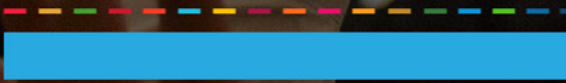




OAS | More rights  
for more people



**young** americas  
 **forum**



## Young Americas Forum

The Young Americas Forum is an open permanent platform for the participation of young people in the Summits of the Americas and General Assemblies processes as well as Ministerial Meetings and high-level inter-American conferences. The Forum has been established as the official event and program that provides inclusive spaces for youth to contribute proactively in the definition of priorities and mandates in the Americas.

An in-person format of the Forum is celebrated every three years within the framework of the Summits of the Americas, institutionalized gatherings of the heads of state and government of the Western Hemisphere. During the Summits leaders discuss common policy issues, affirm shared values and commit to concerted actions at the national and regional level to address continuing and new challenges faced in the Americas. Young People contribute to the Summits process and participate as Social Actors, providing their recommendations and contributions to the Summits Themes.

At the Young Americas Forums, participants connect and gain skills, knowledge, networks through conferences, workshops, and networking events. A Youth Declaration of Commitment<sup>1</sup> is adopted to be presented to Heads of State by youth representatives. Throughout the Forum's process, this young people are able to make concrete proposals to governments, present innovative solutions to the Summits themes and setting up their own agenda for action and follow-up to the agreements reached at the Forum.

The Young Americas Forum was created by Young Americas Business Trust (YABT) in partnership with the Summit of the Americas Secretariat and the Organization of American States (OAS) in 2005, as the official hemispheric platform for the participation of young people to participate and make contributions as Social Actors, in the Summit of the Americas.

As a unique platform for young people to present recommendations, concerns, and most importantly, innovative actions that respond to the Summits of the Americas Themes, the Forum has the following components:

- **Youth Participation** with in-person local, national and hemispheric youth dialogues,<sup>2</sup> policy making trainings (policy labs) and virtual consultations. To contribute to the Youth Declaration of Commitment and Action Plan.
- **Entrepreneurship in Action**, through the Talent and Innovation Competition of the Americas (TIC Americas), an international platform and business acceleration plan for young entrepreneurs and start-ups that provide training, coaching, funding, and access to an international network: [www.ticamericas.net](http://www.ticamericas.net)

Since its creation, more than 28,000 young people from every Member State of the OAS have participated in the Summits of the Americas process through the Young Americas Forum.

<sup>1</sup> Youth Declarations are the written proposals, recommendations and concerns from young people to governments; which include the voice of all young people involved in the Young Americas Forum process.

<sup>2</sup> Since 2007 Hemispheric Youth Dialogues have been consolidated as the channel for the participation of Youth as Social Actors in the OAS General Assemblies.

## Check out some examples of how our young representatives have met some international leaders

• Colombia's first lady María Juliana Ruiz -TIC Americas 2019  
(Video: <https://bit.ly/2ZgErSw> )

•The Vice President of the World Bank for Latin America and the Caribbean, Jorge Familiar, in the IV Young Americas Forum

•S.E Luis Almagro, Secretary General of the OAS in the V Forum

•Panel "Tomorrow's Leaders Speak Up: Intergenerational Dialogue between Today's and Tomorrow's Leaders", in the IV Young Americas Forum  
(Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r66VhPsjdrk>)

## Forum Impact

young americas  
forum

15 years promoting  
Youth Participation

+29 350  
Youth Involved



On site  
Dialogues

Virtual  
Community

Virtual  
Consultation

## The Young Americas Forum and the Sustainable Development Goals

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is the global plan adopted by all the United Nations member states in 2015 to achieve prosperity for all people and the planet. This worldwide commitment consists of leaving no one behind and making the 17 SDGs a reality for everyone by 2030. The Young Americas Business Trust (YABT) works directly with today's young leaders and entrepreneurs that are building a better future for our region and the rest of the world. In close collaboration with the Organization of American States (OAS), YABT fosters the innovative role of youth in economic development, social inclusion, environmental protection, as well as peace and democratic efforts.



Learn more about how YABT contributes to achieve the SDGs through all its programs.

## Young Americas Dialogue 2020 Virtual Format

The Young Americas Dialogues take place every year as part of the OAS General Assemblies and involve hundreds of young people representing youth networks across the region. At each yearly, Hemispheric Dialogue participants connect and gain skills, knowledge, networks access to content, conferences, workshops, and networking events.

A Youth Declaration of Commitment is adopted and presented to Heads of Delegation by youth representatives. Throughout the Forum's process, young people are able to make concrete proposals to governments, present innovative solutions to the General Assemblies themes, setting up their own agenda for action and follow-up.

## Young Americas Dialogue in the frame of the 49th General Assembly June, 2019 | Medellin, Colombia

### Highlights

Youth representatives presented results of a Hemispheric Youth Consultation process to the Heads of Delegation at the 49th OAS General Assembly; focused on the central theme: "Innovating to strengthen hemispheric multilateralism"

More than 1,400 young people from all over the hemisphere participated in the process.

## V Young Americas Forum April, 2018 | Lima, Peru

The Forum was focused on addressing the central theme of the Summit, "Democratic Governance against Corruption"

### Thematic axis:

1. Democratic governance and corruption.
  2. Corruption and sustainable development.
  3. Aspects of cooperation, international institutionality and public private alliances.
- Involving more than 5,700 young people and leaders, as part of the preparatory process

## IV Young Americas Forum

April, 2015 | Panama City, Panama

It was focused on the theme “Prosperity with Equity: The Challenge of Cooperation in the Americas.” It was the first official event within the framework of the Summit of the Americas; which welcomed the attendance of 60 young Cuban citizens, marking a historic milestone for the Americas. For the first time, Luis Almagro, Secretary General of OAS participated at a Young Americas Forum reaffirming the commitment and vision of the organization with the youth.

## III Young Americas Forum

April, 2012 | Cartagena de Indias, Colombia

The first Youth Conference of the OAS under the topic “Youth in Action: For Democracy and Entrepreneurship,” took place in December 2012 in Washington D.C. The conference held a second and third edition in 2013 and 2014 respectively, generating high-level discussions on youth mandates.

## II Young Americas Forum

Abril, 2009 | Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago

Hundreds of young people from different social backgrounds in the region contributed with their opinions to the Summits of the Americas process and presented the youth perspective in relation to the priority theme: Human Prosperity, Energy Security and Environmental Sustainability.

## I Young Americas Forum

August, 2005 | Buenos Aires, Argentina

More than 8,000 participants responded and presented an “Action Plan” focused on decent youth employment.

This was the first opportunity for young people to present their recommendations, opinions, and actions to the Heads of State and Government of the Hemisphere around central theme of the IV Summit of the Americas “Creating Jobs to Confront Poverty and Strengthen Democratic Governance.”



### Connection with Ministerial and other Hemispheric Events in the Inter-American Agenda

#### Youth and Education

The Education Working Group, who postulated in the Declaration that they wanted, as a youth, to be considered in the development of the Inter-American Agenda for Education. YABT channeled this request and the young people were able to make their contribution to the construction of the Agenda. A virtual consultation and a dialogue with experts in Education resulted in a Report that was presented to the Ministers of Education in the Day of Reflection towards the Construction of an Inter-American Educational Agenda.

#### Youth and Sustainable Development

Sustainable Development was another topic that recently achieved a “Declaration of Young Americans United for Sustainable Development” that was presented at the Dialogue with Civil Society in the framework of the Meeting of High Authorities of Sustainable Development developed in Tela, Honduras.

#### Youth and Social Inclusion

Since IV Forum, emerged the need to work on the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the different areas of the Organization of American States. That is why, accompanying a proposal that emerged in Panama, a project for social inclusion for persons with disabilities “Accessible OAS” was presented to the new Secretariat for Access to Rights and Equity of the OAS. In this way YABT accompanies the youth in their concern to guarantee access to information and contents in the OAS for people with disabilities.

#### Youth and Indigenous Groups

Another important aspect of the Forum was that, for the first time in the framework of the Summit of the Americas, the young members of indigenous people had a space and made their voices heard. They drafted a “Declaration of the Indigenous Youth” which was presented to the presidents of the Member States. This was a historic Forum, where voice was given to those who had no voice.

### General Assembly of the OAS

Another event where youth is represented every year is the General Assembly of the Organization of American States. It is a goal of YABT to include young people in the OAS process as drivers of change.

In Washington DC and later in Santo Domingo, the youth made their recommendations regarding the pillars of the OAS and were listened to by the highest authorities of the Organization and the heads of Delegation, so that their words reached every corner of the hemisphere. Prior to the Assemblies, YABT developed virtual dialogues and virtual surveys that involved hundreds of young people from all over the hemisphere making their contributions to the OAS.

### Annual Meeting of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF)

Another historic milestone was the World Bank and IMF Annual Meetings held in Peru in 2015, which, after more than 50 years, was held outside of Washington D.C. Jim Kim, President of the World Bank, was the keynote speaker at the event that convened more than 500 people to talk about youth and entrepreneurship in the Peruvian capital. "Young entrepreneurs: drivers of sustainable growth" was the title of the activity that took as a prelude 4 months of interaction with the youth of 43 countries to know and be able to replicate their success stories in Lima.

YABT coordinated the development of a report that shows how young people have become drivers of innovation, economic growth, and positively impacted their societies. Prior to the meeting in Lima, YABT opened different channels of participation, where thousands of young people were involved: 3 global dialogues, in English, French and Spanish, 25 National dialogues covering 5 continents and more than 1,000 responses to virtual queries.

### Youth and migration

The Committee on Migration Issues of the OAS provided a place for Youth in the Forum named "Migration and Development: Towards the implementation of the Agenda 2030". The results of this and the other 27 dialogues were presented to the Heads of Delegation to the General Assembly of the OAS.

### Youth and Employment

In 2016, a Workshop on Youth Employment was held in Brasilia, bringing together authorities from the Ministries of Education and Labor and other key actors to discuss youth employment strategies. There, a youth spokesperson had the opportunity to share the contributions of 24 national dialogues held during that year. The meeting sought to recognize the changes that are taking place in the world of work and the demands imposed by the new technologies and the so-called 'fourth industrial revolution' in employment, education and training.

### Open dialogue with the Secretary General of the OAS

In 2016 young people participated for the first time in an open dialogue with the Secretary General of the OAS. More than 500 young people from 26 countries from all over the continent participated in the celebration of the 4th anniversary of the formation of the "Youth Network of the Americas" in response to the "Action Plan" of the Young Americas Forum in Cartagena.

### Annual United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Youth Forum

Since 2013, YABT plays a central role in the UN ECOSOC Youth Forum by elevating the voice of young people in the Americas to the UN Level. YABT has been speaker, moderator, presenter and responsible to connect with the Youth Networks in the Region. Intervention include: 2016, YABT Executive Director Valerie Lorena was a panelist at a plenary session on promoting alliances that involve youth in the implementation of Agenda 2030. In 2017, YABT CEO Luis Viguria was in charge of moderation and presentation of the results of the session on the challenges of youth in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Let us know the actions you are leading  
in your country through the hashtags:

#YouthInTheSummit

#YouthInAction

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