

YOUTH CREATIVE CONSORTIUM (YCC) ON SILENCING THE GUNS IN AFRICA

THE BUJUMBURA DECLARATION

Adopted at YCC 2.0 on the Sidelines of the 5th Annual Continental Dialogue on Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) and Women, Peace and Security (WPS)

Under the Patronage of His Excellency, Evariste Ndayishimiye, President of the Republic of Burundi and the African Union Champion for Youth, Peace and Security

Bujumbura, Burundi | 11 August 2026

PREAMBLE

WE, the Youth Creative Consortium (YCC) and Participants from across the African Continent, having convened YCC 2.0 as Session One of the official side events of the 5th Annual Continental Dialogue on Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) and Women, Peace and Security (WPS), held in Bujumbura, Republic of Burundi, in partnership with the African Union Commission, and under the distinguished patronage of His Excellency, Evariste Ndayishimiye, President of the Republic of Burundi, Chairperson of the African Union and African Union Champion for Youth, Peace and Security;

RECALLING the aspirations of Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, and the African Union's commitment to achieving a peaceful, secure, integrated and prosperous Africa, including through the implementation of the Silencing the Guns agenda and its objective of achieving a conflict-free Africa by 2030;

RECALLING FURTHER the relevant decisions and policy frameworks of the African Union, including the African Union Continental Framework on Youth, Peace and Security and continental commitments on Women, Peace and Security;

RECOGNIZING the indispensable role of young people and women as agents of conflict prevention, peacebuilding, social cohesion, governance and sustainable development, and the importance of their meaningful participation and leadership in Africa's peace and security architecture;

ACKNOWLEDGING the critical contributions of communities, youth and women-led organisations, civil society, traditional and religious leaders, academia and other stakeholders to addressing local drivers of conflict and strengthening sustainable peace;

RECOGNIZING FURTHER the importance of strengthening community-based early warning and early response mechanisms, as well as harnessing emerging technologies and artificial intelligence to support conflict prevention, peacebuilding, information management and youth-led innovation;

CONCERNED by persistent inequalities in access to digital infrastructure, connectivity, technology, skills and locally relevant data, which constrain the ability of many young Africans and communities to fully participate in and benefit from technological innovation;

CONVINCED that Africa's young people should be empowered not only as users of emerging technologies, but also as creators, innovators and co-designers of solutions to the continent's peace, security and development challenges;

DETERMINED to strengthen intergenerational dialogue, partnerships, inclusive participation and locally owned solutions towards the achievement of a peaceful, secure, inclusive and prosperous Africa;

HAVING DELIBERATED on the foregoing during the YCC Silencing the Guns 2.0 side event, through keynote addresses, statements by Their Excellencies, and contributions from panellists, discussants and participants;

HEREBY DECLARE AS FOLLOWS:

I. OUR COLLECTIVE COMMITMENT

1. Strengthening Youth and Women's Leadership

1. We reaffirm our commitment to advancing the meaningful participation, representation and leadership of young people and women in conflict prevention, mediation, peacebuilding, governance and sustainable development.
2. We commit to promoting inclusive and intergenerational approaches that recognise young people and women as strategic partners, decision-makers and agents of change rather than solely as beneficiaries of peace and security initiatives.
3. We commit to strengthening platforms that facilitate sustained dialogue between young people, women, governments, regional and continental institutions, civil society, traditional and religious leaders, academia and other relevant stakeholders.

2. Advancing the Silencing the Guns Agenda

4. We reaffirm our commitment to contributing to the achievement of the objectives of the African Union's Silencing the Guns agenda and to strengthening youth and women's contributions to conflict prevention, peacebuilding and the consolidation of sustainable peace.
5. We commit to supporting youth-led initiatives that address local drivers of conflict, strengthen social cohesion, promote peaceful coexistence and contribute to the prevention of violence and insecurity.
6. We call for greater recognition of youth-led peacebuilding as an integral component of Africa's continental, regional, national and local peace and security architecture.

3. Strengthening Early Warning and Early Response

7. We recognize the critical role of grassroots communities and local actors in identifying emerging risks and drivers of conflict.
8. We commit to promoting stronger linkages between community-based early warning initiatives and existing national, regional and continental early warning and early response mechanisms.
9. We encourage youth and women-led organisations to contribute to the collection, analysis and responsible dissemination of information relevant to conflict prevention and early response.
10. We further commit to promoting responsible use of digital technologies to identify and respond to emerging risks, including hate speech, incitement to violence and other indicators of potential conflict.

4. Harnessing Technology and Artificial Intelligence (AI) for Peace

11. We recognize emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence (AI) , as important tools that can complement existing approaches to conflict prevention, peacebuilding and sustainable development.
12. We call for greater investment in digital literacy, technology skills and innovation ecosystems that enable African young people to develop solutions adapted to the continent's diverse realities.
13. We encourage partnerships among governments, the African Union, RECs/RMs, technology organisations, universities, research institutions, civil society and youth innovators to develop responsible, inclusive and context-specific technological solutions for peace and security.
14. We emphasise the importance of ensuring that technological solutions take account of Africa's linguistic, cultural and socio-economic diversity and that greater attention is given to the development and use of locally relevant data.
15. We further acknowledge the imperative to address the digital divide, including limited access to electricity, connectivity, internet services, digital infrastructure and technology, particularly in underserved communities.

5. Supporting Youth Innovation and Entrepreneurship

16. We note that young Africans are already developing innovative solutions to social, economic, governance and peace and security challenges.

17. We commit to promoting opportunities for youth innovators to connect with institutions capable of providing technical assistance, mentorship, financing, research support and pathways to scale.
18. We call upon relevant stakeholders to strengthen mechanisms that enable promising youth-led initiatives to move from the prototype stage to sustainable implementation.
19. We encourage the development of smart partnerships that create employment, skills development, entrepreneurship and leadership opportunities for young people as part of broader efforts to address structural drivers of insecurity.

6. Strengthening the Youth–Women, Peace and Security Nexus

20. We reaffirm the importance of strengthening synergies between the Youth, Peace and Security and Women, Peace and Security agendas.
21. We commit to fostering the meaningful participation and leadership of young women in peace processes, conflict prevention, mediation, peacebuilding, governance and decision-making.
22. We encourage initiatives that promote intergenerational dialogue and strengthen collaboration between youth-led and women-led peacebuilding organisations.

II. OUR CALLS TO THE AFRICAN UNION, MEMBER STATES AND REGIONAL INSTITUTIONS

23. We call upon the African Union ,including its Member States, Organs and RECs/RMs, within their respective mandates, to strengthen institutional mechanisms for the meaningful participation of young people and women in peace and security processes.
24. We call for strengthened coordination between continental, regional, national and community-level initiatives on Youth, Peace and Security, Women, Peace and Security and Silencing the Guns.
25. We appeal to the relevant African Union Organs and institutions to consider appropriate modalities for strengthening structured engagement with credible youth-led organisations, including the Youth Creative Consortium, in continental peace and security processes.
26. We encourage consideration of opportunities for YCC and other relevant youth-led organisations to participate in future continental consultations and dialogues on Youth, Peace and Security and Women, Peace and Security, in accordance with applicable institutional procedures.
27. We call for greater support to community-based and youth-led early warning and peacebuilding initiatives and for stronger linkages between such initiatives and existing early warning and early response mechanisms.
28. We call upon relevant stakeholders to explore more predictable and sustainable financing mechanisms for credible youth- and women-led peacebuilding initiatives.

29. We urge development partners, international organisations, private sector actors, research institutions and other stakeholders to strengthen partnerships and resource mobilisation in support of youth- and women-led peace and security initiatives.

III. STRENGTHENING THE YOUTH CREATIVE CONSORTIUM

30. We commend the Youth Creative Consortium for providing a platform for youth engagement on peace, security particularly Silencing the Guns.
31. We commit to strengthening the Consortium's partnerships with relevant African Union Member States, Organs and institutions, RECs/RMs, and civil society organisations, development partners, academia and other stakeholders.
32. We encourage YCC to continue developing its capacity to contribute meaningfully to continental peace and security initiatives, including through research, advocacy, youth mobilisation, innovation, early warning and knowledge-sharing.
33. We encourage YCC to strengthen its organisational systems, partnerships and resource mobilisation efforts to ensure the sustainability and effectiveness of its programmes.
34. We note the value addition of the YCC Annual Silencing the Guns Conference as a platform for sustained youth engagement and encourage its continued development as a space for dialogue, innovation, experience-sharing and partnership-building.

IV. IMPLEMENTATION AND FOLLOW-UP

35. We recognise that the commitments contained in this Declaration require sustained action, partnerships and accountability at continental, regional, national and local levels.
36. We encourage the Youth Creative Consortium to develop an appropriate follow-up mechanism to document progress, good practices, lessons learned and emerging challenges related to the implementation of this Declaration, as a shared knowledge framework to inspire other youth-led initiatives on the continent to accelerate the collaboration for silencing the guns now !
37. We call upon relevant stakeholders to establish measurable actions, where appropriate, to translate the commitments and calls contained in this Declaration into practical initiatives.
38. We propose that periodic engagements among YCC, relevant African Union Organs and institutions, RECs/RMs, Member States and other stakeholders such as the African Youth Ambassadors for Peace (AYAPs) should be conducted to review progress and identify opportunities for further collaboration.
39. This Declaration shall be transmitted to the African Union Commission through the Department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security, the African Union Peace and Security Council, relevant AU Organs and institutions, RECs/RMs, Member States and other stakeholders for information, consideration and appropriate follow-up within their respective mandates.

V. FINAL DECLARATION

40. We reaffirm that achieving a peaceful and secure Africa requires the meaningful participation and leadership of its young people and women.
41. We recognise that Silencing the Guns cannot be achieved through security / kinetic responses alone and requires investment in inclusive governance, social cohesion, economic opportunity, education, skills, innovation, community resilience and sustainable development.
42. We therefore commit ourselves to strengthening partnerships, promoting innovation, supporting locally owned solutions and advancing inclusive approaches to conflict prevention and peacebuilding.
43. We call upon all stakeholders to translate the vision expressed in this Declaration into practical and measurable action and to ensure that young people and women are not only participants in Africa's peace and security agenda but are recognised as essential partners and leaders in its implementation.
44. We reaffirm our readiness to work with the African Union, Member States, RECs/RMs, civil society, development partners, the private sector, academia and communities in pursuit of a peaceful, secure, integrated and prosperous Africa, in accordance with the aspirations of Agenda 2063 and the objectives of the Silencing the Guns agenda

VI. ADOPTION AND ATTESTATION

This Bujumbura Declaration was deliberated upon and adopted on this 11th day of August 2026, in Bujumbura, Republic of Burundi, in the presence of, and witnessed by:

Bujumbura, Republic of Burundi
11 August 2026