



OSCE Chairperson-in-Office and Serbia's Foreign Minister Ivica Dačić, OSCE Secretary General Lamberto Zannier and Director of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) Michael Georg Link today welcomed the adoption by the UN Security Council earlier this week of a Resolution on Youth, Peace and Security.

They urged greater representation of young men and women in peace processes and conflict prevention and resolution, especially amid the rise of radicalization to violence and violent extremism amongst youth, which can be conducive to terrorism.

"Empowering youth is critical for generating effective counter-narratives that encourage vulnerable individuals to reject terrorism and for preventing the seeds of intolerance, radicalization and extremism from taking root in our societies," said Dačić. "I welcome the UN Security Council's first resolution on youth, peace and security issues and recall the Declaration on Youth and Security unanimously adopted at the OSCE Ministerial Council in Belgrade last week, which underlines the role that young people can play to support participating States in implementing OSCE commitments in all three dimensions of the Organization's security concept."

He added that the Serbian Chairmanship of the OSCE appointed the Organization's first-ever Special Representatives on Youth and Security earlier this year.

"Increasing participation and engagement of youth in decision-making at all levels, including within international institutions and mechanisms, is vital to efforts for the prevention and resolution of conflicts, as well as to counter violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism," said Secretary General Zannier. "Underscoring our common efforts, I joined Serbia's OSCE Chairmanship this year in launching the 'OSCE United in Countering Violent Extremism' campaign, which has already reached almost four million people through social media, giving a voice to young people and tapping into their creative thinking to effectively address this issue."

Director Link said: "Youth can play a key role in efforts to promote tolerance and universal human rights in order to challenge extremist ideas that advocate for the destruction of democracy and the negation of human rights and fundamental freedoms. Ensuring the safeguarding of these rights and freedoms, as well as the promotion of pluralistic, democratic societies, is central to the OSCE's comprehensive concept of security and has to be at the core of any effective counter-terrorism policies."

The OSCE has been active in promoting greater participation of young leaders in decision-making and the political participation of youth in general, including in the Organization.

In September 2015, the Serbian Chairmanship of the OSCE organized a conference in Belgrade bringing together youth representatives from across the OSCE region to discuss how to address the challenge of radicalization, complementing a number of training events, seminars and Youth Leadership Forums held over 2014 and 2015 on empowering youth.

*Photo by: UN Photo/Amanda Voisarad*