



African Insights. Global Perspectives.

The 2012 SAIYA Young Leaders Declaration

Negotiated and Agreed Upon

At the 1st South African Institute of International Affairs Young Leaders Conference, Johannesburg, South Africa

We the children and youth of South Africa, as young leaders,

In pursuit of finding workable solutions to the problems facing the world today,

Guided by the principles of co-operation and caring for our fellow man, declare the following,

The Committee on Climate Change and Sustainable Development

Section 1

Article 1

We, the children and youth of South Africa, call upon the international community to:

1. Actively participate in the process of establishing the Sustainable Development Goals, a key outcome of the Rio+20 Conference on Sustainable Development.
2. Reaffirm the UN Millennium Declaration, specifically Millennium Development Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability: integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources.
3. Encourage the increased participation of African youth in sustainability negotiations such as the Conference of the Parties, the Commission on Sustainable Development and the newly proposed High Level Political Forum for Sustainable Development.

Article 2

Acknowledging the role of Africa in sustainable development and climate change we urge the continent to:

1. Recognise the current state of dependency of the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), including Small Island Developing States (SIDS), and acknowledge

commitments to the eradication of poverty and the improved quality of life of people in LDC's and SIDS. Focus should include basic necessities such as quality health care, sanitation and access to basic services.

2. Direct aid currently being provided, financial or otherwise, should be targeted at vulnerable citizens, allowing LDC's to use their resources for their own development and financial needs.
3. Condemn the exploitation of LDC resources and ensure LDC's benefit from globalisation and fair trade.
4. Consider the health implications and water scarcity brought on by natural disasters, especially in LDCs and SIDS, and urge governments to accept assistance from International Aid Agencies for immediate relief, while mechanisms must be established to create an enabling environment for independent recovery and reform.
5. Create and initiate programmes relating to climate change, disaster management and sustainable development to assist and educate vulnerable groups such as women, children and youth, people with disabilities and indigenous peoples. These programmes must be designed and implemented in collaboration with these vulnerable groups to reflect their needs and concerns, ensuring culturally appropriate solutions.
6. Encourage government to advocate for the above-mentioned goals with other African countries and the global community at large.

Article 3

Fully aware of the detrimental impact that industries have on biodiversity and ecosystem functioning, we insist that the South African Government address this through:

1. Appreciating the delicate position of government in relation to fulfilling its mandate - as stipulated in Chapter 2 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, The Bill of Rights, Section 24; Environmental Rights - to protect the environment for the benefit of present and future generations, a multi-stakeholder approach is required. Government should recognise and support the role of civil society in combating climate change and ensuring sustainable development.
2. Seeking to establish food security through sustainable land use, considering the vulnerable state of the global fishing, agriculture and forestry industries.
3. Imploring industries to adapt their current methods and technologies to include renewable energy sources for their operation.
4. Strongly encouraging industries to adopt sustainable waste management practices, such as the cradle-to-cradle approach, to ensure environmental integrity, in accordance with existing national and international policies.

5. Noting the influence of popular culture on civil society, we advocate the use of media, social media, and celebrity diplomacy to proactively encourage the private sector and general society to recognise and rectify the effect of unsustainable practices.
6. Alarmed by the large-scale contribution towards climate change by the private sector, South Africa needs to further implement a balanced economic policy that is both environmentally sustainable and economically profitable.
7. The development and adoption of a policy entitled “Corporate Environmental and Social Responsibility”. This would stipulate that businesses which exceed a turnover as defined by the Government’s “Broad-Based-Black-Economic-Empowerment essential compliance” should be compelled to contribute a specified percentage of their turnover to environmental initiatives, unless otherwise noted.
8. The implementation of financial incentives to encourage the private sector to shift to environmentally sustainable practices. This would include items such as VAT relief being offered to businesses producing environmentally sustainable products.
9. Deeply concerned with the devastating effects caused by the burning of fossil fuels, a gradual shift of South Africa’s dependence on non-renewable to appropriate renewable energy sources is vital.
10. Believing that beneficiation can strengthen national economies, “green” beneficiation should be established to contribute to decreasing the amount of carbon emissions by industries as well. This would also contribute to the advancement of an international Green Economy.
11. Aware of the gaps present in greening urbanisation and financing, we recommend:
 - a. Urging the National Government to develop services and encourage green development in rural areas.
 - b. Insisting that new housing and infrastructural developments be equipped with appropriate renewable resource utilisation as well as providing education on correct usage and maintenance.
 - c. Motivating municipalities to establish and maintain greenbelt areas within their jurisdiction to promote biodiversity and mitigate micro-climate effects.
12. Sourcing the finance required for sustainable development from South African banks and international funds.
13. The government should apply its transparency principles to the implementation of its sustainable development practices. Full monitoring and evaluation should be conducted annually and results made public for comment and review.

Article 4

We as the Youth commit to:

1. Adopting a sustainable lifestyle in accordance with the principles of sustainability included in this document.
2. Advocating a sustainable lifestyle by informing our communities through various social media.
3. Creating, supporting and actively participating in community projects and international initiatives that serve to implement a sustainable lifestyle.
4. Sharing knowledge and resources with less resourced schools.
5. Approaching principals and community councils to establish organic gardens that schools and communities would have access to, thus promoting sustainability.
6. Continually increase our knowledge and awareness of environmental affairs, climate change and sustainable development to be informed ambassadors for sustainability.

Committee on Education as a Global Priority

Section 2

Article 1

1. Noting with deep concern the poor progress made towards achieving universal education for all as stipulated in Millennium Development Goal 2
2. Recalling the three priorities taken from the Education First Initiative compiled by the UN Secretary-General, Ban-Ki Moon which are:
 - a. Put every child in school
 - b. Improve the quality of education
 - c. Foster global citizenship
3. Confident that the ideas contained herein will serve to achieve the goal of universal education for all.

Article 2

Priority 1: Put every child in school

The following concerns and suggestions are flexible for global, continental, national and local levels.

1. Alarmed by the current number of children outside of the school environment.

2. Aware of the current pressing socio-economic issues that are hindering children from attending school.
3. Acknowledging the efforts made by the international community to ensure all children attend school.
4. Noting with deep concern that the current systems for ensuring school attendance are inadequate.
5. Recognising the need for concerted action by the international community, government, civil society and individuals to ensure all children attend school.
6. Call upon government to partner with transport companies to ensure the safe commuting of children who travel long distances to attend school.
7. Desiring the improvement in the average standard of living to ensure that all families can afford to send their children to school.
8. Calling for an increase in the number of scholarships provided by government and the private sector to secondary and tertiary institutions.
9. Seeing the need for more schools to be built so that all children have access to education in their local community.

Article 3

Priority 2: Improve the quality of education

National:

1. Acknowledging the lack of feeding schemes for underprivileged primary and secondary schools.
2. Observing the unequal quality of education.

Africa:

1. Welcoming the growing use of Information Communication Technology (ICT) systems in schools, as it provides alternative ways of learning.

Globally:

1. Fully aware of the lack of resources and infrastructure in schools across the continent and the globe that pose a challenge to effective learning.
2. Noting with deep concern the perceived lack of value placed on the teaching profession.
3. Acknowledging the need to better resource and support teachers to improve the quality of education.

4. Encourages teacher exchange programmes that enable teachers to learn and exchange different teaching methods to improve the quality of education.

National:

1. Requests that feeding schemes be further promoted in primary and secondary schools to improve the ability of children to learn effectively.
2. Requests further research to improve and standardise the quality of teaching, including regular national benchmarking tests to ensure that schools meet the standardised requirements for quality education.

Africa:

1. Endorses the use of ICT systems once basic infrastructure and resources are available to teachers and learners.

Global:

1. Calls for the increase of educational resources in all schools.
2. Encourages an increase in the number of teachers by creating financial and other incentives for people in the teaching profession.
3. Encourages learners to serve as peer tutors to encourage learning and development.
4. Expresses its hope that an increased number of teachers have access to programmes focused on improving the quality of teaching, including programmes provided by civil society organisations.

Article 4

Priority 3: Fostering Global Citizenship

Nationally:

We recommend the creation of regular national conferences for youth to provide a forum in which to discuss current issues that youth face at a provincial level, and to develop solutions to these.

Strongly suggest the improved capability of schools to implement inter-school learner mentoring programmes, where top learners are able to provide academic tutoring to less resourced schools.

Africa:

We recommend the standardisation of universities across the continent to enable students to interchange between universities, to promote incorporative learning and regional citizenship. Examples of the implementation of such a system can be seen in those adopted by the European Union and MERCOSUL.

Globally:

We recommend an increase of, and financing for, international youth conferences where current global education issues can be discussed and debated. Such conferences would promote global citizenship and seek to develop outcome documents on educational issues that would serve to inform governments on youth perspectives for improving education globally.

We recommend an increase in the number of international foreign-exchange programmes, for learners and teachers alike, to increase global awareness, broaden perspectives and foster global citizenship.

Article 5

As the children and youth speaking to our peers we commit to do the following in our societies:

1. Priority 1: Organise youth marches in local communities to raise awareness about children and youth who are hindered from going to school by socio-economic issues, and help build a social movement to overcome this.
2. Priority 2:
 - a. Participate in outreach programmes at schools and communities to redistribute resources to promote learning and education in less resourced schools.
 - b. Serve as peer tutors to encourage learning and education of other learners.
3. Priority 3: Participate in student foreign exchange programmes.

Committee on the Reform of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC)

Section 3

Article 1:

We the children and youth declare the following to the Global community:

1. Deeply concerned about the inefficiency and lack of fair representation of regions within the UNSC.
2. Recommend that the UNSC undergoes reform with regards to limiting the veto and ensuring fair regional representation.
3. Call upon the UNSC to consider restricting the use of veto exclusively to matters that fall under Chapter VII of the *Charter of the United Nations*;

excluding Article 41. This restriction would not apply to any further reform of the UNSC.

4. Request the creation of a third category of membership in the UNSC in which:
 - a. Four member states of the UN would serve five-year terms on the UNSC.
 - b. Members are able to serve consecutive terms.
 - c. Members would have one vote each as per Article 27.1.
 - d. The privileges of permanent membership referred to in Article 27.3 would not extend to this third category.
 - e. These four member states comprise of:
 - i. Two African representatives;
 - ii. One Latin American and Caribbean (GRULAC) representative;
 - iii. One Asia-Pacific representative.
 - f. A shortlist of potential candidates would be submitted to the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) by their respective working groups in the UN:
 - i. The shortlist of African candidates would be submitted by the African Working Group of the UN;
 - ii. The shortlist of Latin American and Caribbean candidates would be submitted by the GRULAC;
 - iii. The shortlist of the Asia-Pacific candidates would be submitted by the Asia-Pacific Working Group.
 - g. The shortlist should comprise of at least twice the number of candidates as seats available for that Working Group.
 - h. Should the shortlist be deemed to be a legitimate representation of the working groups' interests, the UNGA will be restricted to selecting candidates from this shortlist.
 - i. Should the Working Group fail to provide a legitimate shortlist, the task of nominating candidates would fall upon the UNGA.
 - j. The UNGA will vote and candidates with two-thirds majority will be elected to occupy a third category membership.
5. Further request that the number of non-permanent seats increases from ten to eleven and to ensure fair regional representation, we encourage the UNGA to allocate non-permanent memberships in the following manner:
 - a. Three memberships reserved for Asia-Pacific member states;
 - b. Two memberships reserved for African member states;
 - c. Two memberships reserved for Latin American and Caribbean states;
 - d. One membership reserved for West European member states;
 - e. One membership reserved for East European member states;
 - f. One membership reserved for Arab member states;
 - g. One membership reserved for any other member state in the UNGA.
6. Recommend that each working group which represents the regions referred to in 5 above will submit a shortlist of potential candidates for the consideration of the UNGA. This shortlist must adhere to the conditions outlined in 4 (g), (h) and (i) above. The UNGA will consider these shortlists and select new non-permanent members of the UNSC by a two-thirds majority of the UNGA.

7. Reassure the permanent five members of the UNSC that they will retain their permanent memberships within the UNSC and the right to exercise the veto. However, this right should only be applicable within the parameters outlined in Section 3, Article 1, Sub-section 3 of this Declaration.

Article 2

As the children and youth of Africa speaking to the African states;

1. Commends all African states that have contributed peace-keeping troops to both past and current UNSC and AU missions.
2. Noting with deep concern the lack of representation of the African Bloc on the UNSC, despite the fact that currently the majority of the UNSC issues involve the African Continent.
3. Acknowledging that reform is not an event, but rather a process; however, desiring two permanent African seats on the UNSC immediately.
4. Urges all African states to work with the UN to effectively implement UNSC resolutions in order to ensure and advance International Peace and Security on the African continent.
5. Realising the need for African representation by the African Bloc on the UNSC to deal with issues surrounding International Peace and Security more efficiently.
6. Calling upon the African Bloc to fairly select two politically and economically stable African countries to occupy two seats in the Third Category of the UNSC.

Article 3

As the South African children and youth speaking to their national government;

1. Views with appreciation the active role that South Africa has played regarding various issues in the UNSC.
2. Congratulates the South African government for being one of Africa's strongest leading states and urges the government to continue in this manner.
3. Encourages the South African government to strongly support the various factors of the Reformation of the UNSC, namely:
 - a. The Restriction of the Veto vote;
 - b. The Expansion of permanent and non-permanent members of the UNSC;
 - c. The Creation of the Third Category within the UNSC with the addition of four members representing the regions of Latin America and Caribbean (GRULAC), the Asian-Pacific and the African Bloc.

4. Urges South Africa to actively bid for one of the new African seats in the Third Category of the UNSC, as it is clearly eligible due to its economic and political stability.
5. Expresses its hope that South Africa will continue to be an exemplary African state concerning adherence to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and recall the past history of South Africa when voting in the UNSC and the UNGA.
6. Reminds the South African government of the promises that were made in the year 1994 to uphold the fundamental principles of equality and freedom; as well as the provision of quality education for all South African citizens.

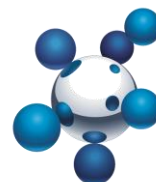
Article 4

As the children and youth speaking to our peers we commit to do the following in our societies;

1. Having investigated the issues regarding the UNSC, we pledge to continue to remain informed about global issues in order to become active global citizens.
2. Deeply disturbed by the lack of interest demonstrated by youth regarding International Affairs, we are committed to enlighten youth about relevant global issues to ignite an empowered South African youth.
3. Ensure that Africa's issues remain paramount in the eyes of youth.

The South African Young Leaders Declaration was submitted to representatives of The Department of Environmental Affairs, The Department of Basic Education, The Department of International Relations and Co-operation, on 13 December 2012 at an official handover at Freedom Park, Pretoria, South Africa

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2012 SAIIA YOUNG LEADERS CONFERENCE DELEGATES

Abongile	Xhantini	Masego	Mothei
Behnazir	Mohumed	Melanie	Voges
Caitlynn	Luke	Michael	van Wijk
Carshiefa	Sissing	Mitchell	Black
Cassandra	Moodley	Mohamed	Sacranie
Chelsea	Groenewald	Motheo	Lenguasa
Chenay	Jonkers	Muhammed	Ismail Bulbulia
Curtley	Govender	Nabeelah	Kader
Dominique	Tarr	Ninza	Mwenesongole
Emma	Ho	Nkululeko	Majozi
Farai	Mubaiwa	Nokubonga	Shamase
Garrick	Blok	Nokwanda	Dlamini
Gugu	Malope	Nozipho	Nkabinde
Jaime	de Gois	Nuhaa	Sentso
Jameelah	Edwards	Prinesa	Reddy
Jasmin	Salomons	Saijil	Nemchund
Javan	Brierly	Shazia	Patel
Jivani	Sithapersad	Stephen	Baxter
Kaamillah	Soeker	Sthembile	Soko
Kimon	Nicolaides	Tasmiayh	Hoosen
Kirsten-Lee	Naidoo	Thabile	Mosoetsi
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Penelope	Makgati
Duduetsang	Mmeti
Darren	Gysi
Odwa	Mtembu