



Word count: 5,789

Fifty-eighth session  
Item 108 of the provisional agenda  
Social development, including questions relating  
to the world social situation and to youth, disabled  
persons and the family

Promoting Youth Employment

Report of the Secretary-General

### **Summary**

This report has been prepared in pursuant to General Assembly resolution 57/165 which requested the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session on the implementation of the resolution, including on the progress achieved by the Youth Employment Network.

Section II of this report discusses the context of youth employment and provides the results of a survey of the status of national actions plans for youth employment in Member States. Section III provides information on the background of the Youth Employment Network. Section IV discusses the work and achievements to date of the Youth Employment Network. Section V provides a summary of the outcome of the second meeting of the High-level Panel of Youth Employment Network. The implications of General Assembly resolution 57/156 on promoting youth employment for the Youth Employment Network are discussed in Section VI.

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## **I. Introduction**

1. This report responds to resolution 57/165 which requests the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session on the implementation of the resolution, including on the progress achieved by the Youth Employment Network.<sup>1</sup> The resolution encourages Member States to prepare national reviews and action plans on youth employment and to involve youth organizations and young people in the process. It also invites, within the context of the Youth Employment Network (YEN), the International Labour Organization (ILO), in collaboration with the United Nations Secretariat, the World Bank, and other relevant specialized agencies, to assist and support Governments, upon request, and to undertake a global analysis and evaluation of progress made.

2. The note verbale of 25 March 2003 from the Secretary-General included a Guidance Note for the preparation of national reviews and action plans on youth employment (Annex I) and a short questionnaire on the status of national action plans for youth employment.

## **II. The context of youth employment and the status of national action plans for youth employment**

3. More than 1 billion people today are between 15 and 24 years of age and nearly 40 per cent of the world's population is below the age of 20. Eighty-five per cent of these young people live in developing countries where many are especially vulnerable to extreme poverty. The International Labour Office estimates that around 74 million young women and men are unemployed throughout the world, accounting for 41 per cent of all the 180 million unemployed persons globally<sup>2</sup>, and many more young people are working long hours for low pay, struggling to eke out a living in the informal economy. There are an estimated 59 million young people between 15 and 17 years of age who are engaged in hazardous forms of work.<sup>3</sup> Young people actively seeking to participate in the world of work are two to three times more likely than older generations to find themselves unemployed.<sup>4</sup>

4. Thirty-seven Member States responded to the short questionnaire that was sent to Member States to determine the current status of their national action plans for youth employment.<sup>5</sup> In view of the limited number of responses to this questionnaire, it is only possible to provide a partial view of the status of action plans for youth employment. The results of the survey are summarized in Table 1. Nineteen Member States reported that they had not prepared a national action plan for youth employment, and of these 11 reported that they were planning to prepare action plans. Several Member States reported that they did not have a specific action plan for youth employment because this issue was already being addressed either as part of an overall plan of action for employment or that there were already programmes in place which were addressing youth employment issues.

## **III. Background of the Youth Employment Network**

5. In the Millennium Declaration, Member States resolved to “develop and implement strategies that give young people everywhere a real chance to find decent and productive work.”<sup>6</sup> The Youth Employment Network was first proposed in the Secretary-General's report entitled “We the Peoples: the Role of the United Nations in the 21st Century” in which he stated: “Together with the heads of the World Bank and the International Labour Organization, I am

convening a high-level policy network on youth employment drawing on the most creative leaders in private industry, civil society and economic policy to explore imaginative approaches to this difficult challenge. I will ask this policy network to propose a set of recommendations that I can convey to world leaders within a year. The possible sources of solutions will include the Internet and the informal sector, especially the contribution that small enterprises can make to employment generation.”<sup>7</sup>

6. The twelve-member High-level Panel<sup>8</sup> of the Youth Employment Network met for the first time in July 2001 at ILO Headquarters in Geneva under the chairmanship of the Secretary-General together with the Director-General of the ILO and the President of the World Bank. At this meeting, the Secretary-General emphasized the need for both immediate action and long-term commitment to achieving the millennium goal on youth employment and invited the High-level Panel to continue working with him in an advisory capacity on an ongoing basis. Finally, the Secretary-General requested the ILO to take the lead in organizing the future work of the Youth Employment Network and to assume the responsibility for hosting a permanent Secretariat.

#### **IV. The work and achievements to date of the Youth Employment Network**

7. The recommendations of the High-level Panel<sup>9</sup> encourage world leaders to take personal responsibility for translating the commitments taken at the Millennium Summit into action through a specific political process. First, Heads of State and Government are invited to develop national action plans on youth employment with targets for the creation of jobs and for the reduction of unemployment and to present these plans to the United Nations in a year’s time. Preparing these actions plans should be based on a critical and self-critical review of past national policies. Furthermore, governments are invited to volunteer to be champions of this process, to take the lead in preparing their action plans and in showing the way to others.

8. In developing their plans, governments are encouraged to closely involve young people and to integrate their actions for youth employment into a comprehensive employment policy. Employment policy is seen not as a sectoral policy among others, but rather as the successful mobilization of all public policies.

9. The Panel’s recommendations present youth as an asset, not as a problem. In the next 10 years 1.2 billion young women and men will enter into the working age population, the best educated and trained generation of young people ever, a great potential for economic and social development. Also, the recommendations present youth as a creative force today – and not only tomorrow. The recommendations avoid speaking of young people as “tomorrow’s leaders”, but rather as “today’s partners”: “Young people are now asking that their voices be heard, that issues affecting them be addressed and that their roles be recognized. Rather than being viewed as a target group for which employment must be found, they want to be accepted as partners for development, helping to chart a common course and shaping the future for everyone.”

10. Finally, the Panel has come up with a straightforward political message, which can be summarized in four principles: Employability - invest in education and vocational training for young people, and improve the impact of those investments; Equal opportunities - give young women the same opportunities as young men; Entrepreneurship - make it easier to start and run enterprises to provide more and better jobs for young women and men; and Employment creation - place employment creation at the centre of macroeconomic policy. These recommendations

were transmitted to the President of the General Assembly where they were discussed on 19 November 2001 in the overall framework of follow-up to the Millennium Summit.

11. The establishment of the Secretariat of the Youth Employment Network is a major milestone in the implementation of the recommendations of the High-level panel and, as of September 2002, the International Labour Office in Geneva began hosting the joint United Nations-World Bank-ILO Secretariat. The Government of Sweden has provided start-up financial assistance for the Secretariat, effective December 2002.

12. Thus far, seven countries<sup>10</sup> have expressed their desire to be lead countries for the Youth Employment Network and to champion the preparation of youth employment action plans as called for in the Panel's policy recommendations. More countries have turned to the World Bank, ILO and United Nations Secretariat asking for assistance on youth employment in the framework of the Youth Employment Network. Follow up missions have been undertaken or are planned in a number of these countries, often resulting in concrete measures both to develop projects and to include youth employment in the country's policy framework.<sup>11</sup> A set of Guidelines (Annex II) has been developed for countries wishing to be lead countries for the Youth Employment Network.

13. Following its first meeting in July 2001, the High-level Panel set up four Working Groups on employability, equal opportunities, entrepreneurship and employment creation. The results of these four Working Groups have been integrated into a consolidated document which provides further guidance on these four thematic areas of action first recommended by the Panel in its 2001 recommendations. Furthermore, this document: (i) Serves to document the ongoing discussions within the High-level Panel since its 2001 recommendations; (ii) Provides guidance to Member States in preparing national reviews and action plans on youth employment and as such supplements the Guidance Note (Annex I) which was sent to all governments; and, (iii) Provides guidance to Youth Employment Network partners in designing, implementing and evaluating youth employment policies and programmes.

14. The High-level Panel members have been actively advocating for the Youth Employment Network through their own respective networks, thereby transforming the Network into a "network of networks." The United Nations Secretariat and the World Bank are active partners in this initiative, and support to Member States and to the activities of the High-level Panel is being coordinated and resources pooled. The ILO and the United Nations have held regional meetings and an expert group meeting on youth employment, and further such meetings are planned.<sup>12</sup> Furthermore, the activities of the Youth Employment Network are being coordinated with the work of the United Nations Development Group and with the United Nations Millennium Development Project, as well as with the overall strategy for implementation of the Millennium Declaration.

15. The Youth Employment Network was presented to the meeting of the High-level Committee on Programmes (HLCP) of the Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB)<sup>13</sup> in March 2003. Recognizing that youth employment is both an integral part of the Millennium Declaration and a key contribution to meeting the Millennium Development Goals, including those related to poverty reduction, the Committee confirmed its strong support of the Youth Employment Network. The Committee furthermore noted that the Youth Employment Network provided the United Nations system with an opportunity to influence the international development agenda and policy debate with a positive message in support of the aspirations of the world's young people. Given the political and inter-sectoral dimensions of youth employment, the Committee underscored the necessity of an integrated, system-wide approach

that would address a range of related issues within the purview of the system, including young people and armed conflict, HIV/AIDS, the root causes of terrorism and gender equality. The Committee called on its members to contribute actively to governments' efforts for the elaboration of national reviews and action plans, as well as to provide inputs for the Secretary-General's report to the 58th session of the General Assembly on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 57/165, particularly the provisions contained in its operative paragraph 3.

## **V. Outcome of the second meeting of the High-level Panel of the Youth Employment Network**

16. The second meeting of the High-level Panel of Youth Employment Network was held at ILO Geneva from 30 June – 1 July 2003. The meeting included, in addition to the Members of the Panel, youth representatives, government delegations, including some with ministerial level representation, representatives from business and from trade unions, a variety of partner organizations as well as representatives from the United Nations Secretariat, the World Bank and the ILO.

17. Participants were reminded by the Secretary-General that in the Millennium Declaration world leaders committed themselves to giving young people everywhere a real chance to find decent and productive work, and that the Youth Employment Network, in the process of finding solutions to the problem of youth unemployment and underemployment, will give a much needed boost to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The Secretary-General highlighted youth employment as key to achieving national and collective security and commended the ILO, the World Bank and colleagues in the UN Secretariat for demonstrating a new way of working, both together within the UN system and with partners from the business community, trade unions, Non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and especially young people themselves. He also said that it is important not only to accept, but also to encourage a youth input into national poverty reduction strategies. The Network's challenge is now to move from the excellent policy work that has been achieved, to a new phase of action at the country level.

18. The Director-General of the ILO in his opening remarks underlined that in the uncertain and troubled times since the first meeting of the High-level Panel in July 2001, the importance and relevance of youth employment has only grown. The Director-General also pointed to three areas where further progress should be expected of the Network. The first was to drive home the importance of youth employment to the overall development agenda. Secondly, he welcomed the participants' views on how to better involve young people in the Network. Echoing the Panel's recommendations to consider youth as an asset, not as a problem, the Director-General called on participants to avoid stigmatising the victim and stressed that: "Unemployment is the problem. Youth are the solution." Finally, the Director-General called on the Network to embark on a new phase of implementation on the ground.

19. The World Bank Managing Director signalled the Bank's committed engagement on youth issues and in the work of the Network. She pledged that the World Bank would promote the youth employment agenda through its relationship with governments, and take up this issue in its consultations with NEPAD. Alongside its relationship with the ILO, the World Bank would also work to integrate youth employment into its projects, including those on health and education.

20. The Meeting of the High-level Panel discussed a draft action programme recommending the next five steps to be taken by the Network:

- First, a call for the Youth Employment Network to endorse the High-level Panel's 2003 recommendations on employability, equal opportunities, entrepreneurship and employment creation, based on the roadmaps produced by the Panel's four Working Groups. Each roadmap outlines the obstacles faced in achieving decent and productive work for youth, policy and operational solutions to overcoming these obstacles, and provides examples and background on cases where these policies are being put into practice;
- Second, initiatives to stimulate and encourage governments to design and implement national action plans for youth employment, as called for in General Assembly resolution 57/165;
- Third, a proposal for social dialogue on youth employment, inviting representatives of employers and workers to participate in the design and implementation of these action plans;
- Fourth, an invitation to youth organisations all over the world to advise in the design of youth employment programmes, to contribute to the implementation of these programmes, to help governments monitor progress towards their commitments on youth employment, and to work with the High-level Panel in an ongoing advisory capacity.
- Finally, a call for the World Bank and the ILO to jointly develop an initiative for mobilising funding for national youth employment programmes, through "twinning" and regional cooperation, and for the work of the Youth Employment Network Secretariat.

21. Youth representatives for their part presented a proposal on their own involvement in the broader Network's activities and on how they proposed to organize themselves into a sustainable advisory group. Their suggestions ranged from the need for reliable indicators and a youth panel vis-à-vis the High-level Panel to a database of national youth organizations working on national action plans. They also highlighted the need for a coordinating mechanism between the Youth Employment Network and its youth constituents, possibly supported by the appointment of a Youth Coordinator for the Network.

22. Following the meeting of the High-Level Panel, the Youth Employment Network Secretariat has undertaken joint consultations on strengthening the coherence of its activities on youth employment to anchor the work of the Network. This involves action in three areas:

- (a) A political process: linking policy to action
  - (i) Develop a strategic plan for follow-up to General Assembly resolution 57/165 on Promoting Youth Employment;
  - (ii) Initiate assistance to lead countries in the elaboration of national action plans on youth employment and share experiences and modalities with a broader group of countries;
  - (iii) Mainstream youth employment policies in the ILO's Global Employment Agenda and in national poverty reduction strategies, including the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP); and
  - (iv) Ensure strong participation of young people in elaboration and implementation of national action plans and strengthen the role of youth as a sounding board for the High-level Panel.
- (b) "Mapping" the challenge of youth employment

- (i) Develop new statistical tools to monitor the situation and experiences of youth in the labour market, as well as policy-oriented indicators on youth employment, addressing training needs, underemployment, gender constraints for youth, the working poor and those working in the informal economy. These indicators will also contribute to monitoring the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals;
  - (ii) Take stock of lessons learned from the past work of the United Nations, World Bank and ILO on youth employment;
  - (iii) Undertake joint UN-World Bank-ILO evaluations at the country-level of youth employment programmes and policies;
  - (iv) Develop a joint research agenda on, for example: indicators of youth employment, unemployment and underemployment; the link between policies and programmes to eliminate child labour, and those promoting youth employment; youth employment and conflict; and the contribution of youth employment to poverty reduction strategies.
- (c) Promoting initiatives and programmes with proven impact on youth employment through network development
- (i) Improve advocacy and share good practices through an interactive Youth Employment Network website and communications strategy; and
  - (ii) Support exchanges of youth employment initiatives, including grassroots experiences, and feed these experiences into Government policy;

## **VI. Implications of General Assembly resolution 57/156 on Promoting Youth Employment for the Youth Employment Network**

23. The strategic implications of this Resolution for the work of the United Nations, World Bank and International Labour Office can be seen in the medium term, running through 2005. The General Assembly's resolution on promoting youth employment was discussed by the Governing Body of the International Labour Organization in March 2003<sup>14</sup> where its Committee on Employment and Social Policy recommended to respond favourably to the General Assembly's invitation for the ILO to play a major substantive role in the implementation of this resolution.<sup>15</sup> Therefore from present until early 2004, the Youth Employment Network, and its core partner institutions of the ILO, World Bank and United Nations Secretariat, are called upon to support Member States in carrying out national reviews and action plans on youth employment. A Guidance Note for the preparation of the national reviews and action plans (Annex I) was sent to all Member States in March 2003, and the deadline for submission to the United Nations Secretariat is March 2004.

24. During the second year, that is from 2004 to early 2005, the Youth Employment Network, under the leadership of the ILO, is called upon, in cooperation with the United Nations Secretariat, the World Bank and other relevant agencies, to carry out a global analysis and evaluation of these national reviews and action plans and of progress made in the work of the Youth Employment Network. The ILO has announced its intention of preparing this global analysis and evaluation within the framework of its 2005 World Employment Report on youth employment. Since youth employment is an integral part of the international community's strategy for the implementation of the Millennium Declaration, this major report on youth



employment will contribute to the five-year review of the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals in 2005.<sup>16</sup>

## **VII. Conclusions**

25. Since the launching of the Youth Employment Network following the Millennium Summit, the urgency of providing young people access to decent and productive work has grown. The Network has succeeded in demonstrating how different partners in the international community can work together to address the various dimensions of this challenge. The General Assembly, with its resolution on promoting youth employment, has not only strengthened the mandate for the Network, but also has provided guidance for the Network's activities over the next two years, leading up to the five-year review of the implementation of the outcome of the Millennium Declaration.

26. The focus in the next phase of the Network's activities is clearly on action at the country level. To prepare for this action, it is urgent that Member States submit their national reviews and action plans on youth employment by the March 2004 deadline, and that necessary steps be taken to mobilize, both nationally and internationally, the resources necessary for the implementation of these action plans.

## **Guidance Note for the preparation of national reviews and action plans on youth employment in response to resolution 57/165 on Promoting Youth Employment\***

### I. Context

1. The commitment to “develop and implement strategies that give young people everywhere a real chance to find decent and productive work” emanates from the Millennium Declaration.
2. Governments may wish to refer to United Nations General Assembly document A/56/422 for overall guidance in the preparation of national reviews and action plans on youth employment (resolution 57/165, operative paragraph 2). This document specifies that “strategies can be shaped on a global level, but policies and action plans have to be developed at the national level. Here, government leadership is fundamental.”
3. The need to first carry out “a critical and self-critical review of past national policies” is emphasized as “essential in the preparation of national action plans.” In developing their action plans, Governments and concerned participants may wish to base these plans “not only on the needs of young people but also on the strengths that they bring to businesses, communities and societies.” Furthermore, Governments may wish to consider “an integrated concept for employment policy,” seeing employment policy not as sectoral policy among others, but rather as the successful mobilization of all public policies with the aim of getting young people into full and productive employment.”

### II. A consultative process

4. Resolution 57/165 specifies that the preparation of national reviews and action plans should “involve youth organizations and young people in this process, taking into account, *inter alia*, the commitments made by Member States in this regard, in particular those included in the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond.<sup>17</sup>” Governments may therefore wish to set in place a national consultative mechanism involving youth organizations, young people, as well as representatives of employers’ and workers’ organizations, private sector and civil society organizations.
5. In this regard General Assembly document A/56/422 states “while government leadership is critical, Governments cannot do it alone. Business also has a substantial interest in making the most of youth potential, and in avoiding the negative consequences of widespread youth unemployment. Employers recognize that employing young people is good for business, as they bring to the workplace enthusiasm, energy, commitment, new ideas and the willingness to embrace change. There is also a role for networks and partnerships among Governments, at the national and local levels, employers’ organizations, trade unions, youth organizations and other civil society groups: they can learn from each other and pool efforts and resources.”
6. In this context, the High-level Panel of the Secretary-General’s Youth Employment Network recommends that “civil society, the business community, employers, trade unions and

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\* This Guidance Note was sent to Member States together with the note verbale of 25 March 2003 from the Secretary-General.

youth organizations should also be invited to contribute to policy-making and implementation at both global and national levels.”

7. Government ministries and departments responsible for employment, labour, youth and finance could be involved in the preparation of national action plans.

### III. Issues to be considered

8. In order to facilitate the preparation of the “global analysis and evaluation of progress made” (resolution 57/165, operative paragraph 3) Governments may wish to structure their action plans in the framework of the four global priorities for a decent work strategy for young people proposed by the Secretary-General’s High-level Panel, namely, entrepreneurship, employability, equal opportunities and employment creation.<sup>18</sup>

Employability: invest in education and vocational training for young people, and improve the impact of those investments;

Equal opportunities: give young women the same opportunities as young men;

Entrepreneurship: make it easier to start and run enterprises to provide more and better jobs for young women and men;

Employment creation: place employment creation at the centre of macroeconomic policy.

9. Governments may also wish to address additional issues, including but not limited to: (a) action in favour of youth in positions of vulnerability due to conflict or poverty, and (b) an intergenerational or life-cycle approach to youth employment.

10. Governments may furthermore wish to consider the importance of information and communications technologies which offer “significant potential for welfare enhancement and employment generation among young people, and their impact on each of the priority elements should be fully considered in every action plan. Here, emphasis must be placed on closing the digital divide within and between countries.”<sup>19</sup>

11. In developing their action plans, Governments may wish to review the quality and range of available statistics regarding employment, unemployment and underemployment of young people. Specifically, Governments are invited to provide the following statistics based on ILO definitions of employment and unemployment and on the United Nations definition of young people represented by those between 15-24 years of age:

- youth unemployment rate;
- ratio of youth unemployment rate to total unemployment rate;
- share of youth unemployment in total unemployment;
- share of youth unemployment in total youth population; and
- proportion of young people who are either employed or in education or training.

12. The action plan may wish to provide information on actual practice and plans for collecting statistics on the evolution of youth employment in the country. All available or potential sources of information on youth employment and unemployment (and related variables such as underemployment, child labour, self-employment, employment by occupation and employment in the informal economy) should be specified. If a regular labour force survey is not currently being carried out, Governments may wish to specify any plan they have to launch such a survey programme. Other available data sources such as household surveys are also relevant.

#### IV. Information relevant to the preparation of national reviews and action plans

13. Governments may wish, in preparing their national reviews and action plans, to refer to the following sources where they exist: (a) National youth policies and programmes, including national follow-up action to resolutions 54/120 and 56/117, and (b) National employment programmes, strategies and/or action plans, where these have been prepared.

14. Also, Governments which are members of the International Labour Organization may wish to refer to the reports which they have been requested to submit by April 2003 on the subject of the *Employment Policy Convention*, 1964 (No. 122) and the *Employment Policy (Supplementary Provisions) Recommendation* 1984 (No. 169), as well as aspects of the following as they relate to the promotion of full, productive and freely chosen employment: *Human Resources Development Convention*, 1975 (No. 142) and the *Job Creation in Small and Medium-sized Enterprises Recommendation* 1998 (No. 189). These reports may provide valuable elements for national youth employment action plans.

15. Also Governments may wish to refer to their submissions with respect to the preparation of the *Report of the Secretary-General: Comprehensive report on the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development* (A/AC.253/13).

16. Governments are invited to seek additional guidance and assistance in the preparation of their action plans from one or more of the following: ILO field offices; World Bank field offices; the United Nations Secretariat; the United Nations Regional Commissions and other relevant bodies within the United Nations System.

17. In order to facilitate the global analysis and evaluation of progress made as requested in resolution 57/165, Governments are invited to submit copies of their national reviews and action plans on youth employment to the United Nations Secretariat no later than March 2004. These documents may be sent directly to Mr. Donald Lee, Focal Point, Youth Employment Network, Division for Social Policy and Development, Two United Nations Plaza, DC2-1358, New York, New York 10017 (Telephone: 212-9638762; Fax: 212-9633062)

## **Guidelines for Lead Countries of the Youth Employment Network\*\***

The following areas of action are proposed for countries volunteering to be lead or champion countries for the Youth Employment Network:

1. Confirm your Government's commitment at the highest political level to decent and productive work for young people

The Millennium Declaration was adopted at the Millennium Summit, the largest gathering ever of heads of State and Government. While a number of governmental ministries or departments will no doubt be involved in preparing the action plan, it is understood that the political impetus for this initiative comes from the highest political level.

2. Prepare a national review and action plan on youth employment

While there is no particular model to be followed in preparing these reviews and action plans, your Government may wish to refer to the panel's policy recommendations for overall guidance as to the content and the process to be followed. The action plan may wish to translate the four global priorities highlighted in the panel's recommendations, namely, employability, equal opportunities, entrepreneurship and the relationship of youth employment to broader employment and macro-economic policies, into strategies for national action. The Government may furthermore wish to invite civil society, the business community, employers, trade unions and youth organizations to contribute to this process.

3. Contribute to sharing national experience with other countries and with the international community

Lead countries will be expected to not only develop national reviews and action plans on youth employment, but to furthermore share their plans and experiences with others. While no fixed modalities for sharing such experiences have been established, lead countries may wish to organize regional or international meetings or exchanges in order to build momentum for broader action at the regional and global levels in favour of youth employment. It is expected that bilateral and multilateral technical cooperation activities will be initiated to support such action whereby countries at different levels of development can share the results of youth employment projects, programmes and policies. The youth employment initiative is expected to be representative of major regions and of countries at different levels of development. Industrialized countries can be expected to contribute financially to the youth employment activities in developing and least developed countries, whereas all countries can be expected to have knowledge and expertise to share and to receive.

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\*\* These guidelines were prepared by the YEN Secretariat in response to the call by the High-Level Panel to invite Governments to volunteer to take the lead in preparing their action plans. (A/54/422, para 28)

4. Contribute to a broader political process within the United Nations General Assembly in the overall framework of follow-up to the Millennium Declaration and within the ILO for a coherent and integrated international strategy on employment

Lead countries may wish to support the Millennium Declaration's commitment on youth employment, not simply as an objective in its own right, but furthermore as a means to support the overall roadmap for implementation of all the Millennium Development Goals. Specifically, lead countries may wish to support a resolution in the General Assembly calling for the development of national action plans on youth employment and calling on the ILO to undertake a global review and analysis of these plans as part of a longer term political process. Also, action on youth employment can be expected to contribute to broader employment policy with both national and international dimensions.

**Table 1: Status of national action plans for youth employment**

<b>I. Countries that have <i>not</i> prepared a national action plan on youth employment</b>		<b>II. Countries that have prepared a national action plan on youth employment</b>	
<u>(a) Countries planning to prepare an action plan</u>		<u>(a) Countries that have reviewed their national action plans</u>	
<u>Year in which plan will be prepared</u>		<u>Year in which action plan was reviewed</u>	
Barbados	2003-2004	Azerbaijan*	2000
Burkina Faso	2003	Bangladesh	1978, 1981
Cape Verde	2004	Cambodia	2001
Ethiopia	(not decided)	China	2002
Jamaica	2003	Indonesia*	1996
Lebanon	2004	Kazakhstan*	g/
Marshall Islands	2005	Kyrgyz Republic	1998
Nicaragua	2003	Malaysia	Every 5 and 10 years
Senegal	2003	Mexico	2002
Slovenia	2004	Monaco	2001-2002
Trinidad and Tobago	2003-2004	Poland	2002
		Qatar*	2000
		Slovak Republic	2002, 2003
		South Africa	2001
		Switzerland	g/
		Syria	2003
		Ukraine	Annually
<u>(b) Countries <i>not</i> planning to prepare an action plan</u>		<u>(b) Countries that have not reviewed their national action plans</u>	
New Zealand	a/	Antigua and Barbuda*	h/
Austria	b/		
Czech Republic	b/		
Belarus	c/		
Cyprus	c/		
Germany	d/		
Norway	e/		
Sweden	f/		

Notes

\* These countries reported, in addition, that action plans for youth employment were being prepared: Antigua and Barbuda (in 2004); Azerbaijan (in process); Indonesia (2003-2005); Kazakhstan (no date provided); and Qatar (2002).

a/ Broad programme for youth employment is already being implemented.

b/ Youth employment is considered within the National Employment Action Plan as part of the European Employment Strategy.

c/ No clarification was provided

d/ Youth employment is addressed within the National Employment Plan and the National Plan for Tackling Poverty and Social Exclusion which are updated biannually.

e/ Youth employment is integrated in the national labour market policy.

f/ Youth employment is included in the national Action Plan for Employment which is reviewed annually.

g/ The year the review was undertaken was not provided

h/ No review currently planned.



Notes:

<sup>1</sup> This report was prepared in collaboration with the Secretariat of the Youth Employment Network.

<sup>2</sup> *Global Employment Trends*, International Labour Office, Geneva, 2003, p.1, and *World and regional estimates for selected key indicators of the labour market*, Wesley Schaible and Ramya Mahadevan-Vijaya, Employment Paper 2002/36, International Labour Office, Geneva, 2002, p. 20.

<sup>3</sup> *A future without child labour: Global report under the follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work*, International Labour Office, Geneva, 2002, figure 3.

<sup>4</sup> *Youth and work: Global trends*, International Labour Office, Geneva, 2001, p. 4.

<sup>5</sup> Antigua and Barbuda, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cape Verde, China, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Ethiopia, Germany, Indonesia, Jamaica, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Lebanon, Malaysia, Marshall Islands, Mexico, Monaco, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Poland, Qatar, Senegal, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, Syria, Trinidad and Tobago and Ukraine.

<sup>6</sup> Resolution 55/2, para. 20.

<sup>7</sup> *We the peoples: The role of the United Nations in the 21<sup>st</sup> century*, United Nations, New York, 2000, pp. 25-26.

<sup>8</sup> Saifuddin Abdullah, César Alierta, Ruth C. L. Cardoso, Hernando de Soto, Geeta Rao Gupta, Bill Jordan, Allan Larsson, Rick Little, Maria Livanos Cattai, Magatte Wade, Ralph Willis and Rosanna Wong.

<sup>9</sup> A/56/422.

<sup>10</sup> Azerbaijan, Egypt, Hungary, Indonesia, Namibia, Senegal and Sri Lanka.

<sup>11</sup> Additional countries where action is underway or planned in the immediate future include Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Brazil, Burkina Faso, China, Ghana, India, Iran, Nigeria, Philippines, Saudi Arabia and Vietnam.

<sup>12</sup> For example: the ILO/Japan Tripartite Regional Meeting on Youth Employment, Bangkok, 27 February – 1 March 2002; the United Nations Expert Group Meeting on the Integration of Youth Employment into public investment policies and the framework of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, Ouagadougou, 3-5 December 2002; and the Joint United Nations/ILO Expert Group Meeting on Jobs for Youth: National Strategies for Employment Promotion, Geneva, 15-16 January 2003.

<sup>13</sup> Secretary-General's Youth Employment Network: Issues Note, CEB/2003/HLCP/CRP.3, presented at the Fifth Session of the CEB High-level Committee on Programmes, Rome, 26-27 March 2003.

<sup>14</sup> United Nations Initiative on Youth Employment, International Labour Office, Governing Body, Committee on Employment and Social Policy, Document GB.286/ESP/5, Geneva, March 2003.

<sup>15</sup> International Labour Office, Governing Body, Report of the Committee on Employment and Social Policy, March 2003, document GB.286/15, para. 140, where the Committee recommends that the Governing Body take note of the United Nations General Assembly Resolution on Promoting Youth Employment; request the [International Labour] Office to assist and support, upon request, the efforts of governments in the elaboration of national reviews and action plans on youth employment, and to undertake, by May 2005, a global analysis and evaluation of progress made in this regard; and request the [International Labour] Office to report to it periodically on progress made by the Youth Employment Network in the implementation of the United Nations resolution on promoting youth employment.

<sup>16</sup> Road map towards the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration, A/56/326, para. 306.

<sup>17</sup> Resolution 50/81, annex.

<sup>18</sup> Resolution 56/422, paras. 18-26.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.* para. 19.