



14 May 2019, Kampala, Uganda

**Speech of Ms. Natalie Sonia Mukundane, Executive  
Chairperson of AYC at Kampala Press Conference  
on AYC Strategic Plan 2018-2020 and 2019 Work  
Plan of AYC Uganda National Consortium**

**Executive Director and entire staff of YIYA  
Foundation**

**Hon. Peter Chege Wamaratu, my brother and young  
parliamentarian from Kenya**

**Ms. Christine Sayo, my AYC Director of Advocacy  
and Communications**

**Excellences**

**Distinguished Guests**

**Our Dynamic Youth**

**My friends from the Media**

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

Good morning to you all!

It is always a pleasure to be in Kampala, a city of which gave birth to me and I'm proud to call it a home. I thank my colleagues at Youth Initiatives for Youth Action (YIYA Foundation) for inviting me to be here with you to participate in this very important Press Conference which



is being co-organised with the Secretariat of African Youth Commission.

Let me at the very onset state my firmly held belief that the ultimate successful transformation of Africa depends to a very great extent on how we utilize the energies, skills and talents of our rapidly expanding youth population. It is common knowledge that Africa's greatest resource is its youthful population and that through their active and full participation in the socio-economic and political development of our states, Africa can surmount the challenges that lie ahead.

The candid truth however is that we are not yet fully utilizing this precious resource. Africa's youth continue to struggle to find employment mainly because the recent economic growth in the continent has been jobless. We continue to see Africa's youth unemployment rate to exceed 30% in 2019 (according to recent report of ILO<sup>i</sup>), and we are also haunted by images of young Africans undertaking risky and dangerous migration to Europe



and other parts of the world in search of opportunity. Our youth continue to be marginalized with regard to access to finance, credit, land, and opportunities for skills acquisition. The exclusion of Africa's youth is also evident from lack of structured opportunities for civil, economic and political participation through which their voices are heard and their ideas used.

**Mr. Chairman, Excellences, Distinguished Guests,  
Our Dynamic Youth, My friends from the Media,  
Ladies and Gentlemen;**

Our purpose here today is therefore to let you know the steps that African Youth Commission and its national consortium spread across the African continent including our host this morning "**YIYA Foundation**" are taking to turn Africa's youth bulge into a dynamo for growth and structural transformation. Taking into consideration our crucial roles to promote political stability, investment in the health and education of Africa's youth, advocate for mainstreaming youth development issues into national



policies, development plans and programmes, and taking practical steps to harnessing demographic dividend.

Through our current youth-owned and youth-driven 3-year strategic plan inspired by AU roadmap on investing in youth to harness the demographic dividend, the AYC and its national consortium are working on creating decent job and entrepreneurship opportunities for young people, improving health services including comprehensive sexuality education in formal and non-formal education, promoting human rights and delivering good governance, accountability and social cohesion as well as encouraging inclusion and active participation of youth in the maintenance of peace and security at all levels.

Indeed, taking full ownership of our youth strategy, the AYC Uganda national consortium is contributing to the implementation of the strategy through the following activities:



- Promoting gender equality and democratic governance through enhancing youth leaders' participation in political and budgetary processes in ten districts of Uganda and at national level;
- Creating political space for National and grassroots youth leaders, training them in leadership skills and enhance their knowledge in policy and budget design at district and national level;
- Mobilising Youth clubs to conduct budget monitoring and service delivery tracking exercises of government programs;
- Bringing the voices of the grassroots youth to discuss how fairly or unfairly the national resources are allocated and how public services are delivered through community dialogues;
- Enhancing the networking, lobbying and advocacy skills of youth CSOs, CBOs and clubs to engage government through high level strategic and networking meetings, and advocate for youth responsive policies, plans and budgets;
- Conducting trainings for youth leaders, councillors and MPs, organising leadership camps, conducting civic education, and training vulnerable women, among other activities to lobby for the integration of youth and gender issues in policies and programmes and therefore lead to the formulation of youth sensitive policies and programmes in 10 districts and at the national level;



- Training 250 young women councillors in 10 districts of Alebtong, Kamuli, Wakiso, Busia, Gulu, Kibuku, Kibaale and Kabale and Lyantonde to enhance the capacity of female youth legislators to debate and engage in council effectively;
- Conducting civic education training for 1000 citizens in 5 districts to raise awareness on civil rights and responsibilities;
- Economically empowering young people to participate in leadership, decision making processes, and bring about social changes in their communities through ICT, entrepreneurship and SRH/R trainings.

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As noted above, the activities of YIYA Foundation are indicators to what is possible if we come together to address issues pertaining to Africa's youth. Indeed, it is through such activities we can collectively prepare Africa's youth for their inevitable destiny as leaders of our beloved continent. As young leaders, one thing we owe to our younger generation is to provide them with a compelling vision for the future, safe spaces and



opportunities to participate in the civil, economic and political spheres, especially with regard advocating and promoting youth inclusion, representation and empowerment at all levels.

At AYC, my team and I are committed to fostering synergies among youth and youth organisations, building capacities of youth-led and youth-serving organisations to provide youth friendly space and amplify youth voices in current decision and policy making processes, influencing youth inclusion, participation and engagement in the implementation of the Africa 2063 Agenda as well the UN Agenda 2030 for sustainable development, support advocacy actions on the ratification and implementation of the African Youth Charter, other youth rights-based legal instruments and contribute to advancing the AU Shared Values in over 46 African countries and diaspora.



More recently, this is manifested in our on-going efforts to organising, coordinating activities of our member organisations, building partnership, promoting and supporting other in-country youth initiatives and programmes at national level. Before I conclude Mr. Chairman allow me to extend my profound invitation to youth organisations, youth groups, youth networks, youth coalitions, youth councils, youth commissions, youth associations, youth parliaments, youth professional and think tank bodies, youth chambers of commerce, youth clubs in high schools and colleges, and associations of university students in Uganda and other parts of Africa to join us and let's together **“Unite Youth in Action for African Unity and Development”**. Collectively, we can build a stronger youth network, intensify the presence, and expand the reach and impact of AYC in Africa.

In closing, Mr. Chairman, permit me to reiterate that the challenge before us is mobilising the required resources and partnership to support the domestication of AYC





programmes and implementation of national consortium's activities at member states level. I therefore call on the Government of Uganda, young people and youth development partners to support AYC Uganda national consortium in their quest to contribute to achieving our collective aspirations for **“An Africa, whose development is people-driven, relying on the potential of African people, especially its women and youth, and caring for children”**.

I thank you for your kind attention.

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<sup>i</sup> <https://7dnews.com/news/africa-s-youth-unemployment-rate-to-exceed-30-in-2019-ilo>