



THE 2016 SAIIA YOUNG LEADERS DECLARATION

Youth recommendations for implementing Agenda 2063, the
Sustainable Development Goals, and the Paris Agreement
Negotiated and Agreed Upon
at the
4th South African Institute of International Affairs
Young Leaders Conference
Johannesburg, South Africa

We, the youth of South Africa, express our excitement about South Africa's commitment to the aspirations and goals outlined in the COP 21 Paris Agreement, the African Union's Agenda 2063 and the Global Goals for Sustainable Development (SDGs), which are at the heart of our National Development Plan. We commit to carry the baton of the class of 1976 in ensuring that young people continue to be at the forefront of implementation process of the aforementioned global goals.

Preamble

Recognising the importance of the United Nations Global Goals for Sustainable Development,

Having examined the Paris Agreement,

Keeping in mind Agenda 2063 of the African Union,

Guided by the National Development Plan,

Applauding the role that South Africa played in the drafting of the Paris Agreement,

Guided by Aspiration 6 in Agenda 2063 which seeks to create an Africa where development is people-driven and unleashes the full potential of its women and youth,

Commemorating the 20th anniversary of the adoption of the South African Constitution, the 40th anniversary of the Soweto Uprisings of 1976 and the 60th anniversary of the Women's March,

Noting with approval the recent resurgence of the powerful youth voice in shaping our future demonstrated by the Fees Must Fall Student Movement of 2015,

Noting with deep concern the negative effects of climate change in South Africa,

Noting with deep concern the shockingly high drop-out rates, illiteracy and innumeracy rates in schools, disproportional teacher-pupil ratios and poor infrastructure.

Section 1: Accountability

We, as the youth, urge municipal government to:

Article 1: Transparency and Community Involvement

1. *Facilitate* smoother handovers when a new municipal government is elected in order to maximise the potential of Integrated Development Plans that target the Global Goals for Sustainable Development (SDGs).
2. With regard to community participation in governance:
 - 2.1. *Reaffirm* attempts by community members to hold their municipal governments accountable, especially with youth programmes such as urban Youth Councils and Children's parliament,
 - 2.2. *Increase* public participation in municipal policy-making, especially the youth,
 - 2.3. *Extend* these projects to interact directly with municipal governments, include a youth voice in municipal reports and sustain the involvement of the youth as stated in the National Youth Policy 2015-2020,
 - 2.4. *Encourage* the implementation of similar projects in other municipalities where such structures are not present such as in rural areas,
 - 2.5. *Make* existing programmes and ward councillors more accessible for youth through better advertising and exposure.

We, as the youth, urge provincial government to:

Article 1: Transparency and effective leadership

1. *Intensify* efforts to eradicate corruption and the mismanagement of funds allocated to the Reconstruction and Development Programme,
2. *Broadened* representation of traditional leaders under the Contralesa (Congress of Traditional Leadership South Africa) in the National Council of Provinces.

We, as the youth, urge national government to:

Article 1: Communication

1. *Increase* co-ordination and communication between civil society and national government to ensure the implementation and regulation of sustainable development policies, as well as aspiration 6 from Agenda 2063,
2. *Support* a shift in the focus of academic research to promote more Afro-centric ideas and solutions.

Article 2: Transparency

1. *Increase* accessibility to information and greater transparency of financial assistance given by international donor agencies to the government, gradually attaining Aspiration 3 and 4 of Agenda 2063,
2. *Increase* the accessibility and transparency of the processes through which national bursaries and scholarships are awarded,
3. *Develop* an electronic and standardised process to allow citizens to monitor the progress and performance of infrastructure projects to ensure that projects are completed within time and financial constraints as per Aspiration 3 of Agenda 2063,
4. *Expand* social welfare within South Africa by allowing youth to have better access to youth-orientated South African Social Service Agency (SASSA) grants.

Section 2: Education

We, as the youth, urge municipal government to:

Article 1: Localised Education

1. *Work* towards universal internet access at the municipal level for all citizens, especially learners, by addressing technological inequalities so that the internet can be used as an educational resource guided by the commitment to fibre optics in the National Development Plan, Chapter 4-29,

2. *Encourage* participation in the Arts and Culture sector through strengthening mentorship programmes and community-level workshops.

We, as the youth, urge provincial government to:

Article 1: Inequalities in Education

1. *Further promote* partnerships between private and public schools to facilitate the sharing of knowledge,
2. *Improve and expand* its public school transportation services for learners in inaccessible areas,
3. *Improve* feeding schemes in schools through partnerships between provincial governments, businesses and non-governmental organisations.

Article 2: Quality Education and Universal Accessibility

1. *Encourage* the introduction of new, innovative teaching methods which utilises technology to stimulate and maintain learners' interests in curriculum content,
2. *Further develop* the inclusion of South African indigenous languages in the curriculum and opportunities to learn in these languages from primary through to tertiary education,
3. *Increase* incentives for potential educators to teach provincially relevant languages,
4. *Continue to develop* well-resourced libraries and computer centres with internet in schools, promoting e-learning opportunities,
5. *Promote* participation in extracurricular and non-classroom based activities by developing quality sporting facilities and further supporting cultural and academic activities,
6. *More effectively eradicate* the use of corporal punishment and bullying in schools through provincial monitoring.

We, as the youth, urge national government to:

Article 1: Implementation

1. *Implement* policy regarding free education at primary, secondary and tertiary levels in a manner which is equitable, in line with SDG 4,
2. *Increase* interaction between national government and the South African council of Educators to implement continuous technological training programmes in the classroom relating to SDGs 4 and 9,
3. *Prioritise* healthcare education at primary and secondary schooling, fulfilling SDG 4.

Article 2: Accessibility

1. *Encourage* competition within the internet service sector,

2. *Effectively* utilise Arts and Culture to educate citizens on matters pertaining to sustainable development,
3. *Equitably distribute* the number of available subsidies for traditional academic institutions and technical Further Educational Training (FET) institutions, as pertaining to SDG 4,
4. *Emphasise* the inherent value of oceans and seas within the existing primary school curriculum, meeting SDG's 4, 11 and 14.

Article 3: Traditional Affairs

1. *Educate* traditional authorities about the aims and proposed action plans expressed in documents such as the Global Goals for Sustainable Development, The Paris Agreement and Agenda 2063 in order for them to create awareness and integrate them into their communities,
2. *Increase* youth education with regards to traditional leadership structures in order for them to gain a greater insight into traditional community practices,

Section 3: Basic Needs

We, as the youth, urge municipal government to:

Article 1: Refuse Removal

1. *Make* recycling easy for citizens by improving waste-removal infrastructure and increasing partnerships with private companies who are engaged in the recycling of their products and packaging,
2. *Assist* with media coverage and celebrity involvement for community clean-up events that aim to protect the environment,
3. *Issue* certificates which commend environmentally-friendly practises in schools,
4. *Encourage* community action for citizens to unlearn environmentally harmful waste management habits such as burning waste, with schools and community centres as key starting places,
5. Relating to waste collection and division, as highlighted in SDG 12:
 - 5.1 *Explore* options to formalise current informal waste collection and recycling through the collaboration between collectors and metropolitan municipalities,
 - 5.2 *Reaffirm* efforts to rehabilitate landfill sites such as the Marian Hill Landfill Site in the eThekweni municipality which harnesses methane to sustainably generate electricity,
6. *Combat* food waste from restaurants and our households through food removal services that use waste for compost and biofuel.

Article 2: Water and Sanitation

1. *Encourage* the continued investment in natural water treatment plants using wetlands such as the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI) “Working for Wetlands” project which promotes sustainable development and creates employment,
2. *Encourage* investment in grey-water systems, especially in future housing projects, with collaboration with the Department of Housing,
3. *Provide* equitable and reliable access to water for all citizens in a way that sustainably preserves natural resources.

Article 3: Healthcare

1. *Accelerate* the implementation of Primary Healthcare re-engineering that decentralises services by basing them on the needs of specific demographic groups in local areas,
2. In relation to sexual and reproductive health mentioned in 6.4 and 7.3 of the National Youth Policy as well as SDG 3:
 - a) *Increase* the accessibility of local clinics and promote the use of contraception, both male and female, for the youth to prevent teenage pregnancy and the spread of sexually-transmitted diseases,
 - b) *De-stigmatise* these issues by continuing to develop youth-friendly, non-judgemental health services,
3. *Provide* free feminine hygiene products in schools, universities and community centres to target vulnerable populations in co-ordination with organisations such as ‘Pledge-a-Pad’.

Article 4: Energy

1. *Encourage* energy conservation by engaging the community through better usage awareness programmes and promoting the use of prepaid meters,
2. *Prioritise and subsidise* the installation of renewable energy infrastructure such as solar panels in all houses and housing development projects while educating people, especially youths, about the maintenance of this infrastructure in order to enforce SDG 7 and 9,
3. *Be cognisant* of student exam schedules when implementing load-shedding in cities,
4. *Minimise* electricity wastage by ensuring that only necessary street lights are turned on in the day,
5. *Communicate* more clearly and effectively with residents about the status of electricity supply through local and online media such as City Power’s use of Twitter.

Article 5: Food security

1. *Promote* the intergenerational sharing of farming knowledge so that we as the youth are able to sustain the environment and achieve goals reflected in the sixth pillar of the Gauteng 20 Year Food Security Plan,
2. *Encourage* commercial farmers to upgrade their current farming methods to be more sustainable and adaptable to climate change in order to fulfil SDG 2,
3. *Spread awareness* to citizens, focusing on youth, about current inner-city farming projects such as vertical gardens so that local schools can be involved and learn from municipalities,
4. *Enforce* in-school practical education, especially in rural communities, using food gardens and fieldtrips to educate the youth about farming,
5. *Implement* better protection of vulnerable farmers and farm-workers to reduce violence in rural areas,
6. *Encourage* sustainable fishing methods through local education programmes and incentives as well as Southern African Sustainable Seafood Initiative (SASSI) compliance to fulfil the fourteenth Global Goal for Sustainable Development.

We, as the youth, urge provincial government to:

Article 1: Development

1. *Target* the failure of building maintenance in urban areas, as per section (12) of the National Buildings Regulations and Building Standards ACT NO. 103 OF 1977 by increasing accountability measures,
2. *Ensure that* houses built by the Reconstruction and Development Programme are in strategic locations which protect biodiversity,
3. *Collaborate* with municipal governments to ensure adequate service delivery, infrastructure and building maintenance in order to sustain economic growth.

Article 2: Water and Sanitation

1. *Upscale* the implementation of waterless toilets and promote other provincial level innovative, environmentally sustainable initiatives, especially in townships and informal settlements,
2. *Merge* inter-municipal water supplies across the provinces,
3. *Incentivise* the use of modern water-conserving irrigation techniques in agriculture, which can save up to 50% of water.

Article 3: Health

1. *Capacitate* rural provinces to support health care education about communicable diseases,

2. *Facilitate* communication between western and traditional medicinal practitioners, given the significance of traditional healers in South Africa,
3. *Increase* the frequency of vaccination awareness campaigns.

We, as the youth, urge national government to:

Article 1: Food security

1. *Encourage* sustainable farming methods that are effective in the long run as stipulated by SDG 2.
2. *Update* the current food security strategy for South Africa.

Article 2: Health Care

1. *Provide* quality, free sanitary products for women and make this a national priority in order to improve women's health outcomes,
2. *Amend* labour legislature to reduce the dangerous working hours of medical staff to no more than 12 hours,
3. *Raise awareness* surrounding mental health to reduce the stigma surrounding these issues and increase the availability of mental health services.

Article 3: Housing

1. *Increase* the building of more sustainable, centrally located, and cost effective RDP housing, contributing to SDG 9, and 11.

Section 4: Economic Development and Employment

We, as the youth, urge municipal government to:

Article 1: Economic Development

1. *Effectively implement* tax-free Specialised Economic Zones in rural and coastal areas for local entrepreneurs in order to encourage economic development for the local people and implement Aspiration 1 in Agenda 2063, which promotes “a prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development”,
2. *Protect* inner-city dwellers that are threatened by private investment, as proposed in SDG 11, to encourage community-based urban renewal and avoid exclusive gentrification,
3. *Ensure* that coastal municipalities drive the blue economy through effective implementation of Operation Phakisa.

Article 2: Arts and Culture

1. *Implement* the Agenda 2063 Aspiration 5 to “create a culturally strong Africa” through better awareness of existing local arts programmes such as the BAT Centre in the eThekweni municipality,
2. *Create* more opportunities and spaces for artists to network, share resources and knowledge to develop the local art scene.

We, as the youth, urge provincial government to:

Article 1: Urbanisation

1. *Decrease* the brain-drain of talented youth from rural areas, due to the process of urbanisation, by incentivising the private sector to expand their businesses to rural area.

Article 2: Economic growth

1. *Expand* current efforts to provide business incubators and/or accelerators to aspiring entrepreneurs in rural areas and historically disadvantaged communities.

We, as the youth, urge national government to:

Article 1: Employment and Economic growth

1. Prioritising economic development and youth unemployment:
 - 1.1 *Create* an environment which enables entrepreneurship by restructuring state supported entities such as the NYDA and providing better support for businesses in the informal sector,
 - 1.2 *Ensure* nationwide access to technology and supporting research and advancements that lead to technological innovation.

Article 2: Implementation and Legislation

1. *Effectively implement* SDGs 1 and 2 by promoting the growth of urban gardens within cities,
2. *Ameliorate* bureaucratic processes and current legislation to allow for easier participation of small businesses in technology and internet service provision,
3. *Better use* tax incentives based on measurable results of Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives to be implemented by businesses.

Section 5: Stakeholders

We, as the youth, urge municipal government to:

Article 1: Gender Equality

1. *Ensure* that women are better represented in municipal decision-making in accordance with Aspiration 6 of Agenda 2063, which states that the African woman will be empowered in all spheres,
2. Acknowledging the religious sensitivities with regard to LGBTQIA+ communities, *support* an inclusive, grassroots and non-discriminatory stance towards minority groups,
3. *Encourage* municipal-level mentorship programmes, such as 'Boys to Men South Africa', that provide better role models for young men and boys.

Article 2: Government Partnerships

1. *Encourage* better collaboration and sharing of best practices among traditional communities as well as local and metropolitan municipalities to fulfil the seventeenth Global Goal for Sustainable Development and Article 14-1 of the Paris Agreement,
2. *Prioritise* different municipalities equitably in a "participatory, cross-cutting and gender-responsive way" as stated in Article 11-2 in the Paris Agreement, and recognise the continued need for services in historically neglected areas.

Article 3: Peace and Security

1. *Extend and properly implement* better drug testing in schools in collaboration with youth-focused, community-based drug prevention campaigns to implement Aspiration 4-37 in Agenda 2063,
2. *Equip* community-based organisations with transferable first-aid skills and to better deal with violence and emergencies.

We, as the youth, urge provincial government to:

Article 1: Gender

1. Provide provincial-wide free sanitary pads to girls to intensify efforts to close the gender inequality gap and keep adolescent girls in schools.

Article 2: Social Welfare

1. *Ensure* that public facilities, especially educational institutions, make necessary infrastructural provisions to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities.

Article 3: Climate change

1. *Create* climate change strategic units in provinces which there are none, and strengthen existing units to head each province's climate change response with sufficient resources and skills to conduct research into the effects of climate change in their province, to determine the best possible mitigation and adaption strategies in their provinces and to coordinate them between municipalities,
2. *Recommend* that strategic units identify ways in which their province can create renewable energy, protect biodiversity, and sustainable agriculture and report their findings to other spheres of government,
3. *Further use* strategic units to spearhead partnerships between government, academia, international organisations, youth and civil society,
4. *Strongly urge* relevant stakeholders to incentivise youth-led creation of green belts in towns, such as using large populations of the Spekboom (*Portulacaria afra*) carbon-storing plant.

We, as the youth, urge national government to:

Article 1: Gender

1. *Address* the disconnect between the constitution and societal perception of the LGBTQIA+ community through the increase of awareness in order to create tolerance and understanding in society through youth.

Article 2: Race Equality

1. *Focus on action* in ending institutionalised racism through the implementation of existing national policies on transformation, pertaining to SDG 10.

Article 3: Civil Society

1. *Investigate* methods to shorten the licensing process of NGOs by targeting,
2. *Increase* national funding opportunities for civil society organisations,
3. *Provide* more stakeholder consultations so that civil society, especially the youth can be more involved in policy-making processes.
4. *Encourage* greater autonomy of traditional leaders and better financial support from national government, SDG 11.

Our Youth Pledge:

We, as young people, pledge to:

1. Be active local citizens and to better use available information and opportunities to empower our peers by connecting with our ward and continuing to participate in forums such as youth councils and public meetings
2. Inform our community about the Global Goals for Sustainable Development
3. Enforce recycling and waste separation and encourage our peers to have litter drives, creating enthusiasm and promoting effective, environmentally-friendly systems
4. Be more conscious of our water usage and promote existing water-wise programmes
5. Conserve electricity and thereby reduce our carbon footprint
6. Learn and educate our community about sustainable methods of farming
7. Change the perspectives in our community to promote the important position of arts and culture within our society by supporting more events that capacitate local artists
8. Dedicate ourselves to stop the exclusion of women and the LGBTQIA+ community through efforts to spread acceptance within our own communities.
9. Combat xenophobia by promoting the acceptance of people from other countries and encouraging African unity through education and awareness in collaboration with non-governmental, community, and faith-based organisations
10. Be more actively involved in community watch programmes and report the wrongdoings that we witness
11. Be at the forefront of implementing the SDGs, the Paris Agreement and Agenda 2063.

The 2016 SAIIA Young Leaders Declaration was submitted to Deputy Minister in the Presidency for Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, Youth Development and Administration, Mr Buti Manamela on 30 June 2016 at the official handover ceremony at the Union Buildings, Pretoria, South Africa.

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