

# PRESS RELEASE

## COP28 Youth Climate Champion welcomes Global Youth Statement from YOUNGO members in the presence of world leaders during World Climate Action Summit

- YOUNGO, the official children and youth constituency of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, presented COP28 Youth Climate Champion H.E. Shamma Al Mazrui with the collective climate policy demands of children and youth from over 160 countries across the world.
- The occasion marks YOUNGO presenting the Global Youth Statement: A Declaration for Climate Justice (GYS) to the COP presidency outside of the Conference of Youth, symbolising a change in the involvement of young people in the fight against climate change.
- “Young people are the future of this world; it is essential that their voices be heard in the fight for that future,” said H.E. Shamma Al Mazrui, the COP28 Youth Climate Champion.

**Dubai, 2 December 2023:** COP28 Youth Climate Champion H.E. Shamma Al Mazrui received the Global Youth Statement: A Declaration for Climate Justice (GYS) during the ‘Youth & Education - The Latent Force of Climate Action’ session of the World Climate Action Summit in Dubai.

The GYS represents the “demands and aspirations” of children and youth from over 160 countries around the world and highlights their collective climate policy demands.

It is the result of intensive policy consultations conducted by YOUNGO, the official children and youth constituency of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). It also takes into account input from local and regional Conferences of Youth, organised in the lead up to the UN Climate Change Conference of Youth (COY18).

The GYS was finalized at COY18, which was held on 26-28 November in the leadup to COP28. It synthesises the collective climate policy demands of children and youth from over 160 countries across the world and is supported by tens of thousands of signatories, accumulating over 750,000 inputs globally, which took approximately 53 thousand hours of work and was done through the efforts of 1,500 volunteers.

The COP28 presidency has long stressed the importance of youth voices and ambitions in the climate process, emphasising that full inclusivity is critical to achieving transformative progress across the climate agenda.

“Young people are the future of this world; it is essential that their voices be heard in the fight for that future,” said H.E. Shamma al Mazrui, COP28 Youth Climate Champion. “We must stand together to take young people's voices into account and meaningfully include them not only as beneficiaries but as partners and leaders.”

“Confronted with the existential threat of climate change, children and youth from across the globe have united their voices and perspectives through the COP28 GYS. This declaration synthesises the demands and aspirations of a generation that acknowledges its unique role and potential for transformative change both within and beyond the UNFCCC. At COP28 children and youth will be advocating for the adoption of their demands and calling for immediate and adequate climate action and intergenerational equity,” the YOUNGO policy team said.

The GYS has increased in importance over the years along with the dedication of the youth climate movement towards providing meaningful contributions to multilateral climate negotiations. YOUNGO has been crafting the annual position statement since 2005 in Montreal. Since COP25, this effort has expanded and evolved into a more holistic, inclusive, and multilateral set of proposals representing the voices of people under 35 around the world.

This year's GYS is the biggest and most inclusive statement so far in terms of countries represented. The condensed demands are also available in multiple languages (Arabic, English, Spanish) and for the first time there will be a child language version of the condensed demands.

The GYS presents clear climate policy demands across COP28 negotiation tracks, ranging from climate mitigation and adaptation to finance and energy to climate justice. It calls for an inclusive approach to climate governance that acknowledges the disproportionate impact of the climate crisis on the Global South and vulnerable communities and underlines the need for systemic and radical action.

The two-day World Climate Action Summit began on December 1, in Dubai, with the goal of implementing and transforming key climate-related decisions into concrete actions and credible plans to tackle climate change. The opening of the Summit was attended by Heads of State and Government, Party delegations, specially invited guests, Heads of the United Nations and related organizations, and selected heads of inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations.

ENDS

#### **Notes to Editors COP28 UAE:**

- COP28 UAE is being held at Expo City Dubai from November 30-December 12, 2023. The Conference is expected to convene over 70,000 participants, including heads of state, government officials, international industry leaders, private sector representatives, academics, experts, youth, and non-state actors.
- As mandated by the Paris Climate Agreement, COP28 UAE will deliver the first-ever Global Stocktake – a comprehensive evaluation of progress against climate goals.
- The UAE will lead a process for all parties to agree upon a clear roadmap to accelerate progress through a pragmatic global energy transition and a “leave no one behind” approach to inclusive climate action.

**YOUNGO:**

YOUNGO is the official children and youth constituency of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). YOUNGO is a vibrant, global network of children and youth activists (up to 35 years) as well as youth NGOs, who contribute to shaping the intergovernmental climate change policies and strive to empower youth to formally bring their voices to the UNFCCC processes. Worth mentioning that YOUNGO is the oldest and largest youth constituency for youth and children within the UN.

**COP28 Youth Climate Champion:**

The Youth Climate Champion (YCC) is the first position within the higher COP leadership to ensure the meaningful participation and representation of youth in international climate decision-making and mobilize substantive youth input and outcomes from the COP and UNFCCC processes. COP28's Youth Climate Champion is Her Excellency Shamma Al Mazrui, UAE Minister of Community Development and previously State Minister of Youth Affairs.

The Youth Climate Champion aims to amplify the climate action and influence of young people everywhere through four pillars collectively known as PAVE. Enhance participation of youth within the Presidency and UNFCCC process, and increase access to the COP, especially for youth from Least Developed Countries and Small Island States. Spurring action through advancing and celebrating youth-led climate action and ambition, particularly in the UAE and Arab region. Relaying and amplifying the voice and policy positions of youth within the Presidency and UNFCCC. And championing education through empowering youth to play an elevated role in climate decision-making through awareness and education opportunities.