WOMEN AND GIRLS DRIVING PROGRESS

YOUNG ACTIVISTS SUMMIT

10 DECEMBER 2019
PALAIS DES NATIONS
GENEVA

PRESS RELEASE
PRESS RELEASE YOUNG ACTIVISTS SUMMIT #YAS19

Geneva, 26 November - The first edition of the Young Activists Summit #YAS19 will take place in Geneva at the Palais des Nations on 10 December 2019

Nobel Peace Prize winner Nadia Murad will be the guest of honour at the YOUNG ACTIVISTS SUMMIT, WOMEN AND GIRLS DRIVING PROGRESS. Organized by the United Nations Office at Geneva, Radio Télévision Suisse (RTS) and dev.tv NGO of media professionals, this event will bring together six young female activists on Human Rights day.

A new generation of young women and girl activists has risen. These modern-day heroines embody the fight against injustice and help drive progress. The first edition of the YOUNG ACTIVISTS SUMMIT will be held in the symbolic Human Rights and Alliance of Civilizations room and will highlight the outstanding achievements of six young women.

Nadia Murad (26 years old, Iraq) was among thousands of Yazidi women who were abducted, raped, and enslaved by the self-proclaimed Islamic State (ISIS). After escaping, Nadia Murad alerted the international community to the plight of her people and founded Nadia’s Initiative, an organisation dedicated to reconstructing Sinjar and helping women and children victimised by genocide, mass atrocities and human trafficking. In 2016, she was appointed by the United Nations Goodwill Ambassador for the Dignity of Survivors of Human Trafficking. In 2018 Nadia Murad was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for her efforts “to end the use of sexual violence as a weapon of war and armed conflict”.

Memory Banda (23 years old, Malawi) fights against early and forced marriages. She has helped change the attitudes of traditional leaders and even the laws in her country: the minimum legal age for marriage has been raised from 15 to 18 years in Malawi. Memory Banda also campaigns more broadly for girls’ rights and access to education. In 2018, she launched the Foundation4GirlsLeadership.

Amy & Ella Meek (16 and 14 years old, UK) founded Kids Against Plastic, a campaign for young people that addresses one of the world’s biggest environmental problems: plastic pollution. The two sisters Amy and Ella Meek work with young people, schools and companies to eradicate single use plastic items. 14-year-old Ella has her own TV show on Sky Kids.

Rebecca Kabuo (also known as Kabugho or Kavugho, 25 years old, Democratic Republic of the Congo) is a prominent member of LUCHA (Lutte pour le Changement), a non-violent, non-partisan youth movement which campaigns for good governance in DRC. Rebecca wants to pass on to future generations a country where people have access to clean water, health care and security.

Hamangaí Pataxó (22 years old, Brazil) defends the rights of indigenous peoples and nature conservation. Hamangaí Pataxó is a prominent member of the Brazilian youth movement Engajamundo. Instead of cutting down the forest, Hamangaí Pataxó suggests drawing inspiration from indigenous populations, who interact sustainably with nature.
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Press Conference

A press conference, organized by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), will be held in the presence of the activists as well as the organizers on Tuesday 10 December 2019 from 12.15pm to 1.15pm in press room III at the Palais des Nations.

Media already accredited at the UN can attend the press conference without registration, but must register to the Young Activists Summit events if they wish to attend them.

Media not accredited at the UN must create an INDICO account https://reg.unog.ch/user/register and register to one of the Young Activists Summit events in order to access to the press conference.

Registration to the Young Activists Summit events is mandatory and open until 29 November included.

Registration for the youth session: https://reg.unog.ch/event/31212/
Registration for the award ceremony: https://reg.unog.ch/event/32532/

Materials for the media:
https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1vf1ozS-t94B19ogyNU9lQU4ISuA45h?usp=sharing
- Photos of the activists, digital toolkit #YAS19, video teasers are available on the drive from 26 November.
- Videos of the activists in the field, generic footage about their cause and press kit will be added on 5 December.
- Photos, video footage and interviews of the activists at the Young Activists Summit will be added on 10 December (early afternoon release of VNRs with excerpts of the youth session, early evening release of VNR with excerpts of the award ceremony)

For any further information, please contact: media@youngactivistssummit.org

Programme of the Summit

On 10 December, a Youth Session will gather hundreds of youngsters (15-25 years old) from 10.00am to 11.30am. Each activist will explain the motivations for her engagement. The moderator, Tania Chytil (RTS) will invite them to debate and the young audience will be able to ask questions and share ideas.

Registration is mandatory (limited number of seats) and open until 29 November included
https://reg.unog.ch/event/31212/

From 4.30pm to 6.00pm, an award ceremony will be attended by hundreds of officials invited from permanent missions, UN agencies, foundations, NGOs, as well as the private sector. A discussion moderated by Heba Aly from The New Humanitarian will take place, during which the six activists will advocate for their causes and exchange views with one another. Each activist will receive an award specially designed by Swiss designer Philippe Cramer and handed over by a child, to symbolize the gratitude of future generations to those who are taking action today for a better and safer world.

Registration is mandatory (limited number of seats) and open until 29 November
https://reg.unog.ch/event/32532/

Both the Youth Session and the Award Ceremony will be livestreamed online:
www.youngactivistssummit.org

To ensure that the Summit has a lasting impact, financial contributions will be donated by foundations to the activists’ field programs. While the Sisley Patronage Foundation will make a donation to the six activists, other foundations will support specific actions related to their programs. The Young Activists Summit is very grateful to all the donors for their generous contributions.

Organized in cooperation with the Graduate Institute, working sessions and bilateral meetings will be held on the day following the event. The activists will meet with experts, consultants and officials. The aim of these sessions, not open to the public, is to empower the activists and strengthen their action with knowledge, technical tools and expert networks.
Tataki will produce a special series of digital reports on the Summit before, during and after the event. RTS will oversee the production of various television, radio and digital programs to accompany the Young Activists Summit. RTS will also offer international exposure to all content via the TV5MONDE network reaching 354 million households in 200 countries. The United Nations Office at Geneva is pleased to host the Summit as part of its outreach to young people on the eve of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations.

Key messages

Promoting the image of young women and girls as drivers of progress, encouraging them to take action and fostering solidarity among girls and young people: these are the main aims of the Young Activists Summit. It will focus on their courage and talents as they rewrite the prevailing narrative and challenge the typical portrayal of girls as helpless victims.

Next steps

dev.tv is working on a platform to support young activists throughout the world who want to shape the world of tomorrow for the better. It will be developed in 2020.

"The world is facing a myriad of challenges and we are running out of time to address them. But I have been really encouraged to see an increasing number of youngsters – including remarkable women and girls – taking things into their own hands and standing up for their rights, with great courage and determination. They are an inspiration to all of us – regardless of age- and must be heard. I am pleased that the Young Activists Summit will serve as a platform to amplify their voices and facilitate their action."

Corinne Momal-Vanian, Director, Division of Conference Management, United Nations Office at Geneva

"We are proud to be part of this important event, which honors young people and also young women, says producer Chantal Bernheim. Bringing together international social issues and actors of International Geneva is at the heart of our public service mission."

Chantal Bernheim, Producer, Radio Television Suisse

"By highlighting these six exceptional activists, who have demonstrated their courage and talent and who stand up against injustice, we are reminded that young women are a factor of progress for society and that they deserve respect. In this regard, the underlying idea of the Young Activists Summit is to fight against the persistent inequalities and violence against women, especially young girls. The purpose of the Young Activists Summit is also to raise awareness about key causes and encourage solidarity among young people.

As this project developed, we sought to include everything that could support the action of our activists: visibility, access to a young audience, access to decision-makers, strategic meetings with specialists and financial resources."

Marina Wutholen, Director, dev.tv
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PRESS CONFERENCE ORGANIZER

United Nations Populations Fund (UNFPA)

UNFPA is the United Nations sexual and reproductive health agency. Its mission is to deliver a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every childbirth is safe and every young person’s potential is fulfilled.

www.unfpa.org

YOUNG ACTIVISTS SUMMIT ORGANIZERS

United Nations Office at Geneva

The United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG) is the representative office of the Secretary-General in Geneva, the largest duty station outside of United Nations Headquarters in New York. An essential role for UNOG is to promote International Geneva as a platform for multilateral diplomacy, global consensus-building and cross-cultural dialogue in support of peace, rights and well-being for all. As an integral part of the wider United Nations family in Geneva, an important task for the UNOG is to facilitate cooperation and coherence in the collective work that touches every person on the planet. This entails building strong partnerships with Member States, other international organizations, civil society, research and academic entities, and the business community. The rich presence of these different stakeholder communities in Geneva is an asset that adds particular value to the work of the United Nations family.

www.unog.ch

dev.tv, NGO of media professionals

Founded in 2002 by media professionals in Geneva, dev.tv is a non-profit organization with a mission to promote media coverage of social, humanitarian and environmental issues. Recognized by the major media for its ethics and editorial reliability, dev.tv works with TV channels, social media, international organizations, NGOs and foundations. Dev.tv’s team is supervising and coordinating the overall operation with all the partners involved, producing video content for the Summit as well as for the media, both traditional and digital.

www.dev.tv

Radio Télévision Suisse

Radio Télévision Suisse (RTS) is a public service audiovisual company, part of the media group SSR (Swiss Broadcasting Corporation), which offers programs on four radio channels, two television channels and numerous digital platforms. We produce, acquire and broadcast information, sports, culture, music and entertainment programs for all audiences in French-speaking Switzerland. Our quality general-interest programs are open to all and manufactured in accordance with our mandate and concession: with independence, credibility and balance of information. Dealing with current regional, national and international issues, we offer a French-speaking perspective on the realities that surround us. Our studios are based in Geneva and Lausanne and we have an office in each French-speaking canton as well as correspondents in Bern, Zurich, Lugano and in the main international capitals.

www.rts.ch

Tataki

Tataki is a Swiss digital media, part of public broadcaster Radio Télévision Suisse (RTS), through an exclusive digital presence via social networks such as YouTube, Instagram and Facebook, as well as on PlayRTS, this medium creates and shares videos and illustrations on a daily basis in three main thematic areas: entertainment, urban culture and social issues. The formats are available in the form of reportages, interviews, vlogs, games, mood posts, analyses, stories, montages, photos, inspired by the street and pop culture. One of Tataki’s core goals is to enhance the value of Swiss youth, through their culture, concerns and daily inspirations.

www.rts.ch
This young media, created in Geneva on 21 September 201, targets mainly the French-speaking Swiss youth (15 to 25 years old), but more broadly the French-speaking world. It was launched by RTS (Radio Télévision Suisse) on Facebook, Instagram, Youtube and Snapchat. Its name, Tataki, is based on a Japanese recipe, one of the cradles of pop culture. The recipe consists in snaking the meat or fish to keep the heart raw. By analogy, Tataki would retain the strength of the raw and the finesse of the fried food, all served in slices (in episodes).

Tataki’s content and series evolve and change regularly (approximately every 6 months) to offer several simultaneous series on each of its networks.

In September 2018, Tataki launched “Swisscred - The best city in French-speaking Switzerland”, a series hosted by Sacha Porchet that mobilizes the whole of French-speaking Switzerland to vote for their city. It was Bulle (canton of Fribourg) that finally won this giant competition.

In May 2019, Tataki’s various platforms had more than 70,000 subscribers combined.