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Brussels, 21st June 2017

To: Jayathma Wickramanayake – UN Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth

Subject: Congratulations from the European Youth Forum

Dear Jayathma Wickramanayake,

On behalf of the European Youth Forum, it is with great honour that I would like to congratulate you on your appointment as the new United Nations Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth.

You now have a great responsibility towards the millions of young people all across the world.

The European Youth Forum - as the largest youth-led movement in the world - is committed to your success and ready to work with you.

Throughout the selection process for the Envoy on Youth, the European Youth Forum, together with our partners in the International Coordination Meeting of Youth Organisations (ICMYO), has been calling for a fair and transparent process ensuring a strong connection between the Envoy and youth organisations. Your strong experience in youth organisations is of high added-value and increases your legitimacy to work for young people.

You have a strong mandate to increase youth participation at all levels, and more specifically within the United Nations. To recall Secretary General Guterres's words: *"For too long young people have been excluded from the decision-making that is affecting their futures. We must build on the work that has been done with the support of Member States, the Youth Envoy and civil society. But this cannot be an initiative by old people discussing the younger generation."* We could not agree more and we must work together to youth up our institutions.

As Envoy on Youth, you will need to play an essential role in driving forward UN priorities on youth, in advocating for the interests and needs of young people and in promoting the effective participation of young people and democratic, membership-led youth organisations in global governance and in the UN system, through participatory and accountable mechanisms, acknowledging their legitimate and valuable contribution to sustainable development and the goals of the UN. The UN has a great potential to ensure and increase the role of young people and their organisations to shape the peaceful future of our societies.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a key and crucial opportunity to further include young people and their organisations in decision-making and to highlight their positive contributions for a more democratic, sustainable, inclusive and progressive world.



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The UN Security Council Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security is also a strong signal and a framework with great potential to increase youth participation at all levels and to support the work of youth organisations in the fight against violent extremism.

You now have a mission to improve the role and the lives of all young people.

Please be assured of the European Youth Forum's availability to support you in your new role with our expertise and understanding of the rights and needs of young people and the backing of our 104 member organisations across Europe. We hope that you will meet regularly with us and with our partners in ICMYO so that we can work collectively for the rights and participation of young people around the world.

Representatives of the European Youth Forum will be present in New York for the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, 10-19 July, and would be very pleased to meet with you during that time to establish initial contact. We would also like to extend an invitation to you to two major events for young people in Europe in the coming months:

- The Council of Members of the European Youth Forum - where representatives from all the leading youth organisations from across Europe meet to discuss the main political priorities for young people - on 24-25 November 2017, in Cascais (Portugal - the European Youth Capital 2018);
- The European Youth Event 2018 - co-organised by the European Youth Forum and the European Parliament, gathering 10,000 young people from all across Europe to discuss ideas with decision-makers on how to shape the future of our societies - on 1-2 June 2018 in Strasbourg (France).

We would be honoured to welcome you to either one or both of these events and create space for you to exchange with participants and share your views.

We are looking forward to working with you to create a better world for young people and we remain at your disposal.

Thank you and congratulations!

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Luis Alvarado", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Luis ALVARADO
President of the European Youth Forum