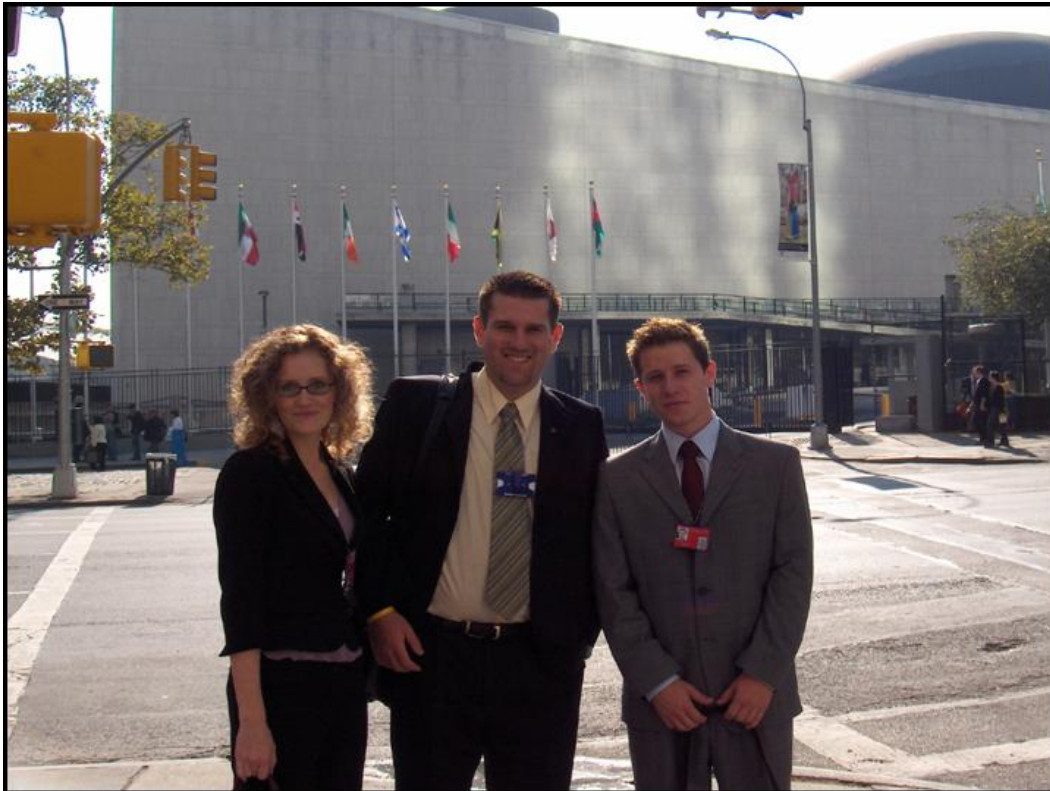


Final Report:

Canadian Youth Delegation

60th Session, United Nations General Assembly
World Programme of Action for Youth +10
New York



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Presented to:

HRSDC & Service Canada

Date:

November 18th, 2005

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”
-Margaret Mead

Acknowledgments

We understand that it took a substantial amount of work to plan for, select, coordinate and send youth delegates to the 60th session of the General Assembly in 2005. We wish to fully recognize the initiative of the Departments of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada and Service Canada and the foresight these departments possess with regards to the future of youth in Canada. We would like to extend special thanks to the following individuals whose work and dedication to youth issues made the first Canadian Youth Delegation a reality:

Adrian Etchell - Policy Analyst (co-op), Active Employment Measure, HRSDC

Amelia Ferozdin - Team Leader, Active Employment Measures, HRSDC

Brien Gillespie – International Policy Analyst, HRSDC

Krista McCracken – Policy Analyst, Active Employment Measures, HRSDC

Allan Rock - Canadian Ambassador to the United Nations

Nell Stewart - Senior Analyst, DFAIT

Marthe St-Louis – Senior Analyst, Children’s Rights and Social Policy, DFAIT

We also send our thanks to our fellow youth delegates from around the world. We learned from your example and the collaborative environment we all experienced. We left New York inspired! May we all maximize this opportunity to have a lasting impact in our homelands and for youth everywhere!

Respectfully yours,

Michael Alty

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Canadian Youth Delegates to the United Nations General Assembly 2005

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Introduction

We would like to first thank the Government of Canada and the Departments of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada and Service Canada for giving us the opportunity to attend the 60th Session of the United Nations in New York from October 2nd–6th, 2005. As youth delegates, we learned about other countries and even more about Canada. We three delegates come from different regions of Canada and represent various cultural differences, political views and visions for this great country. For us to be able to return to Canada with an idea and a vision for youth and our role in the years to come gives us a great deal of pride. As stated in UN General Assembly Resolution 50/81, youth are “both a major human resource for development and key agents for social change, economic development and technological innovation” and their contributions “...are essential for the continuing development of the societies in which they live.”

World Programme of Action for Youth

Member states of the United Nations have long recognized that the imagination, energy and ideals of young people are vital for the continuing development of the societies. In 1995, on the tenth anniversary of the International Year of Youth, the United Nations formally strengthened its commitment to young people by directing the international community’s response to the challenges of youth into the next millennium which came in the form of the World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY). The WPAY is a plan put in place to bring awareness to the importance and vulnerability of today’s young people. It has established a course of action to ensure that every nation’s youth will be able to fulfil their full human potential and help foster global security. It identifies fifteen priority areas:

- | | | |
|----------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ✓ Education | ✓ Drug abuse | ✓ Globalization |
| ✓ Employment | ✓ Juvenile delinquency | ✓ ICT |
| ✓ Hunger and Poverty | ✓ Leisure-time activities | ✓ HIV/AIDS |
| ✓ Health | ✓ Girls and young women | ✓ Youth and conflict |
| ✓ Environment | ✓ Participation | ✓ Intergenerational relationships |

In its resolution 58/133, the WPAY “provides a policy framework and practical guidelines for national action and international support to improve the situation of young people.” The underlying principle of youth participation in the work of the General Assembly is that it leads to better international policy and programmatic responses to the problems facing young people today.

In October 2005, the UN dedicated a week to the ten-year review of WPAY. Country delegations (see Annex A for list of countries in attendance), non-governmental organizations and youth representatives gathered to discuss and complete an “evaluation of the progress made and obstacles encountered in the implementation of the World Programme of Action for Youth.” [A/RES/58/133]

Canada and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG)

The World Programme of Action for Youth plays a critical role in supporting the Millennium Development Goals established by the United Nations. The eight Millennium Development Goals support and reinforce the fifteen priority areas of the World Programme of Action for Youth by sharing common areas of concern.

In September 2000, 147 heads of State and Government, and 189 nations in total, in the [United Nations Millennium Declaration](#) [A/RES/55/2] committed themselves to making the right to development a reality for everyone. They acknowledged that progress is based on sustainable economic growth, which must focus on the poor, with human rights at the centre. Through this commitment came the Millennium Development Goals, which require each country by 2015 to:

- 1) Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
- 2) Achieve universal primary education
- 3) Promote gender equality and empower women
- 4) Reduce child mortality
- 5) Improve maternal health
- 6) Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
- 7) Ensure environmental sustainability
- 8) Develop a global partnership for development

Youth is the group most directly affected by these global goals. A call has been issued to all Member States to create mechanisms for youth to participate in the implementation of the MDGs. Investing in youth will provide long-lasting and effective progress towards meeting the MDGs and sustained development to 2015 and beyond.

Role of Youth Delegates

According to Statistics Canada's 2003 Annual Demographic Statistics update, Canada has more than four million citizens between the ages of 15 and 24. This number represents 14% of Canada's total population. The role, which youth in Canada play, is very crucial. The decisions that all three levels of government make affect how young people will live in this country. We believe youth should be partners in this decision-making.

The responsibilities that youth delegates assume while at the United Nations vary from country to country. Some countries may send their youth delegates to the headquarters to fulfil official duties for one week, as Canada did. Other nations' delegates remain for up to 6 weeks, as illustrated by Australia. Youth representatives are experts on youth issues and participate in the treatment of matters related to youth. As a collective, youth representatives from member states promote youth participation, conduct discussions and seminars, present their ideas, publish newsletters and statements and meet with civil society, governmental and UN agency representatives.

The main focus of the work while in New York centers on the process in Third Committee, which deliberates on Social, Cultural and Humanitarian Issues. The youth delegates participate in the general work of their Missions through meetings, receptions, providing assistance in monitoring general debates and drafting reports. While in New York the Canadian Delegation often liaised with youth representatives from other countries to exchange information and build upon their experiences.

The Canadian Youth Delegation

Before continuing, let us introduce the three Canadian Youth Delegates:

Michael Alty

Manitoba

Greetings! My name is Michael Alty and I live in the village of Howden, in Southern Manitoba. I am studying at Canadian Mennonite University in Winnipeg, Manitoba, majoring in Peace and Conflict Transformation, with a minor in Political Studies.

My interaction with youth has taken a rather global scope. I have been involved in Model United Nations conferences at both a high school and university level. I am currently serving as the United Nations Association in Canada's Manitoba Model United Nations Representative, which has a mandate of engaging youth in international relations through simulations of the United Nations. I am also involved in CIDA's Youth Speakers Programme.

This summer I had the opportunity to complete an internship position at La commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse in Val-d'Or, Quebec, which allowed me to work for the rights of youth. My education, interests, and ambition directs me to a career in policy. I hope to work in development policy, at a national and international level.

Julia Garant

Ontario

Hello, Bonjour, Hola! I am Julia and I reside in the village of Brooklin, Ontario. I am currently a second language educator, after having completed a B.A.(H) in Spanish, French and International Studies at Queen's University, and a Bachelor of Education at the University of Toronto. I believe every young person has special gifts and needs. I am an advocate for cross-cultural understanding, having participated in study abroad programs in Cuba and Mexico, which greatly shaped my identity.

I am honoured to represent Canadian youth and I want to learn from the best practices of other nations. I am proud of my country's emphasis on education, both in national and international programs, as it has a positive effect on so many of the other WPAY priorities. I hope to use this unbelievable experience to motivate youth at home. In the near future, I am hoping to embark on a career serving my country in the Foreign Service.

Mathew Whynott

Nova Scotia

My name is Mathew Whynott and I am a proud Nova Scotian and a proud Canadian. It was certainly a pleasure to have been selected as a delegate to the United Nations. This was a first for Canada and I believe it certainly won't be the last. I have studied Political Science at Saint Mary's University for 2 years and

am continuing this winter. I was chosen from my involvement in the community at large, as Co-Chair of the Nova Scotia Youth Advisory Council. We are set up to advise the provincial government on issues pertaining to youth and how the government can better communicate with the young people in our great province. I am also extremely committed to the United Church of Canada as the Youth Ministry Coordinator, and run many youth programs from my church. Young people have a voice in this country and we are starting off on the right foot by sending young people to the international spot light.

Delegate Selection Process

Both Julia and Michael were selected through an essay writing initiative on the *Canadian Youth Connection (CYC)* on-line forum, sponsored by Human Resources, Skills Development Canada and Service Canada. This is a web resources that allows youth from across the nation to interact with each other. Participating in the CYC allows youth to fulfill volunteer requirements, provide advice and feedback to the Government of Canada on a variety of issues and learn new skills. Mat was selected via a provincial nomination for his connection with the Nova Scotia Youth Advisory Council and his involvement in the community in which he lives.

Participation at the United Nations General Assembly

The Canadian youth delegation had a large task of representing and articulating the concerns and priorities of Canadian youth, at the World Programme of Action for Youth review activities. However, Canada's advantage during this week of discussion on the WPAY +10 was in its numbers. With three delegates and two government officials, all official sessions, side events, and activities had at least one Canadian delegate in attendance.

This chapter will briefly outline the discussions and contributions that Canada's youth delegation brought to the international table. This section will be broken down into three categories: official sessions; side events; and unofficial activities.

OFFICIAL SESSIONS

Below is a list of events that were considered official sessions of the United Nations General Assembly review of the World Programme of Action for Youth:

- Meeting of the Third Committee
- Informal, interactive roundtable discussion on the theme of “Making Commitments Matter”
- Plenary meetings of the General Assembly

The Third Committee

The youth delegation had the opportunity to listen in on the discussions of the Third Committee of the United Nations. On the agenda for discussion item 64: Social development, including questions relating to the world social situation and to youth, aging, disabled persons and the family.

Informal, Interactive roundtable discussion on the theme of “Making Commitments Matter”

This three hour discussion was broken down into three different components: Youth and Their Livelihoods (poverty, education, and employment); Youth and their Society (environment, leisure and participation); and Youth and their Wellbeing (health, drugs, delinquency, and discrimination of girls and young women). All three hours proved to be enlightening, engaging, and thought provoking.

Canada addressed the roundtable discussion by calling on youth and youth councils to write up vision statements for youth. The Canadian delegation incorporated the Youth Service Vision For Canada which was developed through the Canadian Youth Connection in 2005 as an example for the world. It reads as follows:

“Youth are respected, have equitable access to opportunities to be effective members of and to contribute to a society that cares about them and supports and encourages them throughout their transitions.”

-Canadian Youth Service Vision Statement

Plenary Meetings of the General Assembly

This fall, two plenary sessions were ear marked for the evaluation of the implementation of the World Programme of Action for Youth. Countries and

observer nations addressed the General Assembly and declared where their country was positioned in terms of implementing the plan of action. Unique to these meetings of the General Assembly was that many countries allowed for a youth delegate to address the Assembly, Canada included. The UN General Assembly address can be seen at <http://www.un.org/webcast/2005.html> (dated: 06, October 05). See Annex B for text of this speech.

SIDE EVENTS

During the week of review for the WPAY, many different non-governmental organizations, country missions, as well as United Nations agencies organized events that related to the 15 different priority areas set out by the WPAY. Canada maintained a presence and voice at all the side events.

Below is a list and brief explanation on some of the side events that Canada had attended:

- Youth Perspectives on the five new priority areas of the WPAY
- Regional Youth experiences with the WPAY
- Localizing the WPAY: A focus on UN-Habitat's Strategy for Engagement with Youth
- Youth Media Makers: Film clips with a message
- Launch of the World Youth Report 2005
- Young People and Active Citizenship
- "Morf" & "Hold Up, I Got Something to Say"
- Youth-Led development: Linking the MDGs to the WPAY
- A Focus on Gender Dimensions of Youth and Armed Conflict
- The 4 Es of the Youth Employment Network: Moving from Policy to Action
- African Youth Perspectives on Critical Issues of the WPAY
- Convención Iberoamericana de Derechos de la Juventud
- Screening of *Voces Inocentes* (Innocent Voices)

Youth Perspectives on the Five New Priority Areas of the WPAY

This event was a youth led initiative by the youth delegates to the 60th General Assembly. It focused on small group discussions on how the five new priority areas of the WPAY affected youth in 2005. One of the highlights of the new priority areas was the enthusiasm for Internet and Computer Technology from both the developed and developing countries. All countries unanimously agreed that ICT is not simply a luxury, but a right.

Regional Youth Experiences with the WPAY

This side event was organized by the International Coordination Meeting of Youth Organizations (ICMYO). The event consisted of an expert panel of representatives from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Youth Employment Network (YEN), the European Youth Forum, the World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM), the World Alliance of YMCAs, and the International Movement of Catholic Students. They presented their organization's principles and programs, stressing youth as partners, co-mangers, and "experts". The final document called on the United Nations General Assembly to promote an integrated youth policy across the UN system based on WPAY that includes all bodies (member states, agencies, youth organizations) in development, implementation and evaluation processes. The group also presented a lobby paper to the UN General Assembly, encouraging member states to develop National Youth Action Plans based on the framework of WPAY.

Launch of the World Youth Report 2005

The World Youth Report launch was attended by youth delegates, member state representatives, and non-governmental organizations. The event was highlighted by a panel presentation that discussed the concerns for Youth at present. One of the new priority areas that were emphasized in the report was youth in armed conflict. Concerns were raised on the gender dynamics of conflict affecting both men and women, as well as the concern of youth being left out of the demobilization programs at the end of conflict.

The World Youth Report 2005 can be accessed on the following web-site:

www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/wyr05.htm.

Young People and Active Citizenship

This side event organized by the youth delegates of the United Kingdom served primarily as a dialogue for youth delegates, NGOs and member states to come up with concrete strategies for youth involvement in several key areas: healthy lifestyle programs and youth and civic participation among them. The youth delegates of the United Kingdom are consolidating all of the strategies into one working document to present to different UN agencies and Youth Councils. This was a participatory example of Youth making an impact within the UN structure.

A Focus on Gender Dimensions of Youth and Armed Conflict

This side event was organized by UNICEF, Washington Network for Children and Armed Conflict, and the United Network of Young Peace Builders. This event attempted to expose the new reality of conflict using the gender lens. Shattering the notions of stereotypical gender experiences of conflict was a key point in these discussions. The panel extended different policy approaches to support constructive youth capacities (networking, training, advocacy and campaigning) to support peers during and after armed conflict.

Screening of *Voces Inocentes* (Innocent Voices)

On Thursday October 6th, UNICEF organized a screening of the film *Voces Inocentes*, a striking film about the story of a young boy living through the Salvadorian Civil War. This film was preceded by a small lecture by Amnesty International on their work with child soldiers, and what still needs to be done. This was used as a platform to push for stronger action by the members of the United Nations with the goal of putting an end to the use of children in armed conflict.

UNOFFICIAL ACTIVITIES

While countless hours were spent at the United Nations Headquarters, the Canadian Youth delegation also participated in activities that happened off grounds. Here are some of the pertinent activities:

Visit to Canada's Mission to the United Nations

The youth delegation had the opportunity to meet with the Honourable Allan Rock, Canada's permanent ambassador to the United Nations. He led an inspiring conversation about Canada's place in the United Nations, and the strength of the youth voice within the system. All of the youth delegates left moved and inspired to continue pushing the youth platform at the United Nations.

Youth Delegate Meetings

Every evening, all youth delegates to the General Assembly congregated to discuss the daily events. It was also used as a democratic forum to select the Youth delegate that was going to represent the youth at the General Assembly.

The Canadian delegation was also selected out of the youth body to write a letter to Kofi Annan, Secretary General of the United Nations, expressing the youth's gratitude of keeping youth on the UN agenda. Mr. Annan responded positively by briefly stopping in to greet the youth delegates during an informal youth meeting.

Mental Health Working Breakfast

This working breakfast on Youth Mental Health (including the universal challenges of depression, eating disorders, etc) was hosted by the Swiss youth delegate to the General Assembly. This meeting was used as a brainstorming session on practices used in various countries around the world to help combat mental health challenges.

The delegation from Australia brought forth the *FIVE ALIVE* strategy, a proactive strategy on giving youth a game plan to resolve their personal problems. *Five Alive* works like this: Young people choose a confidante for each finger on one hand that they would feel comfortable approaching. Youth go through their fingers/advisors until they find someone available to help them.

Contributions

In short, the Canadian youth delegation's participation extended over a wide variety of official and unofficial activities during the week of the review of the World Programme of Action for Youth. We were recognized as a constant and active presence because we were fortunate to represent our country at all gatherings. We applied our personal interests and strengths to involve ourselves in these events. Thus, we were able to gain *and* contribute in both a broad and personal manner to the week's proceedings.

YOUTH DELEGATES' INPUT

Recommendations

The Government of Canada should be commended for seeking to engage and involve youth in the proceedings of the review of the World Programme of Action for Youth in 2005. As Canada Youth Delegates we felt honoured, excited and fortunate to represent our country and to be the voice for our Canadian peers. This inauguration of youth delegates is an important step in the growing partnership between government and youth that can more effectively address the challenges we face as a country.

While we acknowledge this achievement, we would like to offer some recommendations to assist in creating a continuum of youth involvement at the international level and more specifically, for youth representation at the General Assembly of the United Nations. Some of our recommendations include actions already taken by the Government of Canada, and thus seek to reinforce existing policy.

THE YOUTH DELEGATE PROGRAM

We advocate for:

- **Transparent and democratic selection process for delegates.** As the example must be set at the very highest level, we see it appropriate and necessary that youth delegates be elected or nominated through national or provincial youth councils or youth organizations. This will add to the integrity of the selection process and will inevitably produce a suitable choice of youth delegates.
- **Clear expectations for delegates.** For youth delegates to fulfil their roles with excellence, they need to understand their purpose and responsibilities so that they may reflect on the quality of their personal contribution. This understanding can be communicated through an experienced “mentor”, such as a former delegate or personnel from a government department.

- **Active and participatory role of youth in delegation.** Youth delegates should be involved in an active way that encourages their direct participation and freedom of expression. Delegates must feel they are entitled to voice their concerns, opinions and give feedback on pertinent issues.
- **Quality of participation.** As a lead country in many of the WPAY priority areas, Canada has much expertise to contribute to the international arena. Our reputation as bridge builders is carried on through youth delegates. Thus, it is recommended that these individuals are encouraged and supported in such activities as facilitating side sessions at the General Assembly.
- **Capitalizing on youth input.** Let us have youth involved in the writing of the country statement for the General Assembly plenary session, stressing the ideal of *“for youth by youth”*. This way, youth may truly speak on behalf of youth.
- **Extension of responsibilities.** Ideally, official responsibilities would not begin and end at the UN headquarters. Duties could span a calendar year and could include motivational speaking, educational workshops, consultations with groups of youth, public relations initiatives and working on behalf of the national delegation. A stipend would assist youth to do this.
- **Sponsoring a youth delegate from a developing country.** Supporting another nation’s youth representative empowers the collective youth voice at the UN. It supports youth involvement worldwide and advances democracy in the international community. It allows us to obtain input from developing countries from the South who would otherwise be underrepresented or absent from important deliberations. It could be a component of Canada’s International Framework Strategy.
- **Government liaisons.** It was very helpful to have the counsel, expertise and support of an employee from HRSDC accompanying us for logistical and policy-related reasons. We recommend this provision and suggest an equally accessible counterpart at the Mission in New York to link with for matters in the jurisdiction of Foreign Affairs Canada.

- ❑ **Maximizing impact.** We strongly recommend an official media follow-up with the purpose of youth outreach and publicizing the youth engagement initiated by the government. With the use of press conferences and media interviews, youth representatives can make best use of their position as spokespersons.
- ❑ **Follow-up report.** An important step in youth involvement is analysis and evaluation. The formulation of a report to assess the youth delegate process can result in better future representation through the consideration of valuable feedback.

NATIONAL POLICY STRATEGIES

We advocate for:

- ❑ **Youth National Action Plan.** The WPAY and the Millennium Development Goals are campaigns intended to impact and better the situation of youth worldwide. Certainly youth should be consulted in the design of an official National Action Plan that responds to their particular needs and uses their abilities to meet the goals of the aforementioned resolutions. In this way, we formally bring closer the goals established by the international community. This National Action Plan should also be prepared in consultation with agencies such as the Youth Employment Network (YEN). The YEN is a UN led initiative designed to address the global challenge of youth employment.
- ❑ **Youth accessibility to federal programs.** The generous programs exist. How can we connect youth in Canada to the programs they need to succeed? The work of youth delegates in promoting awareness can bear further fruit with the improved access to youth programs. Let us ensure that there is *equity of access* to programs, as well as *visible access* in all communities. This could take the form of computer labs for community use where citizens can be directed to the pertinent web-sites and information. Another idea would be to have student volunteers educating on programs available for youth in their schools. This would complement the use of posters and other visual promotion.
- ❑ **National Youth Council.** This is a concept that has been realized in many European countries. To achieve such a council in Canada we could

build on the strength of existing provincial youth councils and form a national youth body that would serve to present the concerns and the needs of Canada's youth to national-level officials. A logic map for the creation of a National Youth Council is outlined in Annex C.

- ❑ **Permanent provision for youth representatives at the UN.** One way to invest in the young generation is to provide them with a permanent and sustainable voice in the international community.
- ❑ **Youth and Intergenerational Relationships.** There is need for youth policy to reflect the opportunities presented in intergenerational partnerships. An example of such a partnership is the concept of mentorships of young people by an older generation.
- ❑ **Policy Co-management.** Moving past consultation of youth on policy to involving youth in policy would make for a healthy course of action. This can be likened to the concept of 'co-management' between government and the major stakeholders being affected by the policy.
- ❑ **Policy Partnerships.** The government is encouraged to look at partnering with youth organizations to get input on youth policy.
- ❑ **Civic Engagement.** The government is also encouraged to work with youth organizations to consider Civic Engagement as a fundamental component to the education of youth in order for them to be able to become fully engaged in the political and economic life of Canada.
- ❑ **Youth to Youth.** There is a need for greater communication between government and the young people of Canada. A beneficial plan would be to have youth talking to youth with regards to programs available or initiatives that Human Resources and Skills Development Canada may have in the works. This could be accomplished through youth representatives of the Canadian Youth Connection on-line forum. It is often the case that youth will not buy into a program unless they see other youth getting involved.
- ❑ **The AIDS ABC Strategy.** This is a strategy shared by the youth delegate of Denmark to encourage young people to "*Abstain, Be faithful, or use Condoms*" in order to battle against the HIV rate among young people. It is a catchy acronym that could be incorporated into sexual health programs in Canada.

- **The Youth Employment Spark Project.** This is a strategy used by the Dutch National Youth Council to raise awareness and increase understanding of youth unemployment issues among youth in a positive and entertaining way. Young entrepreneurs start their own business under the guidance of a youth organization and a mentor from the business community. Their experiences are followed and presented to a youth audience through an interactive web-site, national and international youth networks and media channels, and potentially a TV program or documentary. Through raising awareness and international cooperation, the project will spark new youth employment and entrepreneurship projects, partnerships, and funding opportunities.

Personal Action Plans

In this section, the youth delegates outline their current and future work with youth networks and other outreach activities that will continue and enhance their role as Canada's representatives of the young generation.

Michael Alty

Mahatma Ghandi once said, "Be the change you want to see in this world", and I agree fully.

I take great inspiration from Mahatma Ghandi when he said, "Be the change you want to see in this world". As a youth delegate, I feel not only empowered to tackle the challenges that we, as youth face, but also to work for an environment where youth feel inspired and equipped to make a difference.

After this experience in New York City, I feel that by sharing my experiences with others, I can encourage other youth to get involved in ways that affect the situation of youth.

Here are some concrete ways that I plan on using my experience at the United Nations General Assembly to inspire others:

- *I will be presenting at the Manitoba Council for International Cooperation youth conference in Winnipeg on the issue of youth involvement in politics and the international community*
- *I will incorporate a United Nations component into my work with the Canadian International Development Agency's' Youth Speakers Programme*
- *I will be involved in presentations at a local high school on the United Nations and the Youth involvement*
- *There are articles written on the World Programme of Action for Youth in my university newspaper*
- *I will continue to do radio interviews on youth engagement at the United Nations*
- *The Canadian Youth Connection Online Forum by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada*

It is my belief that though the WPAY+10 talks were only a week long, the impact of these discussions will be life long.

Julia Garant

After representing Canadian youth at the United Nations General Assembly, I felt that my main task in the role of youth delegate is to help encourage and motivate young people to reach their full human potential and to sustain meaningful participation in their society. Empowering young people with their own potential allows them to take control of their own development, and influence that of their world.

These activities are components of my plan to bring our words and ideas on youth priorities to action:

- ♦ *Sharing this experience with schools through formal and informal discussions and presentations about leadership and involvement in global and national youth issues.*
- ♦ *Supporting the work of school-based clubs like Students Together Against Racism and Culture of Peace.*
- ♦ *Dialoging with young Canadians on the Canadian Youth Connection online forum facilitated by HRSDC.*
- ♦ *Advocating for youth engagement through interviews with the media*
- ♦ *Collaborating with the Durham Regional Regional Police community committee on diversity, multiculturalism, at-risk youth.*
- ♦ *Responding to youth issues with the local youth council and advisory committee.*
- ♦ *Collaborating with representatives of non-governmental organizations and UN agencies (World Urban Forum and Youth '06 -UN Habitat)*

- ♦ *Partnering with CIDA's Youth Zone to raise awareness of the importance of youth involvement in decision-making.*
- ♦ *Working within CIDA's Youth Speakers program to educate on international development.*

Mat Whynott

- ✓ *Continue my ongoing conversation with young people regarding their involvement in their communities at large.*
- ✓ *Help young people to plan for their future in Nova Scotia and teach them what Nova Scotia can do for them.*
- ✓ *Dialogue with local, provincial and federal politicians to increase their awareness on youth issues.*
- ✓ *Be a support for local youth Non-Governmental Organizations to develop a voice for them*

Conclusion

We would like to applaud the government for the consultations undertaken with youth, both on-line and in person. In particular, the Canada Youth Connection Forum at www.youth.gc.ca is a communication tool that holds a lot of potential for engaging youth in dialogue, given the strong influence of technology in the lives of youth today.

The occasion of Canada's first youth delegation to the United Nations General Assembly represents a landmark achievement. As expected, we cannot stop here. We encourage the government and organizations to continue to find real ways to connect with youth so that we may be *directly* implicated in: *policy formation, program planning, and implementation*. We are capable, ready and willing to become partners in decision-making!

ANNEXES

Annex A

List of Countries Represented by Youth Delegates in 2005

**AT THE REVIEW OF WORLD PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR YOUTH AT THE UN
GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN OCTOBER 2005, THERE WERE OVER FOUR TIMES
MORE YOUTH DELEGATES THAN THE PREVIOUS YEAR!**

The following is a list of countries that sent youth delegates to the United Nations General Assembly in 2005:

- | | |
|------------------|-------------------|
| ✓ Armenia | ✓ Kazakhstan* |
| ✓ Australia | ✓ Lesotho |
| ✓ Azerbaijan | ✓ Malawi* |
| ✓ Canada* | ✓ Mexico* |
| ✓ Croatia | ✓ Netherlands |
| ✓ Czech Republic | ✓ Norway * |
| ✓ Denmark* | ✓ Pakistan* |
| ✓ Finland | ✓ Portugal |
| ✓ Georgia | ✓ Saudi Arabia* |
| ✓ Germany* | ✓ Spain |
| ✓ Ghana | ✓ Sweden |
| ✓ Haiti | ✓ Switzerland |
| ✓ Holy See | ✓ Tanzania* |
| ✓ Hungary | ✓ Turkey* |
| ✓ Jamaica* | ✓ United Kingdom* |

*indicates countries that sent more than one youth delegate

Annex B

Canadian Country Statement to the General Assembly on WPAY:

**Canadian Youth delegation statement
to the United Nations General Assembly
In Honour of the World Plan of Action +10**

October 6, 2005

Mr./Ms Chairperson.

Distinguished delegates.

1. Thank you for this opportunity to speak on behalf of the youth of Canada. It is a great honour for me and my delegation to be here today to help celebrate the 10th anniversary of the World Plan of Action for Youth. But it is much more than a celebration. It is also a time to reflect on what has been done, what is being done, and what should be done for young people around the world. How the global community responds to these challenges will determine how well its young citizens will be able to rise to their potential.
2. Canada recognizes the need to invest in its youth. These investments have contributed to Canada's diversity, as well as one of the highest standards of living in the world.
3. As my youth colleague Mathew Whynott likes to say: "The young people in this world are the future, but we also have to remember that they are the present". Canada therefore views the policies and programs we initiate for youth today as a means to help us with our demographic challenges of tomorrow. With an aging workforce, we must maximize the participation and well-being of all of Canada's people.
4. In 2003, there were more than 4 million Canadians between 15 and 24 years of age, representing 14% of the total population. Approximately 4% of these youth are Aboriginal or indigenous, who often live in rural and isolated areas and face serious socio-economic challenges especially related to lack of education and skills. Immigrant and members of visible minority communities make up a total of 28% of the youth population who tend to live in the major urban areas and face linguistic and cultural challenges. While half of our youth are in post-secondary education, this means that many without advanced education will face problems when entering a workforce where almost all jobs are now highly skilled. These issues are of major concern in a country like Canada with the impending retirement of its Baby Boomers and the increasing impact of globalization.

5. Literacy is a crucial concern. Consider that those with the lowest literacy rate have an unemployment rate of 26% compared to just 4% for those with the highest literacy. Recent immigrants now take 7 or 8 years to catch up to the literacy levels of their same-aged Canadian friends and may face long term incomes up to 20% less than those born in Canada. A recent report from Statistics Canada has demonstrated that a mere 1% increase in the average literacy rate will lead to an \$18.4 billion increase in the Gross Domestic Product. It will drive prosperity, cultural inclusion, and social advancement.
6. Economic growth is also an outcome of prioritizing education. With literacy and proper skills training, a young person can go on to obtain a secure job that will contribute to the economic advancement of his/her community.
7. The Youth Employment Strategy is the Government of Canada's commitment to helping young people, particularly those facing barriers to employment. This strategy was initially introduced in 1997 to address some of the challenges faced by youth in making a successful transition from school to work. In 2003 it was realigned to focus on the value and need for skills, work experience and information to make sure that youth were ready to compete in the labour market of the 21st century, including the acquisition for further education and skills development.
8. The Government of Canada is actively involved in engaging youth through consultations. For example, youth were consulted on a Government On-Line initiative which resulted in the youth.gc.ca website – a website designed specifically for young Canadians. I happen to be living proof of how the Government of Canada partners with its youth: I was chosen as a UN delegate for this week's meetings through an on line essay writing competition. There has been strong support to the goal of having young Canadians as a vital part of policy making through on-line and in-person consultations. The support for this kind of engagement continues to grow.
9. As we move into the future and as globalization progresses, Canada recognises the international challenge of youth well-being. And while we address youth issues nationally, international links must not be ignored.
10. The Canadian International Development Agency (or CIDA) supports an array of initiatives to ensure equitable, inclusive, sustainable developments and pragmatic improvements in the lives of local people, including youth. Our international development agency engages Canadians abroad in missions that work to meet WPAY's goals in Education. Canadian

international efforts focus on four main areas. The first is improving the quality, safety and relevance of basic education, so that student enrolment and motivation remains high. The second area of focus is removing barriers to resolve gender inequality in education and strengthening the programming in girls' education. Another focus is providing education and supporting better integration of educational efforts for the prevention of HIV/AIDS. The fourth element provides education for girls and boys in conflict, post-conflict and/or emergency situations to introduce stability and protection in emergency settings. This work allows Canada to contribute to the efforts of countries around the world.

11. Clearly, much needs to be done to ensure the well-being of the world's youth. We will continue to work towards improving the outcomes for youth in Canada and around the world.

I ask for recognition and involvement of youth, I ask for tolerance and understanding, and I ask for implementation.

Chairperson,

Ladies and gentlemen, it is time for action.

We all know what to do. Now, let us please do it.

Annex C

National Youth Advisory Council (NYAC): Outline

