Executive summary

UNOY Peacebuilders began implementing a new five-year strategic plan in 2016. Our 2016-2020 Strategic Plan defines four key action areas. In 2016, we worked on the following aspects of each action area:

1. To facilitate the build-up of member organisations’ capacity to mobilize youth as peacebuilders. In 2016, we released two publications aimed at this objective:
   1.1 The Learning Curve guidelines on Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning were published in partnership with several member organisations.
   1.2 Designing Learning for Peace, a competence framework for peace education, was published in cooperation with several partner organisations.
   1.3 We brought UN Security Council Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security back to the local level through developing guides and toolkits.

2. To develop young people’s capacity to lead conflict transformation processes and advocate for nonviolence and a Culture of Peace. In 2016 we implemented one training course to meet this objective:
   2.1 A Training of Advocates, training young peacebuilders on advocacy for youth participation in peacebuilding, with a focus on advocating towards European institutions.
   2.2 The training course Young Peacebuilders in West Africa was a collaboration with the UN Alliance of Civilisations for young newcomers to peacebuilding.

3. To ensure meaningful youth participation in issues of peace and security. In 2016, we implemented a number of activities:
   3.1 We advocated at the national, regional and global level for the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security, with an emphasis on funding its implementation.
   3.2 We set up a new European Youth Advocacy Team, working towards the Council of Europe and the European Union.

4. To strengthen UNOY Peacebuilders as a global network with a shared feeling of ownership. In 2016, we will organised one event and began a network development process:
4.1 A Young Peacebuilders Forum was held with a special focus on European youth advocacy.

4.2 We began a process of regional network development aimed at further strengthening the network internally.

4.3 We started a Global Mapping and Survey of youth-led peacebuilding organisations.

**Introduction**

The United Network of Young Peacebuilders (UNOY Peacebuilders) is a global network of youth organizations committed to establishing sustainable, peaceful societies. Young people constitute half of the world's population, and we strongly believe in the importance of their involvement in societal change. This is why we aim to provide youth with the necessary means to contribute to peace.

UNOY Peacebuilders is a non-political, non-religious, non-governmental organization that supports young peacebuilders regardless of gender, ethnicity, social class, religion, or any other distinction. Our vision is of a world free from violence in which young people actively participate and lead in the peaceful transformation of conflicts and work towards cultivating a culture of peace.

2016 was the first year of the implementation of a new five-year strategic plan. Our 2016-2020 Strategic Plan defines four key action areas, which are reflected in the following Annual Plan:

1. To develop young people’s capacity to lead conflict transformation processes and advocate for nonviolence and a Culture of Peace.
2. To ensure meaningful youth participation in issues of peace and security
3. To facilitate the build-up of member organisations’ capacity to mobilize youth as peacebuilders.
4. To strengthen UNOY Peacebuilders as a global network with a shared feeling of ownership.
Through these four action areas, we work towards our vision of a world free from violence in which young people actively participate and lead in the peaceful transformation of conflicts and work towards cultivating a culture of peace.

Three key strands can be said to have played a key connecting role in UNOY Peacebuilders’ work in 2016. The first of these is the development of a regional approach to advocacy. We organised a European-level advocacy training and on the basis of this set up a European Youth Advocacy Team, a group dedicated to advocating towards European institutions such as the Council of Europe and the European Commission. This has been an interesting and challenging process, enabling the network to become even more relevant in shaping the international conversation around youth, peace and security. On the basis of our experiences in 2016, we plan to continue the work of the European Youth Advocacy Team in 2017 as well as setting up a parallel team in Africa.

The second thread running through our different activities in 2016 was the implementation of UN Security Council resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security. After advocating for the adoption of this resolution for several years, we were very happy to see it adopted in December 2015. However, adoption isn’t enough: The resolution needs to be implemented. We have worked on this at different levels in 2016, developing guides and toolkits for our members to begin working with the resolution and localising its messaging, as well as advocating towards decision makers to take the resolution seriously and invest in its implementation.

Finally, a third thread found in many aspects of our work in 2016 is the need for to play an even more central role in building up the youth peacebuilding community globally. Following the adoption of UNSCR 2250, UNOY Peacebuilders has gained increased recognition which has led to even more youth groups wishing to be part of the network and even more non-youth actors to seek out UNOY Peacebuilders’ expertise. We have attempted to meet this through the development of tools to support young people engage with peace and security, by conducting research into the youth peacebuilding sector to be more aware of the community which we represent, and by starting to redevelop our own internal network mechanisms to be able to be more responsive to the needs of young peacebuilders in different contexts.
1. Building up member organisations

As a network of youth organisations, we face common organisational challenges related to issues such as fundraising, organisational learning and assessing the impact of our work. We work together to strengthen each other's organisational capacity through activities coordinated by the International Secretariat and International Steering Group as well as through activities implemented by UNOY members in direct cooperation with each other.

The year 2016 was a year of development of guidelines and practical tools for organisational development. We published the Learning Curve, a guide for monitoring and evaluation in youth organisations, as well as Designing Learning for Peace, a competence framework for peace education. To support our member organisations work on implementing UN Security Council resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security - adopted in December 2015 - we published two different guidelines.

Activities in 2016

1.1 The Learning Curve

Type of activity: Publication

Together with five member organisations, we developed a practical hands-on guide on monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) in youth peace organisations. The guide is called The Learning Curve and is accessible both in a web format and as a PDF for free download. MEL has frequently been identified as a very important area of weakness for youth organisations, which are often more focused on short-term projects than long-term impact. To help address this, the guide leads the user through a series of self-assessments and
proposes appropriate interventions, in the form of new systems or tools, to improve MEL practices in youth organisations.

The guide was based on research into youth peace organisations’ MEL systems conducted in 2015.

1.2 Designing Learning for Peace
Type of activity: Publication

Peace education is an important field within non-formal education, but until now it has been lacking in formal structures for identifying, recognising and validating learning outcomes. Designing Learning for Peace is a toolkit created to help peace educators design their learning programmes in an effective and outcomes-oriented way. It proposes a competence framework for understanding competences within the field of peace education, as well as a method to use this framework.

Designing Learning for Peace was a partnership between a number of European civil society organisations active in the field of peacebuilding, and was built on a previous guide developed by the same partnership titled Mainstreaming Peace Education.

1.3 Bringing 2250 closer to home
Type of activity: Outreach

While we are proud of having successfully pushed for the adoption of a UN Security Council resolution which for the first time recognises the role of youth building peace, we are very aware that this resolution is meaningless if it is not translated into real change at the local level.

To support youth organisations around the world, including UNOY Peacebuilders member organisations, we developed two sets of tools for them to connect their work with UNSCR 2250 and connect it with their own work.
The 2250 Toolkit for Youth is a comprehensive guide to the resolution, its meaning and context. This toolkit has been widely used by youth around the world to begin making use of UNSCR 2250. It has also been used by a wide range of non-youth actors to understand and contextualise the resolution, including governmental representatives and non-youth practitioners working on topics related to peace and security.

Translating Youth, Peace and Security Policy into Practice is a practical guide to organising kick-off activities aimed at setting up national coalitions to work together on implementing UN Security Council Resolution 2250, developed by the UNOY Peacebuilders International Secretariat together with Search for Common Ground. This guide has been used to organise such events in several countries in late 2016, with further use foreseen in 2017.
2. Young people’s capacities

Central to our vision and mission are the role of youth as agents of change and as actors in transforming societies. We aim to empower young people to make use of their unique potential in transforming conflicts and to empower youth to advocate for peaceful and nonviolent change in their communities.

By changing the lens through which young people understand conflict, we can open new opportunities for sustainable change by learning how to creatively and constructively deal with conflict in a way that helps us develop as individuals and communities. With understanding conflict comes the need to develop skills and competences to be able to deal with and transform it, for young people to act as agents for conflict transformation. Young people also need to be able to voice their opinions and concerns in peacebuilding, and highlight and give visibility to their experience and contribution in the field. Through developing their capacities as advocates for peace, young peacebuilders share existing tools and resources on advocacy, learn from each other’s experiences on the ground, and improve strategies for effective advocacy for peace as a collective.

In 2016, we implemented one training of youth advocates to support young people raising their voices to policy makers

Activities in 2016

2.1 Bringing Peace to European Policy

Type of activity: Training of advocates

Training 20 young peace activists to act as advocates for youth participation in peacebuilding and preventing violence towards European decision makers, this training formed the beginning of UNOY Peacebuilders’ European-level advocacy. The training was built on youth advocacy trainings implemented by UNOY Peacebuilders in past years for global-level advocacy, but adapted to
include a focus on European institutions such as the Council of Europe and the European Commission.

In addition to a focus on European institutions, the training included an emphasis on online campaigning as a means of public advocacy and the localisation of the international youth peacebuilding agenda.

Participants in the training course were invited to become members of UNOY Peacebuilders’ new European Youth Advocacy Team after their participation, which many of them did.

2.2 Young Peacebuilders in West Africa

Type of activity: Training of advocates

Together with the UN Alliance of Civilisations (UNAOC), we organised a training for newcomers to peacebuilding in the West African region. The training was aimed at young people aged 18-25 and introduced key concepts and methods for peacebuilding. This was an innovative training format for UNOY Peacebuilders, where the contents of the training were a combination of methods traditionally used by UNOY and by UNAOC.
3. Raising youth voices

We bring the voices of young peacebuilders to the attention of international policymakers, advocating for increased youth participation in issues of peace and security, and a culture of peace. The focus of our advocacy work is towards the United Nations, as resolutions and policies developed at the UN set a global standard for peace and development and an international policy framework on youth, peace and security is vital to keep national governments and other actors accountable towards young people. 2016 saw the addition of a regional focus to our advocacy work, with the setting up of a European Youth Advocacy Team as well as the initial planning for an African Youth Advocacy Team. At the global level, we advocated for the implementation of UN Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security adopted in December 2015, and in particular for the funding to be made available to enable its implementation.

In addition to the work done by UNOY Peacebuilders at the international level, individual member organisations continued to advocate for youth participation in peacebuilding at the local and national levels, with support from the International Secretariat.

Activities in 2016

3.1 Advocacy for implementation of 2250

Type of activity: participation in Working Group, advocacy missions

The implementation of resolution 2250 must take place at all levels - with a special emphasis on national level implementation. UNOY Peacebuilders, as a global network of youth peace organizations, needs to collaborate with the UN, its Member States and civil society for the implementation of 2250. In the advocacy for the implementation of 2250, we will on an ongoing basis learn from the 1325 community.
In 2016 we emphasised on advocating for youth-accessible funding mechanisms to enable young people to play a leading role in implementing the resolution. Additionally, we have worked to keep UN member states accountable to their promises and commitments made with UNSCR 2250.

3.2 European Youth Advocacy Team

Type of activity: Series of advocacy missions

The most innovative addition to our work in 2016 was no doubt the creation of a European Youth Advocacy Team. This new team, set up as a result of a European Training of Advocates held in 2016, went on advocacy missions to both Strasbourg and Brussels to bring youth voices on peace and security to the attention of policy and decision makers at the European level.

The long-term objective of the E-YAT is to achieve policy changes that see young people as central and positive actors on peace and security issues. The short-term objective is to sensitize European policy makers about the positive role young people are playing in peace and security and to gather the voices of young Europeans on matters of peace and security.
4. Strengthening the network

As the leading global network of youth peace organisations, UNOY Peacebuilders draws its strengths at the local, national, regional and global levels through the work of its members. Members of the network are independent and focus on diverse areas of peacebuilding including human rights, conflict transformation, gender equality, environmental sustainability and children's and women's rights. This makes it vital to ensure that the members have a shared sense of being a community.

This sense of community and joint ownership of the network is achieved by effective communication and representation mechanisms. Face-to-face networking opportunities are vital to foster network cohesion and enable young peacebuilders to work together, relate to and support each other. This was addressed through the third annual Young Peacebuilders Forum, held in late 2016. In 2016, we also began a process of setting up more effective regional structures within the network and of gathering more information about the community which we represent.

In addition to the activities listed below, the International Steering Group plays a vital role in maintaining the cohesion of the network. They met monthly throughout the year and once face-to-face in The Hague.

Activities in 2016

4.1 Young Peacebuilders Forum

Type of activity: Forum

The Young Peacebuilders Forum 2016 was titled “Youth Policy and Peace”. At the forum, young peacebuilders from across Europe met and discussed the links between policy and peace and their contributions to both. The Forum saw lively conversations between participants working on different sides of peacebuilding, and important input from the experiences of the European Youth Advocacy Team’s initial activities.
The Young Peacebuilders Forum, held for the third time in 2016, is a very important moment for young peacebuilders to get together and build a stronger network of connections between each other across the continent.

4.2 Regional Network Development
Type of activity: Organisational development

2016 saw the start of a new chapter for UNOY Peacebuilders. The network has grown significantly in recent years, especially with the addition of many members from outside of Europe. To respond to this and to be able to better serve the needs of all members, the International Secretariat began a process of designing new regional structures within the network.

This process will continue in 2017 with consultations with all member organisations, and eventually leading to new decentralised working methods in the network.

4.3 Global Mapping and Survey
Type of activity: Research

The youth peacebuilding community is diverse and global. To get a better overview of the field and the organisations our network represents, we carried out a Global Mapping and Survey attempting to capture the activities, impact and visions of youth-led peacebuilding organisations from across the world in 2016.

We received over 600 responses in this exercise, which will contribute directly to the Progress Study on Youth, Peace and Security mandated by UN Security Council resolution 2250, of which UNOY Peacebuilders is a steering committee member. This project was a partnership with Search for Common Ground. The responses will be analysed in 2017.
5. International Secretariat

In addition to implementing the projects and activities described in the previous sections, the International Secretariat carries out a number of supporting activities.

5.1 Monitoring, evaluation and learning

In 2016, we implemented the second UNOY Participants’ Review. In this review, we surveyed participants in 2014 activities to learn about their experiences and the impact of our actions on them. We also conducted an Annual Impact Review for 2015, which is currently being used to inform the activities to be undertaken in 2017.

5.2 Fundraising

Fundraising remains a significant concern for UNOY Peacebuilders and a significant task of the International Secretariat. The secretariat raises funds for joint network activities in accordance with the multiannual strategic plan. Additionally the secretariat assists member organisations in their fundraising, highlighting relevant funding calls and providing advice on funding applications.

5.3 Human resource development

The International Secretariat is composed of a small team of staff, volunteers and interns. In 2016, Gizem Kilinc replaced Matilda Flemming as Leading Coordinator responsible for advocacy.