally. According to Statistics Canada, 2011, 6.8 million immigrants represent approximately 200 countries (Ana, Picot, & Riddell, 2014). Equally, note, 200,000 to 250,000 come annually, which is approximately 0.8% of its population, and between 2008 and 2012, youth aged 15 to 24 years accounted for an average of 17% (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2012). For this reason, Canada has a significant responsibility to integrate the newcomers' youths, whether born in what I called open-prison (refugee camps) or Canada. The immigrant youth and Canadian-born children of immigrant families represent 25% of the country's population under the age of 18 (Canadian Council on Social Development, 2006). In other words, Canada cannot downplay the increasing challenges facing the newcomers' youths, especially poverty, gangs, drugs, school dropout because of language barriers and racists. The newcomer youth integration into society has a significant impact on their contribution to the new home (Ana, Picot, & Riddell, 2014). The researcher is worried that the history of depriving children in Canada is repeating itself;

3. Statistics Canada stated that 6.8 million immigrants benefit the economy and population increase, although they experienced discrimination, particularly racialized immigrant communities (Sheila & Grace-Edward, 2011; Grace-Edward, 2006; Shields, Park, Kelly, Park, Prier, & Fang, 2011). Economically, the gap is significant, which recycled the poverty from generation to generation, forcing children and youths to join unwanted gangs, drugs, and jailed or deported. The researcher thinks that even-though Canada was ranked second in recent study as the best country to live globally, immigrants in general and racialized communities, in particular, are experiencing extreme racist and social exclusion.

4. The best way to accomplish youth engagement and empowerment is to introduce a course in the school curriculum that deals strictly with the UN Agenda 2030 of youths to supplement the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) recommendations, especially #66 calls for the youth programs/organizations to deliver programs on reconciliation and establish a national network to share information and best practices (Calls to Action 8). The aim is to humanize instead of marginalizing the youths.

Finally, the UN agenda 2030 of youths is a capacity building initiative to participate and take the lead in many socioeconomic, political pursuits and challenges youth face. With a technological era, youth become computer

savvy; and therefore equipped to virtually do anything a human being can do on this planet. There is a lot of youth potential that needs to harness, not to mention the immense unlocked youth potential and enormous energy they possess and exhibit.

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Author’s Biography

David Mabior Atem has joined the Arthur V. Mauro Centre for Peace and Justice, graduate program at The University of Manitoba in September 2016. He is a recognized educator in the affairs of South Sudan, in areas of peacebuilding through institutional development, social justice, community economic development, reconciliation, human rights, and state-building. He holds a BA in International Affairs Studies and an Advanced Certificate in Public Policy and Administration from the University of Winnipeg. South Sudanese-Canadian and the former unaccompanied minor who endured a journey of migration, loss, and eventual resettlement in Canada. Now his advocacy for youths is unparalleled, developing a **transformative model – IDEAS (Involve, Discover, Engage, and Achieve Successes)**. He received two significant awards from his *alma mater*; *Marsha Hanen Award for Excellence in Creating Community Awareness* (2014) and the *Distinguished Alumni Award* (2017). He is the Founder and Chair of the Dialogue on South Sudan and Sudan Forum in Canada and Panelist for the Prairie Research Associates (PRA). Dialogue on South Sudan and Sudan is a forum driven by impartiality and inclusivity with open membership regardless of gender and group affiliation to embrace trusting-building and peacebuilding to discourage divisive sentiments.