

## Jeddah Youth Declaration on Volunteering and Dialogue

adopted at the International Youth Conference on Volunteering and Dialogue in  
Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia  
30 Muharram – 2 Safar 1435 / 3-5 December 2013

**WE, the youth gathered at the “International Youth Conference on Volunteering and Dialogue” in Jeddah, organized by the Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the KACND (King Abdulaziz Center for National Dialogue) and UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), within the framework of the “Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz International Programme for a Culture of Peace and Dialogue”, adopt the following declaration on this International Volunteer Day (5<sup>th</sup> December):**

**WE SINCERELY APPRECIATE** the efforts of the hosts and organizers of this Conference to make the voices of the world’s youth heard in global fora, to bring our messages across and to allow us to take part in platforms in which we can connect and exchange our views;

**WE ARE CONCERNED**, by the current multiple crises which compromise our chances as future leaders to make the world better than we found it;

**WE RECOGNIZE** that volunteering and dialogue, which are guided by our shared aspiration to unite people around common causes, generate mutual benefits and transform the lives of all those involved in this process;

**WE FIRMLY BELIEVE** that dialogue is the catalyst for enabling lasting cooperation, promoting the sharing of experiences, and fostering solidarity within and among communities, cultures, faiths, generations and nations;

**WE PLEDGE** to integrate dialogue at all levels of volunteering, as fuel for creative change;

**WE APPLAUD** young volunteers for their on-going contributions to efforts benefiting communities worldwide, in areas such as humanitarian or peace-building initiatives, heritage conservation, post-conflict/disaster assistance, environmental

**protection, health-related programs, the full inclusion of persons with disabilities, entrepreneurship; and therefore call upon all relevant stakeholders to support and promote these efforts;**

**WE ENDEAVOUR to work with the world's leading organizations for youth with the aim of establishing sustainable partnerships benefitting young volunteers, and promoting a culture of dialogue and mutual understanding;**

**WE AFFIRM the need to cultivate an ethos for volunteering and dialogue rooted in solidarity, empathy, self-confidence, critical thinking, respect and appreciation for diversity (especially to break prejudices and cultural stereotypes), the spirit of initiative and teamwork, disinterested action, patience, perseverance, the art of listening, and meaningful participation and recognition;**

**WE EXPRESS our concern about the gap between ideas and their implementation, and believe that this gap can be bridged by a joint, networked, upstream and community-based sustainable effort of all involved;**

**WE REAFFIRM our commitment to creating open, welcoming spaces to improve the exchange of experiences, and to establish new forms for sharing mutual learning, youth civic engagement and intercultural dialogue – all the while avoiding the risk of systematic framing and standardisation;**

**WE URGE governments, local authorities, the private sector as well as global and regional organizations, such as United Nations entities, ISESCO and ALECSO, to integrate volunteering and dialogue as critical components of youth development, both personal and professional, and to create an enabling environment and platforms in which youth volunteering can flourish;**

**WE COMMIT to building on the experiences shared by all the organizations present in this Conference, including the United Nations Volunteers programme, the World Organization of the Scout Movement and the Coordinating Committee for International Voluntary Service, and the messages contained in this Declaration to increase the number of young men and women engaged in volunteering globally;**

**WE COMMIT to sharing the contents of this Declaration with our current and extended networks, and to harness social media in our efforts to foster global, active and responsible citizenship;**

**WE CALL UPON the youth of the world to join us in our endeavour.**