Youth 2030: UN-Habitat commits to work with youth to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

8 October 2018, New York: The UN Secretary-General António Guterres has launched the Youth 2030 UN Youth Strategy at a high level meeting at the UN. Youth 2030 aims to scale up global, regional and national actions to meet young people's needs, realize their rights and tap their possibilities as agents of change.

The Secretary-General tasked his Envoy on Youth, Jayathma Wickramanayake, along with UN and youth and youth-led agencies, to lead the implementation of the UN Youth Strategy. The strategy's thematic priority areas reflect the three pillars of the UN system - sustainable development, peace and security, and human rights.

"All of our hopes for a better world rest on young people," Mr. Guterres said. "Sustainable development, human rights, and peace and security can only be achieved if we empower these young people as leaders and enable them to unleash their full potential."

Youth 2030 was co-authored by UN-Habitat as the co-chair for the Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development along with the Secretary-General's Youth Envoy and United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA).

"We commit to meaningfully engaging youth through UN-Habitat's programmes on sustainable urbanization and in particularly we will be looking at the needs of youth living in informal settlements and in conflict cities," UN-Habitat Executive Director, Maimunah Mohd Sharif told the meeting.

The meeting was attended by three heads of state who expressed their support for the Youth 2030 strategy.

""We do not champion the cause of youth opportunity and hope as a favour, but rather as the necessary, undeniable, embrace of our collective future," stated the President of Kenya, Uhuru Kenyatta, "We must give young people education, and employment opportunities if our societies are to live up to their full promise."

He called on youth to actively participate in their countries; development. "Embrace your chance to lead by seizing opportunity and turning it into tangible achievement. You must stand up, offer yourselves, dedicate yourselves, shoulder responsibility, and carry the world into the future."

President of Rwanda, Paul Kagame said the UN could not be relevant to all people without an answer to the aspirations of the world's youth. He said that "equipping the next generation with the capabilities and mindsets needed for success is among the most urgent policy priorities in countries such as my own Rwanda."

The voice and participation of young people were highlighted as critical to the success of the Youth 2030 strategy. South Korea's blockbuster k-pop band, BTS, attended the event to add their support to youth.

"I want to hear your voice, I want to hear your conviction. No matter where you're from, skin colour, gender identity, just speak yourself. Find your name (and) find your voice," said Kim Namjoon, leader of BTS, in a speech that went viral on social media.

Young people globally celebrated the launch of Youth 2030. The founder of the Mathare Environmental Youth Conservation Centre, Isaac Muasa, said Youth 2030 was key for young people living in slums and informal settlements.

"Often young men and women who live in slums such as Mathare never have their voice heard nor their needs recognized," stated Mr Muasa. "In Youth 2030 we see a place for us at the table, a place where we will be respected and listened to. I thank the Secretary-General and Jayathma his Envoy, who we met in Mathare last year, for their recognition of our work and our potential as leaders of today and tomorrow."

Young people today want the sustainable, peaceful world envisioned in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Realizing the aspirations of young people depends on realizing their rights, to empowerment and development, participation and choice. They offer 1.8 billion reasons for the United Nations to stand by their side.

For more information please watch the launch on:

UN WEBTV http://webtv.un.org/watch/launch-of-the-new-youth-strategy/5839450886001/

UN FB:https://www.facebook.com/UNWebTV/videos/511233509420422

And download the report in all UN languages at http://www.un.org/youthenvoy/ and in English at https://www.un.org/youthenvoy/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/18-00080_UN-Youth-Strategy_Web.pdf