



**ECOSOC**  
**YOUTH FORUM**

**YOUTH2030**

## **Economic and Social Council Youth Forum**

**"Accelerating the COVID-19 recovery and full implementation of the 2030 Agenda with and for youth"**

### **REPORT ON THE SIDE EVENT AT THE 2023 ECOSOC YOUTH FORUM**

**"The Turkish Humanitarian Diplomacy and Youth Participation: The Role of Youth in the Recovery from February 2023 Earthquake in Türkiye "**

**25 April 2023**

**1:00 p.m-3:00 p.m**

On April 25, 2023, the Islamic Cooperation Youth Forum (ICYF) and the Turkish Permanent Mission of Türkiye to the United Nations. hosted a side event titled "The Turkish Humanitarian Diplomacy and Youth Participation: The Role of Youth in the Recovery from the February 2023 Earthquake in Türkiye" at the Turkish House in New York. The event was held on the sidelines of the ECOSOC Youth Forum at the UN Headquarters in New York, which took place from April 25-27, 2023.

1. During the event, Ambassador Sedat Onal, the Turkish Permanent Representative to the UN, praised ICYF's efforts to empower youth in the OIC region and their discussions on critical issues related to humanitarian diplomacy and youth participation in disaster recovery. He highlighted the Turkish Government's immediate response to the disaster, which included mobilizing all available resources for immediate relief and initiating a massive reconstruction and recovery effort. He also emphasized the active participation of young people in relief and recovery efforts and renewed the government's commitment

to the implementation of the sustainable agenda and supporting youth participation in humanitarian diplomacy.

Mr. Taha Ayhan, the President of ICYF, expressed gratitude to the Turkish Foreign Ministry and the Permanent Representative of Türkiye to the UN for their support in organizing the event. He highlighted the role of young people in the recovery efforts following the earthquake and how their contributions helped in the recovery from the destruction. He proposed recommendations to enhance the potential of youth engagement in humanitarian diplomacy, including investing in youth education and training on disaster preparedness, response, and recovery, fostering more partnerships among governments, humanitarian organizations, and youth-led organizations, and promoting youth participation in decision-making towards best future for all.

**2.**The Keynote speakers, including Ambassador Amir Khan, the Deputy PR for Pakistan at the UN Mission, and Ambassador Hameed Opeloyeru, PR of the OIC to the UN Mission addressed the audience with keynote speeches. Ambassador Hameed Opeloyeru emphasized the critical role that young people can play in the recovery process and highlighted the efforts of OIC to provide humanitarian aid and support to the affected regions in Türkiye. He stressed the importance of youth participation in the recovery process and renewed OIC's commitment to working with young people. The Deputy Permanent Representative of Pakistan at the UN Mission Ambassador. Amir Khan shared Pakistan's experience in responding to natural disasters, including the role of the Turkish government in assisting Pakistan during difficult times. He emphasized the devastating impact of natural disasters on people's lives, homes, and livelihoods and the importance of international solidarity and cooperation in times of need. He pointed out the importance of youth in times of disaster, as they have the energy, creativity, and passion to make a difference in their communities.

**3.**The panel convened a group of experts, mainly representing youth initiatives and some UN institutions, to share the best practices and real experiences from the field, from a youth perspective.

Mr. Jamil Ahmed Director of UNEP highlighted the importance of youth participation in disaster response efforts, the rise in natural disasters and the disproportionate impact on marginalized communities. He underscored Türkiye's robust disaster management system and UNEP's initiatives in disaster risk reduction and engaging youth in environmental action. He emphasized the unique process of economic recovery and suggested "green" stimulus packages to stimulate employment and reduce production costs. Mr. Ahmed concluded by advocating for youth empowerment to support development and achieve the SDGs.

Mr. Mehmet Küçük from MUSIAD, the youth branch of the Independent Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association (MÜSİAD), presented some of their efforts to help young people in Turkey succeed in entrepreneurship and contribute to the country's economic development. During the devastating earthquake that hit 11 provinces in Turkey in February 2023, Young MUSIAD mobilized to provide necessities and built more than 2000 container houses to accommodate people in need in a very short time. The organization

also focused on providing psychological support to young people affected by the disaster and revitalizing the commercial cycle in the region. Additionally, the organization published a book on innovation, with all sales and donation revenues going towards helping people in the earthquake area.

Mr. Sinan Karsiyaka Director at ICYF highlighted the efforts of The Islamic Cooperation Youth Forum and how they immediately mobilized their resources to provide relief and support to those affected by the 2023 earthquake in Türkiye. ICYF assessed the situation and identified the immediate needs of the affected population. ICYF worked in collaboration with local authorities and other humanitarian organizations to provide timely and effective assistance and emergency relief supplies, helped to establish emergency shelters and mobilized a team of volunteers to provide translation for international rescuers and medical assistance. He demonstrated the importance of collaboration and coordination in humanitarian efforts and highlighted the critical role of youth-led organizations in responding to natural disasters.

Kristine Luzette from Religions for Peace emphasized the importance of youth inclusion and participation in leadership roles and has partnered with the International Coordination Council of Youth Forums to empower interfaith youth and facilitate multi-religious collaboration. She underscored the critical role of youth in identifying solutions to global challenges and called for inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable cities to alleviate the effects of social and environmental crises.

Ms. Betül Demirel International student at Columbia University described the incredible mobilization, coordination, and solidarity of young people in the aftermath of the disaster in both Türkiye and the United States. She highlighted the role of youth in social media platforms in mobilizing and coordinating aid efforts, including the development of an application to rescue people under rubble and successful fundraising campaigns. Turkish Student Associations organized campaigns to raise awareness and donations. She expressed gratitude for organizing such an event and providing a platform for youth voices.

**4.**The event was well attended by youth organizations UN entities and Missions it highlighted the significance of consistent efforts and coordination among diverse stakeholders to educate youth and prepare them to engage in humanitarian diplomacy initiatives and the recovery efforts.