



SUMMIT

OF AFRICA YOUTH LEADERS

On Peace, Security and Development of
the African Continent

REPORT



**DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO
KINSHASA, 31 AUGUST 2024**



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Summit of Africa Youth Leaders was held on 31 August 2024 in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), under the **theme: Peace, Security and Development of the African Continent**. The summit was convened by the **Pan-African Youth Union (PYU) and the National Youth Council of DRC (Conseil National de la Jeunesse (CNJ-RDC), with the invaluable support of the Ministry of Youth and Patriotic Awakening of DRC (Ministère de la Jeunesse et Éveil Patriotique)**.

The Summit gathered youth leaders across the continent to engage in meaningful dialogue on pressing issues affecting the continent's stability and growth. A landmark achievement of the summit was the drafting of the **"Africa Youth Declaration on Peace, security and development in Africa."** This declaration articulates a comprehensive set of commitments and recommendations from African youth, emphasizing the need for greater investment in youth empowerment, inclusion in decision-making processes, and support for youth-led peacebuilding initiatives. The declaration represents a unified voice of African youth calling for a renewed focus on sustainable peace and development across the continent.

The outcome of this summit is poised to serve as a catalyst for development initiatives, not only within the DRC but throughout Africa, fostering a vision of the continent as a beacon of peace, prosperity, and collective progress.

In advance of the summit, several key engagements took place, including a high-level meeting with **His Excellency President Félix Antoine Tshisekedi Tshilombo** at the presidency, Kinshasa.

Also, PYU Secretary-General, Mr. Bening Ahmed Wiisichong, had an engagement with Hon. Noella Ayeganagato Nakwipon, Minister of Youth and Patriotic Awakening of DRC along with PYU Vice President for Central Africa, Ms. Pamela Audrey Derom, and the President of National Youth Council of DRC, Mr. William Mukambila .

These meetings laid the groundwork for the success of the Summit and marked the strong commitment of the government of DRC to youth empowerment and development.

Still on the preparation of the Summit, the leadership of PYU had a briefing session with the Presidents and representatives of National Youth Councils in Kinshasa.

PAN-AFRICAN YOUTH UNION LEADS AFRICAN YOUTH LEADERS TO ENGAGE HIS EXCELLENCY PRESIDENT FÉLIX ANTOINE TSHISEKEDI TSHILOMBO IN KINSHASA

On August 29, 2024, the leadership of the Pan-African Youth Union led leaders of National Youth Councils and equivalent National Coordinating Mechanisms to engage with **His Excellency President Félix Antoine Tshisekedi Tshilombo** at the Presidency in Kinshasa.

The meeting was to engage His Excellency the President who is the **African Union Champion of Youths on matters of peace, security and African development.**

The youth leaders were in Kinshasa for the **Summit of African Youth Leaders**, convened by the Pan-African Youth Union, National Youth Council of DRC with the support from the Ministry of Youth and Patriotic Awakening under the auspices of His Excellency the President.

His Excellency President Félix Antoine Tshisekedi stated his support for youth empowerment as a key driver for sustainable development and peace in Africa.



He stated that, “The Summit of Africa Youth Leaders on Peace, Security, and Development on the African Continent holds immense significance for the Democratic Republic of Congo and Africa as a whole”.

He added that “Kinshasa, hosting this summit serves as a testament to the city’s growth as a hub for regional and continental diplomacy”.

DRC, a nation that has experienced its share of conflict and instability, stands at a crucial juncture where peace and security are not just national priorities but essential for regional development.



His Excellency President Félix Antoine Tshisekedi strongly reiterated his dedication to youth empowerment as a pivotal element for achieving sustainable development and lasting

peace in Africa. Concluding with a strong commitment that the Government of Democratic Republic of Congo will continue supporting youth-led initiatives for peace, security and development in the region.



PAN-AFRICAN YOUTH UNION SECRETARY-GENERAL MEETS WITH MINISTER OF YOUTH AND PATRIOTIC AWAKENING OF DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

The Secretary-General of the Pan-African Youth Union, **Mr. Bening Ahmed Wiisichong**, engaged in a highly productive discussion with **Hon. Noella Ayeganagato Nakwipon**, Minister of Youth and Patriotic Awakening of Democratic Republic of Congo along with **Ms. Pamela Audrey Derom**, Vice President of the Pan-African Youth Union for Central Africa, and **Mr. William Mukambila**, President of National Youth Council of Democratic Republic of Congo. This meeting marked a significant step towards fostering stronger collaboration between the Pan-African Youth Union and Democratic Republic of Congo in advancing youth development and patriotic engagement.



Photo: from the left: Mr. Bening Ahmed Wiisichong; Secretary-General of the Pan-African Youth Union, Hon. Noella Ayeganagato Nakwipon; Minister of Youth and Patriotic Awakening of DRC, Ms. Pamela Audrey Derom; PYU Vice President for Central Africa, Mr. William Mukambila; the President of National Youth Council of DRC

The meeting between Secretary-General Wiisichong and Minister Ayeganagato Nakwipon centered on enhancing youth participation in national and continental initiatives, promoting strategic partnerships, and addressing key issues impacting the youth across Africa. Both leaders expressed their commitment to leveraging their respective platforms to drive positive change and foster greater unity among African youth. This fruitful engagement underscores the shared vision of both parties in championing the cause of youth empowerment and national development, paving the way for future cooperation and impactful initiatives.

The Pan-African Youth Union remains committed to the renewal of youth unionism and advancing the African Renaissance agenda, underscoring the power of collective action and unity.



LEADERS OF NATIONAL YOUTH COUNCILS DISCUSS IN KINSHASA



In advance of the **Summit of Africa Youth Leaders on peace, security and development of the African continent**. Presidents and representatives of National Youth Councils had a briefing session with the leadership of the Pan-African Youth Union (PYU) in Kinshasa.

The session commenced with a welcome address by **Mr. Moumouni Dialla, President of the Pan-African Youth Union**. Mr. Dialla's address set a positive tone for the session, encouraging a spirit of collaboration and shared responsibility among African youth leaders. Mr. Dialla expressed his gratitude to the attending leaders for their unwavering commitment and continued support to the work of the PYU. He acknowledged the significant role the National Youth Councils play in fostering youth development, promoting unity, and advocating for the rights and aspirations of young people in their respective countries. He further expressed his gratitude to the leaders of National Youth Councils for their continuous commitment in supporting the PYU's mission and their dedication to advancing the cause of youth across the continent.

The Secretary-General of the Pan-African Youth Union, Mr. Bening Ahmed Wiisichong, equally thanked the leaders of the National Youth Councils and spoke on:

THE ROLE OF NATIONAL YOUTH COUNCILS IN PYU

The Secretary-General indicated that PYU was a member state led platform, where the executive committee is accountable through the National Youth Councils and equivalent National Coordinating Mechanisms. National Youth Councils equally have the responsibility in supporting the work of the PYU rather than shifting responsibilities to their representatives on the committee. The Secretary-General added, the National Youth Councils are the PYU and therefore, must be the ambassadors of the work of PYU, amplifying and emphasizing the significance of the PYU at national level.

PYU RESTRUCTURING AND REFORM AGENDA

The Secretary-General continued that the PYU is undergoing a comprehensive restructuring and reform agenda to make it more inclusive and reflective of the changing dynamics of the African youth development ecosystem. The Secretary-General outlined several upcoming PYU events that are part of this agenda:

- **African Youth Side Event at the Summit of the Future:** Scheduled to take place in New York on September 20th, 2024, in partnership with the UN Office of the Special Adviser on Africa (OSSA), UNDP, ECA, and the African Union Commission.
- **African Start-Up Forum:** To be held from 29th - 31st October 2024 in the Kingdom of Morocco.
- **Pan African Youth Forum:** Set to take place on November 1st, 2024.



President of the Pan-African Youth Union, Mr. Moumouni Dialla at the Leaders of National Youth Councils Discussion on 29 August 2024 in Kinshasa



The emphasis was on the importance of joint programs between the PYU and the National Youth Councils. These initiatives will go a long way to bring grassroots closer to the work of the Union, ensuring that the PYU's impact is felt across all levels of society.





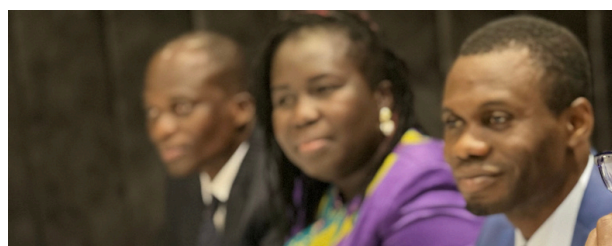
RECENT PYU ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

The Secretary-General also highlighted PYU's **four major activities of the year 2024**, which have successfully brought together youth leaders and development actors across Africa to discuss the challenges of our continent.

1. **Summit of Africa Youth Leaders in Kinshasa:** A significant gathering focused on peace, security, and development.
2. **International Youth Day Celebration in Burkina Faso:** Organized in collaboration with the National Youth Council of Burkina Faso and the Ministry of Sports, Youth, and Employment, this event took place on August 9th - 10th in Ouagadougou.
3. **African Youth Consultative Forum on the UN Summit of the Future:** Convened in Addis Ababa on April 26th and 27th, 2024, under the auspices of the Economic Commission for Africa, the Pan African Youth Union, and the African Union Commission.
4. **Africa Youth Colloquium:** Held alongside the African Union Heads of Summit 2024, this colloquium brought together over 60 young leaders from 20 African countries to discuss key issues affecting youth across the continent.



The Union also supported the **National Youth Council of Mozambique in convening the 15th National Youth Conference in Mozambique** to generate policy advisories to the government and amplify the aspirations of young people across the country, he concluded. The briefing session had thirty Presidents and representatives of National Youth Councils, Regional Economic Commission and Youth Civil Society Organizations leaders.



**LEADERS OF
NATIONAL YOUTH
COUNCILS DISCUSS
IN KINSHASA**

2024

SUMMIT OF AFRICA YOUTH LEADERS ON PEACE, SECURITY AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE AFRICAN CONTINENT

The Summit gathered youth leaders across the African continent to engage in meaningful dialogue on pressing issues affecting the continent's stability and growth. Over the course of this summit, youth leaders exchanged insights, shared best practices, and proposed innovative solutions to address the challenges faced in conflict and post-conflict settings. This collaborative spirit underscored the crucial role of youth in shaping a peaceful and secure future for Africa.

OPENING REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL OF DRC, MR. WILLIAM MUKAMBILA

The President of the National Youth Council of Democratic Republic of Congo, **Mr. William Mukambila**, opened the Summit of Africa Youth Leaders by welcoming leaders from DRC and across the continent for gracing the occasion in Kinshasa.

In his remarks, he urged the youths of DRC and Africa as whole to take control of their own destiny. For too long, we have been neglected, the moment has come for us to rise and make our voices heard, he stated. He continued, If we are not included in shaping the present, the future will be bleak.

"We the African's must embrace African solidarity and patriotism, for without unity, we are vulnerable to the same forces that have manipulated us for generations." - Mr. William Mukambila, President of National Youth Council of DRC

He highlighted the need to support and empower youth initiatives. Mr. Mukambila further stated that, the vision of a brighter future for Africa depends on our ability to stand together, united in our pursuit of peace and progress. The peace we seek in DRC is not a matter of individual concern, it is a collective responsibility.



President of the National Youth Council of DRC, Mr. William Mukambila giving welcoming remarks at the Summit of Africa Youth Leaders on 31 August 2024 in Kinshasa

He called on the African brothers and sisters across the continent to join them in this effort, for only through solidarity can we build the Africa we all dream of, a continent on the path of true renaissance.

In 30 years, the world will speak of an Africa that has awakened and this future begins with us, here and now, he affirmed.

REMARKS BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE PAN-AFRICAN YOUTH UNION, MR. BENING AHMED WIISICHONG

The Secretary-General of the Pan-African Youth Union, **Mr. Bening Ahmed Wiisichong**, expressed his sincere appreciation to the Presidents of the National Youth Councils and Regional Platforms that came across the continent to Kinshasa for the Summit of Africa Youth Leaders on Peace, Security and Development on the African Continent.

Distinguished ladies and Gentlemen, our continent is overwhelmed by the growing incidence of armed conflicts, political conflicts, militant insurgence, military takeovers, pandemics and the incessant attack from imperialism. We are confronted with an aggressive looting and plunder of our natural resources by imperial powers aided by African accomplices with whom we have entrusted political power. By the Secretary-General.

The Secretary-General highlighted **the importance of unity for the development of the African continent**. This continent cannot progress if we have no commitment to uniting and building a collective interest for Africa. We can only develop our continent and build a resilient, progressive, and prosperous society by first uniting our collective interests, not our personal egos and sentiments, he said.

"Africa requires leaders who understand that our future depends on prioritizing our collective interests and not on how they feel. Given the circumstances we face as a continent, conversations on peace, security, and economic development are extremely important." - Mr. Bening Ahmed Wiisichong, PYU Secretary-General

The aspirations of **African Union Agenda 2063 and United Nations agenda 2030** are only achievable within a climate of peace and stability. That is why the silencing the guns initiative is of paramount importance to the socio-politico-economic development of the continent and building the Africa we truly want.



Secretary-General of the Pan-African Youth Union, Mr. Bening Ahmed Wiisichong, giving remarks at the Summit of Africa Youth Leaders on 31 August 2024 in Kinshasa

The Secretary-General concluded his remarks by remembering the compatriots in the **Eastern DRC, the Republic of Sudan, Somalia, South Sudan, the Central African Republic, Burkina Faso, Niger, Mali, Eritrea and Ethiopia**. He said, these are the compatriots who have firsthand evidence of what it means to live in conflict. We stand in solidarity with our compatriots that are currently suffering from war, internal displacement, terrorism, and political instability across the continent. He encouraged that if you have the comfort of leaving your home and going back safely, remember that this is a luxury those in conflict areas do not enjoy.

There cannot be peace or stability on this continent if our natural resources are not used for the benefit of the majority. We cannot talk about peace, security and stability while those entrusted with these responsibilities fail to appropriate our resources in ways that serve our interests.

Therefore, young people of Africa must be the advocates for changing the status quo, they must take responsibility for the future of their respective nations and ensure that in the construction of their nations, they build resilient, inclusiveness, and progressive societies for all.

PLENARY SESSION:

PEACE, SECURITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT NEXUS IN AFRICA

The panel highlighted the vital role of youth in shaping Africa's future. Each panelist brought unique perspectives however, shared a common belief in the power and responsibility of young Africans to lead the continent towards a more peaceful, secure, and prosperous future. The discussions underscored the need for strong leadership, self-reliance, collective action, and unwavering commitment to the principles of peace, security and development.

PANELISTS:

Dr. Cheikh Tidiane Gadio - Pan African political figure and diplomat, President of the Institute for Pan-African Strategies, Peace-Security-Governance

Mr. Ba Bocar Abdoulaye - Vice President of the Pan-African Youth Union for North Africa

Ms. Banica Stephenie Elliott - President of Federation of Liberian Youth

Prof. Jack Njoli - Professor of Law



Photo: from the left: Banica Stephenie Elliott; President of Federation of Liberian Youth, Mr. Ba Bocar Abdoulaye; Vice President of the Pan-African Youth Union for North Africa, Prof. Jack Njoli; Professor of Law, Dr. Cheikh Tidiane Gadio; Pan African political figure and diplomat, President of the Institute for Pan-African Strategies, Peace-Security-Governance



PANELISTS

Dr. Cheikh Tidiane Gadio

Pan African political figure and diplomat,
President of the Institute for Pan-African
Strategies, Peace-Security-Governance

Dr. Cheikh Tidiane Gadio, Pan African political figure and diplomat, President of the Institute for Pan-African Strategies, Peace-Security-Governance, opened the panel discussion with a powerful assertion that **"the heart of Africa beats in DRC and its great battles are played out first and foremost in DRC."** He highlighted the immense potential of Africa's youthful population, which constitutes a formidable force for development. However, he emphasized that progress hinges on three critical elements: **leadership, peace, and security.**

Dr. Gadio argued that Africa must take the issue of leadership seriously, as it is the cornerstone of any progress. He dismissed the notion that the continent's challenges can be resolved through European funding alone and stressed that it is **"an illusion to think that we can solve Africa's problems by relying on external support."** He called for an awakening, urging African leaders and youth to take ownership of their destiny and **"wake up and stand up"** to secure a prosperous future.



PANELISTS

Mr. Ba Bocar Abdoulaye

Vice President of the Pan-African Youth
Union for North Africa

Mr. Ba Bocar Abdoulaye, Vice President of the Pan-African Youth Union for North Africa, posed a fundamental question: **"What kind of Africa do we really want?"** He rejected the idea of an Africa **"far removed from its roots and marked by conflict,"** advocating instead for a united, diverse, and prosperous continent. Mr. Ba Boucar emphasized the crucial role of youth in Africa's development, arguing that young people must be **"aware, prepared, and trained"** to contribute meaningfully.

He urged African youth to view the situation in DRC as a wake-up call, reflecting the broader challenges facing the continent. Mr. Ba Boucar highlighted the importance of youth empowerment, stating that **"anything done without us is against us."** He called for policy reforms that would create opportunities for young people, warning that without such opportunities, they risk becoming **"candidates for delinquency."**

Mr. Ba Boucar concluded with a call for sacrifice, stating that **"there can be no change without sacrifice,"** and urging young Africans to take responsibility for shaping the continent's future.



PANELISTS

Ms. Banica Stephenie Elliott

President of Federation of Liberian Youth

Drew parallels between Liberia's past struggles and the current situation in DRC, noting that **Liberia's 40 years of civil war** posed similar challenges, particularly in terms of security and peace. She celebrated the lasting peace that has prevailed in Liberia for the past 21 years, attributing this success to the commitment and resilience of young people.

Her discussion centered on four key sub-themes related to the quality of life: **security, social life, education, and peace**. She emphasized the importance of youth participation in achieving these goals, referencing **UN Resolution 2022-2025**, which focuses on **participation, protection, prevention, and partnership**.

"No country will be able to lead this fight alone," she asserted, stressing the need for collective efforts. Despite the numerous challenges Africa faces, she urged youth not to be discouraged but to see their role in peace-building as a partnership for reconciliation. Young people must **"promote peace initiatives, act as mediators, and create employment opportunities,"** with dialogue as the key to making their voices heard.

PANELISTS

Professor Jacques Ndjoli

Professor of Law

Professor Jacques Ndjoli, Professor of Law, began by congratulating the youth for their resilience and commitment to Africa's future. His theme addressed the complex interplay between peace, war, underdevelopment, and security. He highlighted the persistent conflicts in Central Africa over the past 30 years, attributing them to political, economic, social, and environmental causes.

"No Congolese should take up arms against his fellow man," Prof. Ndjoli declared, noting that even groups like the **M23** are supported by foreign powers with the intent of weakening the Congo. He called on young people to remain vigilant and criticized the African Union's lack of action in addressing these issues.

Prof. Ndjoli urged Congolese youth, who are often the first victims of conflict, to focus on cohesion, unity, and good governance. He emphasized that young people are key players in resolving peaceful issues and must become aware of the power of their voices. **"Your yes must be YES, and your no must be NO,"** he said, encouraging them to use their voices to propose solutions tailored to Africa's unique needs.



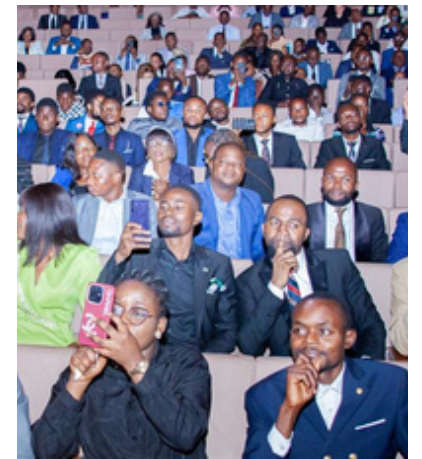


CONCLUSION

The Summit of Africa Youth Leaders ended with commitment of the **Pan-African Youth Union** to continental security and the role of young people in leading discussions on how African nations can collaboratively address the intertwined challenges of peace, security and development. As the capital of a country rich in natural resources but marked by ongoing conflicts, Kinshasa is the ideal venue to highlight the urgent need for sustainable solutions that foster stability, economic growth, and social progress across the continent.

The discussions and recommendations highlighted at the summit focused on creating a peaceful and prosperous Africa by addressing issues related to conflict resolution, security and the need for greater investment initiatives that support development, education, skills training, and economic empowerment of young people across the continent.

The Pan-African Youth Union extends our deepest gratitude to Democratic Republic of Congo for its warm hospitality and steadfast support. We particularly thank His Excellency, the President of Democratic Republic of Congo for championing the efforts of the PYU in bringing together youth leaders across Africa and providing a platform for meaningful dialogue on our shared challenges and aspirations for the future.





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