2nd Regional Webinar Series - Report

Asia & Middle East Group – Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) Agenda
Date: Tuesday, 14 July 2026
Time: 6:00 PM – 7:30 PM (CEST)
Language: English
Translation: French & Spanish

Introduction

On 14 July 2026, the Asia & Middle East group successfully organized the Second Regional Webinar Series under the Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) agenda. The event brought together young leaders, activists, and peacebuilders from across Europe, Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and the Americas. The session was facilitated by Mr. Shan Rasheed, a communication and youth engagement professional from Punjab, Pakistan.

The webinar was designed to highlight the role of youth as agents of peace and social change, moving beyond the perception of young people as mere beneficiaries of peacebuilding efforts. Instead, the session emphasized youth as leaders, innovators, and partners who are already shaping communities and contributing to global peace.

Opening and Moderator's Remarks

The session began with a warm welcome from the moderator, who greeted participants and set the tone for the evening. The moderators, Rahman Jalil and Carol Zakhour, reminded everyone that peace is not a regional project but a shared journey, strengthened each time young people come together across borders.

Special recognition was given to Rok, described as the heartbeat of the network, whose dedication ensures that youth voices remain united and the agenda continues to move forward. The moderator also extended appreciation to all regional coordinators for their enthusiasm, creativity, and commitment in amplifying youth voices and connecting communities.

The moderator then introduced the speaker, Mr. Shan Rasheed, highlighting his academic background in English literature, his current role as Communication and IT

Manager at a civil society organization, and his passion for human rights, youth empowerment, interfaith harmony, and peaceful coexistence.

Programme Overview

The webinar was structured into several segments:

- **6:00 – 6:05 PM | Introduction** Welcome, speaker introduction, and overview of objectives.
- **6:05 – 6:50 PM | Presentation** *Empowering Youth as Agents of Peace and Social Change* by Shan Rasheed.
- **6:50 – 7:10 PM | Interactive Discussion** Sharing experiences and challenges from different regions.
- **7:10 – 7:25 PM | Question & Answer Session** Open dialogue with the speaker.
- **7:25 – 7:30 PM | Closing Remarks** Final reflections and appreciation to participants.

Presentation by Shan Rasheed

Shan's presentation was divided into two parts:

Part I – Understanding Today's Youth Reality

He examined the realities facing young people across Asia and the Middle East, noting challenges such as:

- Unemployment and unequal access to quality education
- Gender inequality and discrimination
- Mental health concerns and trauma
- Social polarization and misinformation
- Limited opportunities for civic participation

Shan emphasized that while youth possess knowledge, skills, and passion, they often lack mentorship, financial resources, and supportive networks to transform ideas into action.

Part II – From Challenges to Action

Shan then outlined practical approaches for empowering youth through the YPS agenda, including:

- Promoting youth leadership and dialogue
- Encouraging volunteerism and human rights advocacy
- Fostering interfaith understanding and legal awareness
- Supporting conflict prevention and community-led initiatives

He stressed that meaningful change often begins with local action, collaboration, and inclusive leadership, rather than large-scale resources alone.

Interactive Activities and Regional Exchange

A highlight of the session was the interactive activities where young men and women from different regions — Africa, Europe, Asia, the Middle East, and the Americas — actively participated.

Participants shared:

- The challenges faced in their communities, such as unemployment, inequality, misinformation, and exclusion.
- The initiatives they were engaged in, ranging from volunteer projects and advocacy campaigns to community-led peacebuilding activities.

This exchange created a vibrant atmosphere of learning and solidarity. Youth from diverse backgrounds reflected on their realities, shared practical solutions, and inspired one another to continue building inclusive societies.

Importance of the Topic

The session reinforced that youth should not only be recognized as the leaders of tomorrow but must be trusted, supported, and empowered as leaders today. Families, schools, communities, civil society, and governments all play a role in either empowering or discouraging youth participation. Investing in youth is not just a social responsibility — it is an essential strategy for building peaceful, inclusive, and resilient societies.

Closing Remarks

The webinar concluded with key messages:

- Sustainable peace cannot be achieved without the meaningful participation of youth.
- Empowering youth requires creating inclusive spaces, expanding leadership opportunities, strengthening mentorship, and investing in youth-led initiatives.

- Regional exchanges are vital for learning, collaboration, and adapting solutions to local contexts.

Participants were thanked for their active engagement and encouraged to continue supporting youth-led peacebuilding and social change in their communities.

Speaker Profile – Shan Rasheed

Shan Rasheed is a communication and youth engagement professional from Punjab, Pakistan. He currently serves as Communication and IT Manager at a civil society organization, where he leads communication strategies, manages digital platforms, coordinates workshops, and documents peacebuilding initiatives.

He holds a master's degree in English literature from the University of the Punjab and has participated in international fellowship programmes, including the First Freedom Foundation Fellowship (USA), Human Rights Education programmes supported by UNDP and the European Union, and Insider Mediation Training.

His work focuses on youth empowerment, human rights, Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB), interfaith harmony, and community-based peacebuilding. Shan believes that young people are powerful agents of peace and positive social change. He is committed to creating inclusive spaces where diverse communities can build trust and resilience.

Conclusion

The Second Regional Webinar Series was a beautiful and inspiring event, showcasing the strength of youth voices across continents. It highlighted the challenges young people face, celebrated their ongoing initiatives, and provided practical pathways for empowerment.

By combining the principles of the YPS agenda with real experiences and community-based solutions, the session demonstrated that youth are not waiting for tomorrow — they are leading today.