

For Immediate Release

September 26, 2012

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International Youth Leaders Met in Turkey and Had Something to Say

Youth Leaders Are First in the World To Make Their Voices Heard Around the Globe

Istanbul, Turkey - For the first time in its 67-year history, the United Nations is asking for youth from all over the world to voice their opinions about the creation of the world's development agenda beyond 2015. In September, the first group of youth rose to the challenge.

From September 7 – 14, 29 youth leaders from 17 different countries gathered in Istanbul, Turkey to take part in the 2nd International Youth Leadership Academy (IYLA) training, coordinated by Habitat Center for Development and Governance (Habitat). During the training these youth took action and are the first leaders in the world to tell the United Nations what kind of world they wanted after 2015. To make their voices heard, they created a short advocacy video that will be used by the United Nations Millennium Campaign to engage youth in the post-2015 development process.

Young people from Albania, Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Egypt, Georgia, Iraq, Jordan, Kosovo, Libya, Macedonia, Mexico, Montenegro, Romania, Tunisia, Turkey, and Yemen gathered in Istanbul and made their statements about the world they wanted after 2015. The topics covered during the IYLA training were tough, ranging from youth rights and participation, youth leadership, and citizenship, to social responsibility. After covering all of these topics, the leaders committed to the creation of their advocacy video that will be used to mobilize thousands of youth across the globe to engage in the post-2015 development agenda process.

In the advocacy video, Katerina Kochkovska from Macedonia says, "In 2015 I want a world that cares about children's opinions, and a world in which youth initiatives are supported by adults."

"This new program is important because it is the first time ever that youth can raise awareness that their voices will not only be heard but respected. We are the generation that will carry these goals and make sure that they are implemented, so our voices need to be heard during this process." said Mileta Radovanic from Montenegro.

Vanda Sawahla from Amman, Jordan said "We are not just the leaders of tomorrow, we are also partners now and we will be shaping our future by our hands. So we need to be present and involved as youth in these processes as much as we can."

The training was conducting by leading global expert on children and youth Ravi Karkara.

[View the video here.](#) For more information visit www.worldwewant2015.org or www.habitatkalkinma.org

Habitat Center for Development and Governance is a civil society and youth led organization that coordinates the International Youth Leadership Academy, which is a global partnership between UCLG-MEWA, CORIO, Save the Children (NL), WALD and UNICEF Turkey. Established in 1997 in Istanbul, Turkey, Habitat aims to support children, youth, women and the disabled in terms of sustainable development and participation to decision-making processes at all levels.

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