Second Cohort: African Youth Ambassadors for Peace (AYAPs)

The PSC requested the Commission to appoint five (5) regional African Youth Ambassadors for Peace (AYAP) to work with the AU Youth Envoy in championing the promotion of peace and security on the continent. In tandem with the communiqué of the 807th meeting of the PSC, the Y4P Africa program in collaboration with the RECs/RMs and the AU Youth Envoy launched a call for application to all African youth and afterwards shortlisted 15 applicants, three (3) from each of the five (5) regions of Africa for a training and assessment workshop in November 2019. The training and assessment workshop provided a platform to sensitize the 15 applicants on the AU normative frameworks and operations on peace and security and also accorded an opportunity for the RECs/RMs, AUC and development partners to assess the capacity and competence of the youth, a development that facilitated the selection of one AYAP per region. The selected AYAPs were presented to the PSC at its second open session on YPS in November 2019 for consideration and approval. Subsequently, on recommendation by the PSC, the 33rd Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of States and Governments held in February 2020 endorsed the appointment of the AYAPs. In collaboration with the relevant RECs/RMs and AU, the AYAPs are elected for a two-year non-renewable tenure and are mandated to advocate and promote the mainstreaming and inclusion of young Africans in peace and security by amplifying their contributions and resilience, challenges and encouraging policy and programmatic actions to address the challenges and enhance their contributions.

Name:
ACHALEKE CHRISTIAN LEKE
Region:
Central Africa
Area of Expertise:
International development, Peace building, violent extremism, conflict prevention, children and youth development
Country of Origin:
Cameroon

Biography: Achaleke Christian Leke is an international development, peacebuilding and violent extremism expert with 15 years of experience working as a practitioner, researcher and academic from Cameroon. He holds an MSc in Conflict Security and Development from the University of Birmingham. His work has been influenced by his childhood experience of growing up in a violent community. He currently serves as the Executive Director of Local Youth Corner Cameroon, a leading youth-led peace building organization in Cameroon. In his 15 years of work, Christian has executed over 600 youth development and peace building project in Cameroon and across the world impacting over 2 million people. His work around facilitating community dialogues for peace and youth-led Mediators' Network has amplified efforts of peace and security in Cameroon. His engagement in supporting former violent and violent extremist offenders in prisons and children affected by Boko Haram insurgency remains among his key milestone. As of 2014 Achaleke became a key stakeholder in Cameroon and globally towards the development and implementation of UNSCR 2250, 2419 and 2535. He is currently the initiator of the Youth Peace and Security Coalition in Cameroon and is leading processes of localizing the Continental Framework on Youth Peace and Security and the development of a National Action Plan in Cameroon. Achaleke's work has been grazed with several recognitions including; featuring in 2021, 2020, 2017 & 2016 Africa's List of 100 Most Influential Young Africans. In 2020 he was featured as a UNESCO Real-Life Hero. In 2018 he was awarded the Luxembourg Peace as an Outstanding Young Peace Maker. He was named by the Commonwealth Secretary-General as Commonwealth Youth Champion in 2016 and was recognized as the Commonwealth Young Person of the Year 2016.

Name:
DIANA CHANDO
Region:
Eastern Africa
Area of Expertise:
The political climate and its effects on security in Africa, Communication and Diplomacy.
Country of Origin:
Tanzania

Biography: Ms. Diana Chando is a young Tanzanian, zealous for human rights, education, peace, and security. She is a lawyer and a Sustainable Development Goal Champion. Her dedication to the peace agenda began after she received her training at the UN Headquarters in Geneva, where she was certified as a UN delegate. During which she represented the youth in various forums that involved peace issues such as the UN Women Forum in London on Ending “violence against women” where she was a speaker in the UK Parliament. She also attended the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation event on honouring the late Former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan in London. She also attended the Commonwealth Summit as a representative from Tanzania also in London. In 2020 she was the only young Tanzanian in an online panel with WHO, OHCHR & UN. The discussions included the measures and containment on how the pandemic has affected Africa’s security socially and economically. She graduated her Bachelor’s Degree in LLB Law with international relations from Middlesex University in London England. Her Master’s Degree in Science of Climate Change and Sustainable Development at the University of Dar es salaam, Tanzania is her current endeavour. Her international presence has been noted by social and local media that led to interviews and features in articles. She believes that as an advocate social media is a great tool to educate, promote and challenge communities to do better. Diana’s vision for Africa as a continent is of peace, security, stability at all levels, with unity at the forefront of this perspective.

Name:
KHOULOUD BAGHOURI
Region:
North Africa
Area of Expertise:
Gender Development, GBV, Peace & Security, Post Conflict Response, DRR, PVE, Advocacy
Country of Origin:
Tunisia

Biography: Khouloud Baghouri Is a young female activist passionate about gender development & Women's rights. She works largely to promote sustainable development and stand up for the rights of children and young women. She is an Alumna of the MEPI program - on expanding Youth understanding of participatory governance, leadership, and Civic Engagement. She has worked with many INGOs and facilitated many sessions on both the national and international levels. Khouloud

was chosen in the first cohort of the UN Women Regional Office of the Arab States Program 'Young Women Peacebuilders' where she shifted her knowledge and gained more insights about Women in Peace and Security. She has been invited as a speaker at several events and she recently won the Global Sustainability Award. Khouloud studied Conflict Resolution at California State University, Chico, and aims at having more academic expertise in this field. In continuity with her learning journey she is working on strengthening her expertise in the Post Conflict Response (PCR), Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), Crime and Violence Prevention.

Name:
CYNTHIA CHIGWENYA
Region:
Southern Africa
Area of expertise:
Post-Conflict Peacebuilding, Sustainable Development and Green Finance
Country of origin:
Zimbabwe

Biography: Cynthia currently is the African Youth Ambassador for Peace (AYAP) for Southern Africa. She is a Political Researcher who has conducted extensive studies on post-conflict peacebuilding and development in Africa. These studies include reconstruction in post-genocide Rwanda, conflict mediation in South Sudan, comparative analyses of Zimbabwe's legal framework on reconciliation; the transferability of traditional justice mechanisms and administration of reparation grants. Cynthia's academic background is in Criminology, Criminal Justice and International Studies. She holds a Master of Arts in Development Studies from Witwatersrand University and is an MPhil in Social Policy and Development. Cynthia has previously held research positions in the South African Parliament and at the National Commission for the Fight against Genocide in Rwanda, where she contributed to the United Nations' report on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. Thus far, Cynthia has worked with several organisations promoting and advancing the African Union's Agenda 2063 and Sustainable Development Goals in Africa.

Name:
MOHAMED KUNTA
Region:
West African
Area of Expertise:
Peace building conflict analysis and mitigation
Country of Origin:
Sierra Leone

Biography: Mohamed Kunta is a strong feminist and youth Ambassador, who has embarked on national and international advocacy campaigns and research on education, health, youth empowerment, peace building, conflict analysis and mitigation. With over 8 years of experience working with different institutions in several capacities. Proven track record on deadline driven, strong ability to multi-task and successfully coordinate multiple projects simultaneously, ability to manage large complex program and project as needed dictate proven ability to build relationship and influence key partners and the ability to get result through collaboration. Currently serving as the Learning and development advisor for Youth in Partnership for peace and development, is a civil society youth led advocacy organization that focus on peace building conflict analysis and mitigation in Sierra Leone. In 2014, Mohamed Kunta was appointed by the former president as young people commissioner at the national commission for children, to advice the government on the best interest of young people, and monitors the implement of the African chart and the convention on the right of the child. Since 2012, Mohamed kunta have led several training sessions and facilitate programs on youth leadership, Communication Skills, conduct research on SRHR and SGBV. He holds a Bachelor Degree in Peace and Conflict Studies, from Fourah Bay College, University of Sierra Leone and a Diploma Certificate in Social Work.