

Strasbourg, 17 December 2015

Annual Young Political Leaders Programme - 2016

1. Introduction

In line with the decision of the Democracy Support and Election Coordination Group (DEG) in May 2015 to endorse a new *Concept for an EP Young Political Leaders Programme*, the following proposal for a *1st Annual Programme* was presented for discussion in November and then for adoption in December 2015.

The engagement of young political leaders from third countries has long been of interest to the European Parliament, its importance continues to grow in response to the changing geopolitical context whereby the EU is faced with instability in the East and South, as well as further afield.

In line with the Concept, young political leaders will include parliamentarians, political party representatives, civil society actors and young business leaders, who will be invited to attend seminars, training and other interactive events that provide the space (and basis for networks) for those committed to pursuing common values of democracy and sustainable peace.

As set out in the Concept, three different categories of activities are to be offered, depending on the need, context and available resources:

- *Country level activities*, facilitating dialogue in selected individual countries (e.g. Republic of Sudan visit to Brussels).
- *Country-to-country level activities*, developing an exchange of peaceful dialogue between neighbouring countries (e.g. Israel-Palestinian dialogue in the Middle East Forum).
- *Regional level activities*, developing dialogue between countries of a particular region (e.g. Eastern Partnership or the Maghreb).

In addition, the development of an online *Young Political Leaders Alumni Network* will ensure continuity between individual programmes by encouraging dialogue amongst alumni and MEPs as well as allowing wider virtual dialogue amongst alumni on matters of peace, mediation and democracy building.

2. First Annual Programme for 2016

In line with an emphasis upon the wider Neighbourhood, building upon successful past practices and taking into account the priorities under the Comprehensive Democracy Support Approach (CDSA), the following draft programme has been approved:

Activity	Time Period	Place	Comments
Category: Country			
Tanzania	3 days	Tanzania	Taking into account the quasi-federal and bipolar party environment in Tanzania, activities will include participants from Mainland and Zanzibar, and from CCM and CHADEMA/CUF. The YPL event would be combined with a training session/best practices between young MEPs and newly elected young MPs (as requested by the National Assembly).
Myanmar	3 days	Myanmar	CDSA Myanmar Programme 2016 incl. reference to this activity.
Turkey	3 days	Turkey	New activity as Turkey is a strategic partner of the EU and where working with young leaders could be important as the country is undergoing considerable generational change. This would also allow proper focus of a country whose activities would otherwise be included in the broader pre-accession activities.
Category: Country to Country			
Israel-Palestine Dialogue	3 days	Brussels	New focus on Israel-Palestinian Dialogue.
Category: Regional			
Western Balkans	3 days	In the region	Possible partnership with Commission and following up on the Western Balkans Summit (tbc).
Maghreb	3 days	Brussels	New programme (replacing previous annual forum).
Eastern Partnership & Russia	3 days	Brussels	New programme (modifying and replacing the previous annual forum).