

## AFRICA YOUTH PEACE FORUM - DIALOGUE AND EXCHANGE PROGRAM (AYPF-DEP):

### THE NAIROBI DECLARATION ON AFRICAN YOUTH CONNECTEDNESS AND PARTICIPATION IN THE PEACEFUL DEVELOPMENT OF OUR CONTINENT

We, the youth of Africa culminated on the 29<sup>th</sup> June - 1<sup>st</sup> July 2017 at the Kenyatta University Conference Center:

**Recognizing** the crucial role that youth play, in light of the youth bulge, in all sectors of development and building peace;

**Acknowledging** the advancement made by national governments, international governing bodies, and civil society in the empowerment and engagement of youth;

**Recalling** the vulnerability of many young people, including but not limited to refugees, internally displaced persons, marginalized, radicalized and manipulated youth;

**Concerned** about exclusion of youth in all levels of decision-making, limited access to credible information and over-securitization and militarization of elections and our societies in general;

**We hereby,**

**Call upon** African youth, youth-led initiatives, and states and non-state actors to join us as we champion the implementation of the following calls to action:

#### **1. Unite with Youth for Peaceful, Free, Fair, and Credible Elections:**

We, the youth, have played both positive and negative roles during election processes, and we acknowledge the importance of our civic duty to make our voices heard. Yet we find that the word 'youth' has often been associated with violence and political manipulation during election periods. We are determined to change this pervasive narrative into one that demonstrates the ability of young people to exercise their civic duty in a non-violent manner while promoting peaceful, free, fair, and credible elections. Therefore;

- a. We call upon youth to strive to use active non-violent approaches, make informed decisions as they vote, and resist political manipulation and incitement while holding leaders accountable for campaign promises.
- b. We call upon all actors to promote and advocate for peaceful, free, fair, and credible elections that are based on merit and ideology rather than on bias affiliations including but not limited to ethnicity, religion, and gender.

- c. We urge aspirants to employ issue-based campaigns and to engage in public discourse that ensures that youth and community needs are captured in their political agendas.
- d. We urge all stakeholders to normalize and support youth voting and candidacy and to encourage constructive participation of youth at all levels of electoral processes.

## **2. Recognize and Support Youth as Partners and Leaders in Peace-building**

We, the youth, are highly engaged in transforming conflict, countering violence, and building peace. Yet our efforts remain largely invisible, unrecognized, and even undermined due to inadequate participatory and inclusive mechanisms and opportunities to partner with decision-making bodies. We implore policy-makers to develop meaningful mechanisms for youth leadership development and participation in decision and policy-making processes at all levels of governance.

- e. We commit to promoting the principles of shared security, Ubuntu<sup>1</sup> and the Golden Rule in our networks through advocacy and practice in our day-to-day lives.
- f. We call for increased engagement of African youth in providing solutions to African issues including the youth bulge, employment, environment, education, and the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies.
- g. We call on the African Union to adopt a resolution on Youth, Peace, Security, and Development to recognize the role of youth and institutionalize their participation at all levels.
- h. We urge all stakeholders to adhere to the use of active non-violent and non-militaristic approaches to break cycles of violent conflict on the continent.
- i. We encourage the youth of Africa to become “their brothers’ keepers,” looking out for one another and being vigilant about radicalization into extremist groups or manipulation by politicians or others to incite violence.

## **3. Create and support the African Youth Peace Network (AYPNet)**

We hereby launch the African Youth Peace Network to support and encourage African youth-led non-violent movements. We seek to connect youth across the continent for mutual benefit, increase access to information, encourage collaboration and exchange of ideas among youth, create a strong, unifying voice to advocate for social change, and engage diverse stakeholders in order to build sustainable peace on the African continent.

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<sup>1</sup> “I am because you are”

By fixing our signatures below, on this day the first of July two thousand and seventeen, we the youth attending the Amani Youth Festival African Youth Peace Forum - Dialogue and Exchange Program, commit to this declaration and to the launch of the African Youth Peace Network.

Signatories:

JOEL MWITA DANIEL

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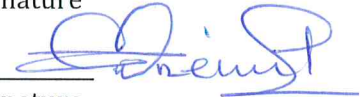
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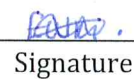
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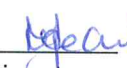



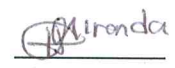
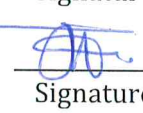

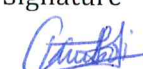
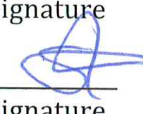

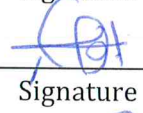
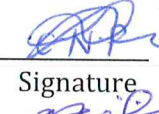
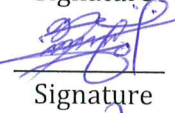
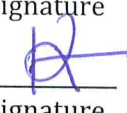
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