

9 History of WYC Series



7th WORLD YOUTH CONGRESS
GUINEA 2014

Hawaii 1999



The first Congress in Hawaii was designed to help young people around the world agree “Priorities for the New Millennium.” Astonishingly, after 6 months of pre-congress promotion, tours and discussions involving over 20 million youth worldwide, the top priority for every region was the same: “Education for All” - and not just ‘school as we know it’ - but school that prepares us for life in the 21st Century with a strong focus on sustainability, peace-building, human rights, IT, job creation etc. 800 youth from 127 countries came together at the State Capitol Building and endorsed the Youth Priorities (- 7 of which became the UN’s Millennium Development Goals at the UN Millennium Summit a year later.) The Congress also articulated the concept of Youth-led Development (YLD) - ‘community improvement projects designed and delivered by young people.’ It also set up the Be the Change Youth-led Development Action Fund - to fund YLD projects all over the world. More than this, Hawaii - with its defining spirit of Aloha and its dream of creating sustainable communities on its idyllic islands - set the tone for all future Congresses: all subsequent Congresses have opened with indigenous Hawaiian dances and invocations, and the Congress Talisman is a Hawaiian Conche Shell which is used, by all Hawaiian tribes, to call people together to the Gathering Place (Oahu). The Spirit of Hawaii runs through every aspect of the Congress series.

Morocco 2003



The Morocco Congress examined the progress of the Be the Change Youth-led Development Fund and explored how Youth Actions might be linked it to the UN campaign for the Millennium Development Goals. 1,000 youth from 148 countries met at the beautiful youth camp at Bouznika where they agreed the Casablanca Declaration (www) - outlining areas where young people could assist their governments to achieve the goals. This was the first congress to take delegates out on Action Projects - where they live and work with local citizens, doing manual work and getting to know the host country better.

Scotland 2005



The 3rd Congress, held at 'Europe's most picturesque university' at Stirling in Scotland brought together 600 youth from 112 countries to agree a policy document advocating youth-friendly policies for governments to promote YLD more effectively. It also took delegates on Action Projects around the highlands and islands of Scotland, and produced the booklet: "Nothing for us Without Us" - a step-by-step guide on how to design and implement Youthled Development projects.

Quebec 2008



The 4th Congress, designed to help celebrate Quebec City's 400th Anniversary, was entitled "Regeneration 2008." Governments were invited to discuss and analyse the increasing number of YLD initiatives taking place around the world. 600 youth from 116 countries discussed the governments' - and their own - findings and produced a handsome book: A Celebration of Youth-led Development - which was presented to governments and aid agencies across the world. UN US-G, Shah Zukang, delivered the UN Secretary General's Youth Day message to a crowd of several thousand youth and delegates in Quebec City's central stadium. 8 distinguished VIPs from the UN, World Bank and governments were awarded the Congress Champions of Youth Awards.

Turkey 2010



The 5th Congress brought together 1,200 delegates from 154 countries to the Yildiz Technical University. It also took delegates out to fascinating Action Projects through out this huge city and surrounding area. Organized by E-Genclik (E-Youth) - it featured a multi-faith adaptation of the original Peace Child play, and an excellent cultural programme which formed part of Istanbul's celebration as Europe's Capital of Culture. The main outcome was the Istanbul Action Plan (IAP), which proposed actions that governments, intergovernmental organisations and youth civil society should take together to accelerate the achievement of the UN's Millennium Development Goals. It also set out plans to assess YLD projects by involving young people in youth-led monitoring and evaluation web platforms. in Quebec City's central stadium. 8 distinguished VIPs from the UN, World Bank and governments were awarded the Congress Champions of Youth Awards.

Brazil 2012



This WYC took place just in one of the world's most beautiful cities: Rio de Janeiro. Delegates enjoyed a brilliant cultural programme, and Action Projects in Rio's vibrant favelas. The congress took place just before the UN's Rio+20 Conference on Sustainable Development and the Green Economy - marking the 20th Anniversary of the landmark Rio Earth Summit of 1992. The young delegates from over 100 countries realised that the human family had fallen far short of their commitments made in 1992 - and so worked hard to create "20 Solutions for a Sustainable Future" - a document listing the Immediate Actions that citizens and their governments must take to ensure that future generations could meet their needs. Sadly, the governments failed to make much progress at their Summit: "A failure of catastrophic proportions," Kumi Naidoo - director of Greenpeace - called in. But the Congress 20 Solutions lay out for young leaders around the world their Generational Challenges.

Guinea 2014 Nepal 2016

Future Congresses will focus on the themes of solving the Youth Unemployment Crisis and the building of the Green Economy. After Guinea, the next Congress will be in Nepal in 2016.