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| **TDAG Informal Coordination Group on the Youth Summit and the Global Celebration (TDAG-ICG-GYS)****1st Meeting, Virtual, 25 September 2024** | A close up of a sign  Description automatically generated |
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|  | **Document** **TDAG-ICG-GYS/4-E** |
|  | **20 September 2024** |
|  | **English only** |
| Chair, TDAG-ICG-GYS |
| Background Paper |
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| **Summary:**In line with the decision made by TDAG-23 and endorsed by the ITU Council, the BDT will lead the development of the ITU Global Youth Summit ahead of WTDC-25.This background papers invites members of the TDAG Informal Coordination Group on the Youth Summit and the Global Celebration (TDAG-ICG-GYS) to contribute their expertise and ideas and provide advice to the BDT Director to support a successful Global Youth Summit, and a possible Youth Celebration at the WTDC-25.**Action required:**TDAG-ICG-GYS is invited to review this document and provide guidance as deemed appropriate.**References:**TDAG Documents: TDAG-24/DT/7, TDAG-24/13, and TDAG-24/13(Ann.1), TDAG-24/31(Ann.1), TDAG-24/30, TDAG-24/32. |

**Background**

Since 2001, the International Telecommunication Union, ITU has been a pioneer in hosting Youth Forums, successfully conducting 12 such events to date[[1]](#footnote-2). Additionally, beginning in 2003, the Bureau for Telecommunication Development (BDT) has accumulated over two decades of experience in utilizing Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for digital inclusion to support educational and socio-economic empowerment of youth in the digital world. In line with the decision made by TDAG23 and endorsed by the ITU Council, the BDT will lead in development of the ITU Global Youth Summit.

**Introduction**

In line with the decisions made during TDAG-23 and TDAG-24, endorsed by ITU Council 23 and 24, it was decided that the BDT will lead the development of the ITU Global Youth Summit (GYS) under the theme "Amplifying Youth Voices in ICT for a Connected Future," to be held in the lead-up to WTDC-25.

The purpose of this event is to identify and emphasize the key requirements and needs of young people globally for their inclusion in the digital transformation process, regardless of their educational background, socio-economic status, abilities, or geographical location. The goal is to ensure equal and equitable access to, use of, and knowledge of ICTs for all young people, thereby supporting their active participation in the digital society, economy, and environment.

The Summit aims to foster a global, intersectional, and intergenerational dialogue that engages young people and provides ITU Members—including governments, the private sector, academia, other UN agencies, and decision-makers—with a comprehensive and current vision of the ICT-related needs essential for empowering youth from all regions of the world. This dialogue will further enable Member States and other interested Parties to assess and, if desired, incorporate these needs into their national, regional, and global digital agendas, contributing to the empowerment of both current and future generations through ICTs.

To support these efforts, an outcome document summarizing the identified needs and requirements of global youth will be made available to ITU Members, allowing them sufficient time to incorporate these findings into their official contributions and input to WTDC-25, should they choose to do so. In this way, the BDT will help empower young people worldwide, fostering their education, socio-economic development, and active engagement in the digital world.

**Work of the TDAG Informal Coordination Group on the Youth Summit and the Global Celebration (TDAG-ICG-GYS)**

In line with the TOR and documents [13 and its Annex](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D22-TDAG31-C-0013), document [30](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D22-TDAG31-C-0030) and document [32](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D22-TDAG31-C-0032), presented at TDAG-24, the creation of an Informal Coordination Group on the Youth Summit and the Global Celebration (TDAG-ICG-GYS) was proposed. The group's aim is to contribute their expertise and ideas and provide advice to the BDT Director in support of a successful Global Youth Summit and a potential Youth Celebration at WTDC-25.

To support and facilitate the organization and implementation of these youth events, the Informal Coordination Group may wish to consider the following topics for discussion:

1. **Updates on host countries and dates proposed for these events**
	1. **Offer to host the Global Youth Summit (GYS)**

BDT received an official offer from the Government of Cuba, via the Ministry of Communications, to hold the Global Youth Summit (GYS) from 11 to 13 March 2025. The proposed venue is to be confirmed. Negotiations are ongoing with the potential host, to confirm the location and dates. A Host Country Agreement (HCA) will be established between ITU and Cuba.

* 1. **Consultation with WTDC-25 host country on the Youth Celebration**

BDT intends to start negotiations with Azerbaijan on the Youth Celebration as a pre-event to WTDC-25 (17 to 28 November 2025) proposed to be held on 16 November, to be confirmed and reported back to this group.

1. **Youth participation at the Global Youth Summit and potential Youth Celebration towards WTDC-25**

*Generation Connect Youth Envoys (GCYE)*

The 2024 Cohort of GCYE consists of 184 inspiring young individuals from 64 countries, nominated by ITU Member States. The GCYE, composed of 49% female and 51% male participants, aged 18 to 24, represents a diverse group as follows: 75 GCYE from 25 countries in Africa, 26 GCYE from 10 countries in the Americas and Caribbean, 36 GCYE from 10 countries in the Arab States, 21 GCYE from 7 countries in Asia and the Pacific, 8 GCYE from 4 countries in the CIS, and 18 GCYE from 8 countries in Europe ([*see Annex with details of GCYE per country and regions*](https://www.itu.int/dms_pub/itu-d/md/22/tdag31/c/D22-TDAG31-C-0031%21N1%21MSW-E.docx)).

Given the significant representation from 25 Least Developed Countries (LDCs), 10 Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs), and 6 Small Island Developing States (SIDS), securing sponsorship to ensure fellowships for these youth envoys is of critical importance.

This group may wish to propose solutions to address this key issue, such as encouraging ITU Members from developed countries to support the participation of GCYE in the summit and celebration, and/or assisting ITU efforts to identify potential sponsors.

1. **Identify and facilitate participation of inspirational global keynote speakers playing a key role in the global ICT agenda and youth empowerment**

The profile of these potential speaker should support the debate on the topics of youth interest at the Global Youth Summit, as identified in TDAG Document [13](https://www.itu.int/md/D22-TDAG31-C-0013/) and its [annex](https://www.itu.int/md/D22-TDAG31-C-0013/). Note that the topics reflected in the agenda and programme may be adjusted thorough the regional and global co-creation activities to be organized with the Generation Connect Youth Envoys as part of their Knowledge and Mentoring Development Programme.

1. **Additional topics**

The informal coordination group may wish to discuss any other ideas aimed at advancing the work of this group related to these events, and provide advice to the BDT Director, accordingly.

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1. <https://www.itu.int/ITU-D/youth/itu__telecom_youth_forums.html>; <https://www.itu.int/en/bynd2015/Pages/default.aspx>; <https://www.itu.int/generationconnect/generation-connect-youth-summit-2022/> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)