

YOUTH at PP-22

Generation Connect Youth Envoys' Reflections



Our future is just
a click away



Abdul Gafaru Dasana
Amin
GC-AFR Youth Envoy

#GenerationConnect



"My participation in the PP22 has been one of the most exhilarating highlights of my life in 2022.

General Reflection

Before arriving in Bucharest, I had very few positive expectations. Being the first [youth cohort] was/is fulfilling, but I knew it came with a lot of challenges, especially in rooms that had just made some of the world's biggest history days prior. It felt like our participation would be a rather major change to add. However, the outcome of the youth at PP22 has awakened me to the fact that the majority of the world is now ready to embrace this change but is just waiting for someone to take the lead.

Youth-Led Sessions

When I saw the energy and passion with which they represented all of us in the room, I could not help but feel proud to be affiliated with my colleagues, the GC Youth Envoys. I also always felt proud to have been one of those to have co-created the sessions.

Despite that, the main highlight of all the sessions for me was at the last session, the session on bridging the digital gender divide. It was the moment the Deputy Minister for ICT from the Philippines pledged to bring no less than 10 young people to the next PP and also start a chapter of Generation Connect in the Philippines.

In that moment, I felt a certain power that made me congratulate myself for representing and giving opportunities to other young people in the world who are equally deserving of the opportunity I have.

Conclusion

I could continue to give testimonies of how impactful the youth sessions and the plenaries were, but I want to rather reflect on the fun times I had with my colleagues. Clubbing, sightseeing, singing, cultural excursions, and so on. All these things made the experience more beautiful. And as Melissa El Feghali (GC Youth Envoy) said in an Instagram post, "Don't let the suits get to you. Break the typical/biased image of leaders as being blunt and serious. They can also be fun-spirited, passionate, creative, open-minded, etc. You name it. But, most importantly, they can be YOUNG."

Thank you to the governments of Australia, Canada, and Romania for their investments in our participation at PP22."



Our future is just a click away



Connie Man Hei SIU
GC-ASP Youth Envoy

#GenerationConnect



“My journey with the United Nations, technology, and policy began as a 15-year-old youth representative participating in the 2016 UN Internet Governance Forum, and engaging young people in technology decision-making spaces wasn't prominent despite the global multistakeholder platform. However, with more youth participating over the years, I'm proud to be a part of the force that drove the end of an era where youths weren't included in decision-making agendas, and I'm grateful for the crucial role that ITU takes on in this timeline - engaging and encouraging youth participation alongside today's leaders.

Being present at ITU's highest decision-making body has been a surreal experience, with ceiling-breaking moments ranging from electing the first-ever woman Secretary-General, to holding the first-ever youth-led side events in front of decision-makers across the world. But these occasions are bittersweet: arduous conversations and the failure to see the bigger picture are oftentimes intertwined behind the scenes, and yet they always serve as a great reminder of how change takes time, and that we should celebrate every small step and success.

To top everything off, (re)connecting with fellow youth envoys, delegates, and everyone at PP22 was eye-opening with how unique and phenomenal each person is, and I'm grateful to the entire ITU team, alongside the governments of Canada, Australia and Romania for making this happen.

*My biggest takeaway from PP22 is 'CONNECT': with resolutions to increase connectivity in various regions, alongside how youths, girls, and other groups connected to decision-makers by making themselves seen and heard; this is just the beginning. It never was solely about connecting people to the Internet, but more so about what we can do with this connectivity, and **I'm sure that we as young people will 'connect' to further empower, engage and participate in building an inclusive and sustainable digital future for all.***



Our future is just
a click away



Dogan Sahnigar
GC-CIS Youth Envoy

#GenerationConnect



“Looking back on the week we spent at ITU PP-22 Bucharest, I see lots of good memories, new friendships, and important ideas exchanged between “vintage” and young generations during the meetings and sessions. It was valuable for me to feel the support and interest of policy makers in us, and we are grateful to the organizations and governments that supported us to be there. Back in my country, I have now gained important insight about the importance of youth, youth voices on decision-making arenas, what we can do, and what we should do next.

We witnessed the records in ITU’s 157-year history: first ever elected female Secretary-General of ITU, youngest ever elected Deputy Secretary-General, and we, the first youth group ever participated in ITU PP Conferences. I was there in person when the delegate of my country was elected as the member of ITU RRB and when my countries were elected as the member states of ITU Council. I witnessed how our side events had an impact on policy makers and witnessed to their promises to support more young people back in their countries.

*As a very personal opinion, other valuable GC youth envoys made me realize even more that we are much more than only technical skills; we the people from technical backgrounds should not feel limited to be involved in technical work only, but we should also take initiative for those who do not have the same opportunities. We should do it for a better equal and digital future. We are the ones who shape the future and the future is also shaped for us. **As shown on the signboards: ‘engage’ and ‘participate!’”***



Our future is just
a click away



Humaun Kabir
GC-ASP Youth Envoy

#GenerationConnect



Witnessing a pair of historical moments at ITU PP 22, a youth perspective:

“The Plenipotentiary Conference is the highest policy-making body of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) held every four years. In ITU's history for the first-time youths have been a part, I was privileged enough to take part in the conference at the side events of Generation Connect as well as the plenary. As a GC youth envoy, it was my immense pleasure to see the intergenerational dialogue interactively with the participation of delegates and decision makers from different countries because the dialogues are co-designed by us, we have reflected our voice through it to the policy makers. Emphasizing to the meaningful youth engagement workshop, I have come to learn about the common grounds and challenges in different region as well as the precise solutions from different private and public stakeholders. If I try to make a word cloud then there will be "leadership", "inclusion", "sustainability", "communication", "accountability", "gender equality", "opportunities", "accessibility" and "awareness" in most cases.

In parallel to learning activities I proudly echoed the voice of youth to the higher officials and decision makers mentioning the importance of youth engagement to shape the future digital transformation of the world. I met youths with the aligned goals from Generation Connect regionals, policy makers, government and private stakeholders around the world to learn about what's happening around them, their stories inspired me a lot to take the further steps in my region to foster development in ICTs.

*And the most enlightened thing that I have witnessed is, in 157 years of ITU's history the first female Secretary General has been elected at ITU PP22 in Bucharest. That's a lifelong memory for me as a youth. **Amidst of learning, networking and fun that's how I witnessed a pair of historical moments at ITU PP22 in Bucharest, Romania.***



Our future is just
a click away



**Jackeline Garcia
Alvarado**
GC-AMS Youth Envoy

#GenerationConnect



“Attending PP-22 was an experience that has definitely impacted my life. It has left hope in young people, believing that together we can create a better future, more inclusive, with more opportunities and impact lives around the world. Representing the youth of Generation Connect at this conference was an opportunity to raise the voice of young people, put our opinions on the table, and be heard!”

At this conference I felt empowered, heard, supported. Also, I met people who inspire me to keep going.

I feel grateful to the government of Canada and Australia for believing in youth, for believing that we can and that we have valuable ideas to share.

Generation Connect is an initiative that has invited me to dream and has opened doors to the world!”



Our future is just
a click away



Alfiah Rizqi Ramdhini
GC-ASP Youth Envoy

#GenerationConnect



"I am Alfiah Rizqi Ramdhini, an 18-year-old Meteorology Science student from Indonesia. Since my first encounter with Generation Connect and getting selected as [a] Gender Champion, I never expected the whole turning point of my life after that moment. Before, I was just an ordinary student and young woman who sought an experience to discover what I could do to engage and create an impact on the more extensive community. My journey started in a beautiful city in Rwanda, then suddenly continued in a fantastic place such as the Palace of Parliament in Bucharest, Romania.

The Plenipotentiary Conference was something that I've always wanted to attend since I did a Model Simulation as a student four years ago. I could never have imagined that I would see the resolution process and that the plenary meeting would happen this early. I saw a lot of high-level guests that might be difficult to meet if not because of the plenary, including the delegation from Indonesia, and was surprised when they recognized me as a youth delegation. The other day, I was delighted and honored with the warm welcome from an unexpected invitation to attend Indonesia Embassy in Bucharest. Looked at my fellow delegation happily, and I also felt grateful to present them with the culture of my country.

With two Intergenerational Dialogues and one interactive workshop, I watched many dynamics emerge between Generation Connect and delegations. With the eagerness of my fellow youth delegation, it might not be just me that realized the different vibes we brought with our presence in the Palace at that time, but actually, Mr. Santiago recognized that too. We successfully obtained the youth spirit from Global Youth Summit in Kigali into the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference in Bucharest.

When I arrived at my university, I sat again as a student in common. I reflected on a lot of things that just happened in there. In just nine days of my journey, I got a lot of perspectives to share and a privilege because there might still be a few people my age who also could feel the same experience I had as a youth delegate. There is a responsibility to carry the new idea and lead the spirit of youth into action that impacts the community. I also felt the immense opportunity to become a bridge between my study, technology, and International policy and minimize the perspective gap that usually happens when it comes to regulation and research.

*I will never forget when someone told my fellow delegates, "You might feel small in here, in the Palace of Parliament, but remember your presence is big and important, and that's why you should be proud of yourself." Now, I'm pretty sure this is not even a half path; this is still a beginning. Going with Generation Connect and ITU, I aspire to be a young woman representative that could fill the presence of youth voices for technology and policy until the future. **Bucharest, thank you for the memories.**"*



Our future is just
a click away



Karimot Odebode
GC-AFR Youth Envoy

#GenerationConnect



“Bucharest was a dream come true. The PP-22 gave me the opportunity to hold conversation with amazing young people like myself from across the world. This conversation has birthed ideas which will impact my community positively as we are working to collaborate on a community project.

Also, it availed me the opportunity to learn more about the work that the ITU does and how countries are involved.

It was also a great moment to learn more about the host country, Romania, and interact with the people.”



Our future is just
a click away



Keeghan Patrick
GC-AMS Youth Envoy

#GenerationConnect



“My time at the Plenipotentiary meeting was a truly immeasurable experience. The opportunity gave me the chance to observe the structure of international conferences and the process of how legislation, policy and governing bodies are selected. I also had the opportunity to meet ICT delegates from both my country and region, this opportunity has allowed me to share many of my ideas and the initiatives of my company, Orbtronics with these delegates. I hope to engage them in the near future as I hope to work closely with my region to see improvements in digital connectivity, the gender digital divide and inclusivity of all regardless of race, social class, or any other segregation construct.”

*The Generation Connect initiative has truly been transformative in giving the youth a voice and empowering us to do more. **We as the youth want to be engaged, we want to create solutions, and we want to see a better future!**”*



Our future is just
a click away



Khanimnisa Ismayilova
GC-CIS Youth Envoy

#GenerationConnect



"I was so excited since we had gotten news that youth envoys would be selected to participate in PP-22 where we would have a chance to speak to high-level decision-makers. It was my first experience as a youth changemaker to participate in such an event, which allowed me to meet delegates and other youth leaders from different countries and socioeconomic cultures. As the youth, we generally don't get a chance to speak and express our feelings, concerns, and ideas to people in senior positions. Metaphorically, it always used to feel like there was a tall stair and youth stood below while decision-makers stood at the top which made the communication channels very unbearable both mentally and physically. But thanks to ITU and Canada, Australia, and Romania, the stairs were broken and we stood on the same stage (or level). It felt so important and confident, and I understood there are people who want to change some stream in a good way and help the youth to be heard. On the other hand, meeting delegates and my fellows from different countries and cultures expanded my horizons about various issues that are still in our world and need solutions.

Beyond this, I witnessed an Azerbaijani woman delegate to had reelected as an RRB director in ITU and it was so inspiring to be there, feeling the atmosphere and crossing fingers. After the election, I had a chance to meet with her and our other delegates, she was so modest and kind as much as successful as she is which made me hopeful about my country's future as well. Moreover, we talked about how to collaborate in the future. It means that being in the event gave me more opportunities than I had.

Additionally, it was an honor to be a part of three different sessions to express youth concerns to delegates, and especially it was my first experience speaking up about realities to more than a hundred people in our international dialogue on bridging the digital gender divide. After the session, I got lots of positive comments about my speech and the importance of the issue which made me understand actually I am on the right path, I can do more, and I should do more for other women and our future generations.

Last but not least, as one of my fellows said, this world is so big but ITU and the people who made us a part of the event made the world really small to hear, to understand, to speak, and to be heard. As a young woman, I am so inspired and proud of being a part of Generation Connect and to work together with excellent professionals."



Our future is just
a click away



Melissa El Feghali
GC-ARB Youth Envoy

#GenerationConnect



“Having participated in several Model United Nations conferences as a teenager, being present at the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference in Bucharest, Romania felt unreal. Being able to witness Member States’ delegations voting, approving resolutions, negotiating, and just seeing the whole policy-making process happening in front of me was very intriguing. But the highlight of it all for me was the opportunity for us, youth, to be able to contribute somehow to such a high-level conference through our side events and to see the impact that we have created.”

Through our meaningful youth engagement workshop, I had interesting and constructive conversations with decision-makers that were present at the roundtable I was facilitating. A key takeaway from these conversations was that policy/decision makers should acknowledge the importance of youth participation and be willing to give them the opportunity to contribute, instead of having prejudice about their capabilities and shutting them out because of “lack of experience”. Nonetheless, another key takeaway was that in return, youth should also make sure to bring something to the table and show that their contributions are valid when given the chance.

*Yes, we had some difficult conversations, and yes, we did encounter some setbacks on different levels - national, regional, and international. However, for me, getting inspired, first by the work of my fellow GC Youth Envoys, and second, by the leaders who have put their trust in us and have given us the floor to engage in conversations with them and share our ideas and perspectives, was the factor that will push me to keep moving forward in this advocacy journey. **The palace was huge and we might have felt so little at certain moments, but we have come to realize at the end that the impact we made was big.**”*



Our future is just
a click away



Luke Cavanaugh
GC-EUR Youth Envoy

#GenerationConnect



“Arriving at Romania’s palace of parliament, the largest building in Europe, was as inspirational as it was overwhelming. Monday morning was spent in a coffee break stood round a table with delegates from Indonesia and Ghana, Guinea and Japan, conversing with like-minded people from all around the world about important topics of digital inclusion.

As the week went on, that sense of being overwhelmed slowly diminished, and the conversations became more vibrant. Digital inclusion gave way to the digital inclusion of youth, serendipitous coffee table chats became scheduled meetings, and coffee breaks were replaced with intergenerational dialogues and youth-organised workshops.

It was inspiring to see delegates and senior ITU officials pack out our Generation Connect sessions to discuss digital connection, the gender divide and youth empowerment. Youth at PP represented an important step in a journey to achieve meaningful youth representation across the United Nations.

Sharing this experience with 22 other youth envoys and 6 content creators made it all the more special. Just as remarkable as the delegates were the stories of my other youth envoys, from gender campaigners to blockchain pioneers, from teachers to published poets.

*Youth at PP was a call to action. Not just for the member states who heard our message that Youth were there not just to ask for things but to participate and problem solve, but for those of us who attended. **Having realised what the power of young people’s voices can achieve, we look forward to the next event, and further supporting Generation Connect.”***



Our future is just
a click away



Mable Chileshe
GC-AFR Youth Envoy

#GenerationConnect



“The opportunity to attend and participate in Youth at PP-22 was a once-in-a-lifetime experience and it still feels surreal. I still remember when Sylvia first announced during our Generation Connect roundtable and immediately, I knew that I wanted to be part of such an experience - to engage with global policymakers on issues affecting women and youth in the digital space.

While at PP, I had the rare privilege of meeting representatives from my country’s ministry of ICT and others from Zambia’s biggest telecommunications company (ZICTA) who expressed interest in future collaborations on STEM-based community projects in Zambia - an opportunity I would never have gotten elsewhere.

*As someone who is considering a career in Tech policy and digital inclusion, I had the rare opportunity to get a deeper understanding of how Tech policies work and engaged in conversations with delegates. My major highlight was the overall youth experience- collaboration with fellow youth envoys to deliver successful dialogues and a workshop. **In the process, I developed deeper and more meaningful relationships with fellow youth who are now friends and potential partners on projects relating to gender, education, and/or STEM.”***



Our future is just a click away



Melissa Muñoz
GC-AMS Youth Envoy

#GenerationConnect



“Participating as a youth envoy of the Americas group at PP-22 was an incredibly important and enlightening experience from which I earned a multicultural family of 22 new friends from all over the world. I developed a new vision of the ITU and its processes and learned thousands of inspiring ideas of how young people are transforming their realities through the use of ICTs.”

For the first time in the 157 years of this organization, a woman was elected as general secretary and I was a witness for this ceiling breaking moment. From this week full of activities, I take with me the example of great women who are echoing and creating spaces through which they can achieve great things in making technology more accessible to all. But most of all, I will remember the simplicity of Doreen, the diligence of Silvia, and the empathy of Dunola. To all of them, I say thank you, because they have taught me and inspired my future goals and who I become.

*Finally, I want to express my deep gratitude to the ITU that has bet on us, the youth, and in doing so gave us the necessary mechanisms and tools to be able to echo the dreams and concerns of our generation in the future digital agenda. **I dream that someday the youth will be able to have a significant vote and role in these debates and more young people from the Dominican Republic will be able to participate in these types of spaces.**”*



**Our future is just
a click away**



Nguyen Dang Son
GC-ASP Youth Envoy

#GenerationConnect



"After this event, the meaning of "Generation Connect" is thoroughly understood for our youth envoys to be a bridge to connect generations with generations, continents with continents, ethnicities with ethnicities, and people with people. Throughout 3 side events co-hosted by youths, the concerns and significance of bringing youths into the discussion to move the world forward are emphasized by decision-makers' involvement. The moments of welcoming plenty of outstanding and talented decision-makers worldwide to step inside our room were the most extremely contented for all of our efforts, thus far.

Not stopping there, I had a chance to personally talk with several delegates, and politicians in other countries to share with them my ideas for changing the world. Surprisingly, they advocated for my ideas and criticized some points to adjust them as a better initiative implemented in the future. So glad was I when some politicians said they would try to discuss these ideas with their board of members in their countries after returning to their countries. I still keep connected with them and ask them frequently about these changes; then, of course, expect to be a supporter for them whenever they inquire about my opinions. I have never expected high and strong empowerment like this before. But, in the end, I and our youth envoys are here to connect the unconnected worldwide!

Hope to see the next ITU Plenipotentiary Conference in 2026 and how the world changes after PP-22."



Our future is just
a click away



Raiz Boodram
GC-AMS Youth Envoy

#GenerationConnect



“On October 3rd -7th I had the distinct honour of participating in the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) Plenipotentiary Conference in Bucharest, Romania as a Generation Connect Youth Envoy from the Americas Region, specifically, Trinidad and Tobago. This conference occurs once every four years and is the ITUs highest policy making-making body for Member States.

This year however, is one that will forever be engraved in the history books! This is my reflection! The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) decided to include the Generation Connect Youth Envoys into PP-22 for the first time in history, so we can be ‘heard by and learn from’ major decision makers from all regions across the world and I cannot begin to express how privileged I am to have been one of the selected envoys to participate in this life changing experience.

Generation Connect had three (3) side events at the conference focused on ‘Education, Digital Skills & Future of Work’; ‘Meaningful Youth Engagement’ and ‘Closing the Gender Digital Divide.’ Not only did I have the opportunity to participate in the ITU-PP Conference but I was honoured to be the moderator of the first side event, ‘Education, Digital Skills & Future of Work’ where I shared the stage with fellow youth envoys, key decision makers, and Ms. Doreen Bogdan-Martin (Director BDT & ITU Sec-Gen Elect)

And yes, this is another one for the history books. For the first time in 157 years of ITU, Ms. Doreen Bogdan-Martin shattered the glass ceiling by becoming the first woman ever to be elected to the post of Secretary General and I was extremely grateful to have had the opportunity to celebrate this achievement briefly with her at the side event all while, being engrossed and learning from every individual in the room.

At this PP-22 conference, a lot more historical events occurred and I am elated to officially say that I am part of said history thanks to the ITU and their Generation Connect Initiative.”



Our future is just
a click away



Ramu Pandey
GC-ASP Youth Envoy

#GenerationConnect



“In my life, there are many experiences that could qualify as the life-changing. Every new experience was, at one time or another, the first experience to explore more. But, the most transformative experience was attending the International Telecommunication Union (ITU)’s Plenipotentiary Conference (PP-22) in Bucharest, Romania as the Generation Connect Youth Envoy representing Nepal, Asia Pacific Region with support from Government of Australia.

ITU’s highest policy-making body Plenipotentiary Conference (PP) is the platform that I had always dreamed to be part of as a youth. I along with other youth envoys from different regions, we were what you would call a well-rounded, perfect group of youth delegate to the high level platform to elevate our voice and settle down with policy makers to seek for possible solutions. I was grateful to witness the high level election process of ITU during PP-22 and how member states play their role to shape the future of ICT globally. This experience was beyond enriching, not only because I had the opportunity to observe the high level election process but also because I gained connection with the government delegates from my country as well as other country’s representatives to take good practices to local level. This was the life time chance for me to speak with delegations from around the world, attend plenary discussions and elections, and co-create a series of intergenerational dialogues and youth-led workshops at the ITU’s flagship strategy-setting event; broaden my horizon of knowledge to the next level.

*I gained a new respect to the people of Romania for their welcoming nature and for preserving their cultural heritages, tradition and values blending it with the modern world. I realized it when I had the opportunity to explore different place in Bucharest. **In a nutshell, I lived my dream in Bucharest.**”*



Our future is just
a click away



Saba Tiku Beyene
GC-AFR Youth Envoy

#GenerationConnect



“First of all, it’s an honor for me to be chosen amongst many applicants to participate in the Youth at PP-22 event in Bucharest, Romania. This experience was beyond enriching. Not only because I met with my fellow youth envoys but because I had the opportunity to connect with delegates, representatives, and entrepreneurs from all over the world. It is also an honor to meet with the first elected female secretary-general, Doreen Bodgan.

To begin from the first day, I had the pleasure to meet with my country delegate. The intergenerational dialogues we had on the second day on the topics of education, future jobs, and digital skills with the decision-makers were quite beneficial and engaging. I also benefited a lot from the youth-led workshop we organized on meaningful youth engagement because I had the opportunity to give my opinions as a youth and learn from the advice and experiences of other generations in shaping the next generations of ITU delegates. During the workshop many topics were covered regarding youth engagement were we and the decision makers co-designed an interactive workshop. It was also on this day that we visited the University Politehnica of Bucharest with the ITU Secretary-General Houlin Zhao and saw different laboratories and innovation centers. The final day was spent with the second intergenerational dialogue on the gender digital divide. On this day, we visited the Bucharest National Opera House and experienced a glimpse of European culture.

*In conclusion, it was an amazing experience and I’m delighted to meet with my fellow youth envoys and made some great friends and memories. **I extend my gratitude to the government of Romania, Canada, Australia and officials of ITU for making this possible, especially Dunola and Sylvia.**”*



Our future is just a click away



Shradha Pandey
GC-ASP Youth Envoy

#GenerationConnect



"Attending the ITU-PP22 from October 3rd to October 7th in Bucharest, Romania, as a Generation Connect Youth Envoy for the Asia Pacific was one of the most profound and life-changing experiences for me. The International Telecommunications Union (ITU) is a specialised agency of the United Nations for Information and Communication Technologies (ICT's). The ITU was founded in 1865 as the International Telegraph Union, it is currently the oldest existing International Organisation in the world. It is headquartered at Geneva Switzerland and it conducts the Plenipotentiary (PP) Conference once every four (4) years which is the highest policy-making body of the ITU.

The Plenipotentiary conference is the key event where the ITU Member States (193 Nos) come together to decide the future role of the organisation, thereby determining the organisation's ability to influence and affect the development of ICTs across the globe. The usual norm is that only the representatives of the Member States are present at this conference. 2022 is a historic year because for the first time in the history of ITU young people i.e. the Generation Connect Youth Envoys engaged with the decision makers during the ITU PP-22 and got the opportunity to experience the plenary sessions as participants and witnessed the elections (with 182 members voting) held at the plenary for the Radio Regulations Board and the Council. This amazing feat was accomplished by the constant support and Vision of Doreen Bogdan Martin (who herself made history by shattering the glass ceiling) along with the support from the Canadian and Australian Governments to ensure that the young community members have a seat at the table to shape the digital development agenda for the present and our own future. The experience of attending the entire event was surreal and I am still absorbing the entire journey starting from the Welcome Meeting, Elections, Attending the plenary, observing the voting process (Process of casting ballot, observing the vote counting process and the enthusiasm of countries when they won). A special place in my heart belongs to all the Generation Connect Youth envoys who attended the PP-22 not only to participate but to actively engage and shape our digital future.

The first Intergenerational Dialogue was on the topic "Education, Future Jobs and Digital skills where the opening address was given by Doreen herself. For the first dialogue we spoke to numerous delegates from different countries and regions and invited them to attend the session. The participation and interest in the session was so overwhelming that we even had people standing in the back which showed us that truly there is hope for us as a lot of decision makers care about youth participation and hear what the young community members have to say about their future. We had the wonderful Sabin Sarmas, the Chairman of PP-22 and the President of the IT&C Committee at the Parliament of Romania along with John Omo, Secretary General of the African Telecommunications Union along with Botagoz Kaliyeva, Chief Specialist at State Radio Frequency Service of Kazakhstan. Our dearest Karimot Odebode (Founder of 'Black Girl's Dream' initiative) recited a poem titled "With Just a Click" during our session. We also had the amazing Eliza and Simran participate as youth members during the panel. The dialogue and the conversation gives me hope for our digital future and inspires me to bring a change in this world.



Our future is just a click away



Shradha Pandey
GC-ASP Youth Envoy

#GenerationConnect



On the next day we had the meaningful youth engagement workshop where Thomas Lamanauskus, the youngest elected Deputy Secretary General in ITU's history gave the opening speech at the workshop. I had the opportunity to meet and co-facilitate during the session with the amazing Marco Obiso (ITU Chief) and the adorable Mable as the scribe for the session. We had an amazing engagement with Pablo from APNIC, Atsuko San from ITU and Norah from Zimbabwe, we also had amazing decision makers like Mihail from Romania among others. We brainstormed answers to crucial questions like "what meaningful youth engagement meant to each of us, on sticky note then go stick it up on the reflection board". We also dealt with other questions like "What actionable solutions could improve meaningful youth engagement at national, regional, and/or international levels? and How can we attract, engage and empower future youth delegates to ITU events and initiatives?" Being a strong Intergenerational gender and equity advocate myself, the next day was one of my most favourite topics, we had out Intergenerational Dialogue on Bridging the Gender Digital Divide, where we started the session with an icebreaker to turn to the person next to us and tell them about a woman who inspires you! The opening speech was given by Santiago Reyes Borda, senior policy advisor, International Telecommunications and Internet Policy and Department of Innovation, Science and Economic Development of Canada. The idea of Gender Equality as a premise for social, economic and cultural development was discussed during the session. We had the lovely Valentina Dominguez, and the three panelists who joined us were Roxanne McElvane Webb, the Deputy Chief of Global Strategy and Negotiation Division at USA FCC International Bureau, Her Excellency Jocelle Batapa-Sigue, Undersecretary of the DICT of the Philippines and Mansour Al-Qurashi, General Manager for International Affairs at the CITC of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. We also had Khanimissa as a youth panelist during the session along with Mable who brought out some crucial concerns regarding gender during the session.

*I am extremely grateful for the opportunity to attend such a high level conference and interact with such esteemed delegates at my age. The memories and experiences I had during the PP22 range from extreme happiness and joy to having difficult conversations and disappointment from some things we were told. The interactions and discussions I had with the delegates helped me realise that while some countries were going above and beyond for youth inclusion and equity, not each and every country or region was open to change and bringing youth into the policy discussions to facilitate change in the society. The PP22 helped me realise that meaningful youth engagement along with equity and inclusion is quintessential for the development of all countries. The history created at PP22 and the way in which the path is paved for the future inclusion of youth community members in such high level discussions gives me hope for the future. **It is time to think and work on giving back to the community and the ITU with just a click, because when the youth community comes together to bring a change, there is nothing that we cannot achieve.**"*



Our future is just
a click away



Tayma Abdalhadi
GC-ARB Youth Envoy

#GenerationConnect



“Thank you so much to ITU for all your work and efforts in Generation Connect. It has been a truly life changing experience. Being where all the decisions are made, meeting and being mentored by delegates and heads of delegations was eye opening. Seeing so many delegates excited to have us but also delegates hesitant to see our presence lit a fire in me to work towards spreading more awareness on youth engagement.”

The feedback from the workshop was extremely exciting. Decision makers and youth are finally eye to eye, talking and brainstorming solutions to challenges they proposed. It was what we needed, really.

*I’m eager to continue the mission to find a structure to engage more youth and to spread awareness on what meaningful youth engagement is. And I’m happy to offer any help with brainstorming the next engagement structure. **I’d also be honored to have a more involved role with Generation Connect whenever possible.**”*



Our future is just a click away



Simran Sahni
GC-ASP Youth Envoy

#GenerationConnect



*"As a young social activist, I have been always told that I am too young to have a voice for my opinions. I have many a time been denied access to opportunities that involve making decisions affecting me merely because of my age. Youth at PP2022 gave me an opportunity to be confident about who I am and what I have achieved at such a young age. It gave me a platform to talk eye-to-eye with many decision-makers across the world and voice my opinions. As a gender equality and inclusion advocate, I was elated to be a part of a historic Plenipotentiary conference where a woman was elected as the Secretary-General in 157 years. Doreen has always been an inspiration for me and it was an honor to be a part of this historic conference. As a child, I have always taken part in MUNs, and attending a plenary was dreamlike. I met delegations from various countries and was able to understand their vision of excellence for their country. I made life-long friendships with my fellow youth delegates, and each of them inspires me. The host country, Romania, was so gracious and made us feel so comforted and welcomed. The daily reflections in the morning were a way for me to reflect and make connections to my learnings. Dunola and Sylvia pushed us to think of our learnings and sustainable action steps contextualized to our countries and Generation Connect. **I am grateful to be a part of this conference, I am taking back so much learning and growth.**"*



Our future is just
a click away



Valentina Dominguez
GC-EUR Youth Envoy

#GenerationConnect



“The experience in Bucharest is something I wish all young people could experience. The opportunity to attend elections, participate in plenary discussions, interact with deputies, business people, and representatives from around the world, and co-create Intergenerational Dialogues and Workshops has been a privilege and a gift to me. During these events, we have the opportunity to show that we are capable of making ourselves heard, raising our voices for ourselves and for our people, and generating meaningful youth engagement.

This experience has undoubtedly changed my life. It opened up a new door for me in my career that I probably wouldn't have opened without it. I feel close to making a significant impact today, and I have more tools and resources to help me do so.

The more I've connected with people, the more I realized how few people take us seriously. Maybe because we aren't founders or because we're too young. In any case, older generations are still reluctant to take young people seriously. Before I went to Bucharest, I didn't realize how challenging it is for young people to be included and engaged in events of this scope. But, this doesn't discourage me, it gives me reasons to get united with other Youth Envoys and fight for having a seat at the table.

*These are the moments that matter. Change is now. Change is by and for the young people of today, our hope for the future. **And I, for one, am committed to the cause of giving us a voice and to stand up for a future that is more inclusive, more diverse, more equitable, and above all, more connected.**”*



Our future is just
a click away



Wassila Chtioui
GC-ARB Youth Envoy

#GenerationConnect



“Simply stating that it was one of the best experiences I ever had is enough to describe how much participating in the PP22 was both fun and insightful. I'm shy, not much of a social person and I'm not very involved when it comes to policy and stuff, and yet I managed to be friends with everyone, talk with delegates and share with them my thoughts and ideas about the Arab region as a youth envoy and be a panelist in one of our Generation Connect sessions ‘Education and Future Jobs’, which boosted my confidence and my communication skills.

A huge thank you to Dunola and Sylvia, who believed in us and everyone who contributed to make our presence in the PP22 possible.”



YOUTH at PP-22

Generation Connect Youth Envoys' Reflections

