

World Peace Congress Youth Activity Report



November 2021

Second World Peace Congress

(Re) Imagine our World: Action for Peace and Justice

Introduction

The Second World Peace Congress in Barcelona was a space for hundreds of youth activists from around the world to speak, lead, discuss and take action for a sustainable peace. Not only did we easily reach our goal to include 40% of speakers under 40 years of age – with an entire Youth congress lead by the IPB Youth Network (IPBYN) and 13 workshops and side events wholly organized by Youth representatives, the congress would not have been imaginable without the contributions of so many bright young minds. In this report, we will attempt to encapsulate all these actions big and small that went into building bridges across continents for a truly international, young peace movement, ready to take on the challenges of our time.

Pre-Congress Activities

Before we focus on the actions in Barcelona, however, we would like to highlight our pre-congress activities to connect young peace workers even before we set foot in Barcelona. Together with the IPBYN, we organized two online Youth Meet ‘n’ Greet to allow attendees to get to know each other, share their backgrounds and find common interests.

On July 18, we further launched a [crowdfunding campaign](#) to fund five Youth leaders in the field of peace and disarmament from around the world to join us in Barcelona in-person:

- Emma Pritchard, PhD student at the University of Oxford in the field of Transitional Justice and IPBYN Co-Founder, United Kingdom
- Tyson Smith Berry Jr., Founder of 4Kids International, Liberia
- María Teresa Barrios, President of CoPaz and IPBYN Co-Founder, Argentina
- Srishty Aware, Representative of the India Institute for Disarmament, Peace and Environmental Protection, India; and
- Benjamin Nnamdi Igboanusi, Representative of the World Youth Peace Organization, Nigeria



Over a period of 30 days, we were able to raise a total of 1.121 CHF. While this was a great feat and we are truly grateful for every contribution by the 16 supporters of the campaign, the amount would not have been sufficient to cover the cost for bringing all five beneficiaries of the campaign to Barcelona, which we estimated at 10.000 CHF. Luckily, we were able to secure these missing funds with

support of other donors like 1.000 CHF from the Movement for the Abolition of War and our own budget. Despite our greatest efforts, two out of the five beneficiaries were not able to join us in-person due to visa regulation issues, while one could not join us due to the COVID-19-pandemic.

Our first meet 'n' greet on September 13 moderated by Maria Teresa Barrios focused on making connections with senior members within the IPB network with a background on some of the central topics featured at the World Peace Congress. Among others, these included Shirine Jurdi (WILPF Lebanon and MENAPPAC) as well as Chloe Meulewaeter (Centre d'Estudis per la Pau JM Delàs).



Our second event on October 4 moderated by IPBYN member Pauline Auer focused on providing a space for attendees to have conversations about topics they introduce themselves. In total, around 30 participants joined the meetings.

To carry over both the energy and results from our events to a more permanent space, we set up a Slack-workspace together with members of the IPBYN to organize its work and welcome congress attendees eager to continue the conversations from our meet 'n' greets or learn more about the IPB Youth Network, with a small but consistent influx of members after the first event.

We also wanted to complement these opportunities of peace work exchange with a designated and easily accessible space for young attendees to solve some of the more practical questions like logistics and recommendations for hotels and sights. Therefore, we created the Facebook group "Young Peace Humans of Barcelona" moderated by IPBYN member Sankalp Pawar with an in-depth FAQ around the most common issues.

The Youth Congress



Before the opening plenary of the main congress had even started, our Youth congress already created a space for young attendees, speakers and workshop conveners alike to voice their interests, share their expertise and formulate common actions.

We were lucky to have worked with Jordi Viñals and the team of the Barcelona Youth Council, who helped us host the event at their venue.

Emma Pritchard and Sankalp Pawar moderated the opening with the support of IPBYN-member Theo Valois Souza Ferreira for the hybrid part of the event. After an introduction by IPB Executive Director Reiner Braun, Emma and Sankalp encouraged the 30 participants through a barcamp-style workshop format to introduce topics themselves and form discussion groups around them.

The result was a diverse set of issues, ranging from gender in the peace movement over Youth mobilization during the COVID-19 pandemic to the climate crisis. One aspect we were particularly happy about is the diversity of the group, including a wide range of local backgrounds and perspectives on peace work.

The event further bridged the gap between those with a more active role in the congress and attendees, allowing for discussions between them. These included Srishty Aware, Vanda Prošková (Youth Fusion 2000) and B Arneson (Corruption Tracker).



After a pizza-break in the court yard, the afternoon program offered a storytelling workshop held by Helen Patuck (Kitabna - Our Book CIC). The workshop focused on creative writing in groups and crafting stories of the 15 attendees' individual visions of peace.

Meanwhile, Marta Batalla and the team of Espai Rasprava led a group of 25 participants through Barcelona in a 2-hour walking tour, raising questions of social conflicts, remembrance and peace and exploring the agency of youth in memory.



Youth at the Second World Peace Congress

The vast presence of Youth was not limited to the Youth congress, however. In the course of the congress' main activities, Youth were present as speakers, organizers of events and conveners of workshops. While most of the activities included Youths in some capacity, thirteen contributions, actions and workshops were explicitly organized as Youth-led events:

Organization	Title	Action
4Kids International	Democracy, Elections & Peacebuilding	Workshop
Alianza Iberoamericana por la Paz	The challenges of the construction of peace in Iberoamerica	Panel
Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University	Why Achieving Inner Peace Is A Must To Achieve World Peace	Activity
Corruption Tracker	Tracking Corruption In The Arms Trade	Workshop
dED-UCATION	7 Myths That Sustain The Global Arms Trade	Film Teaser & Discussion
Global Sunrise Project	1.5 Degrees of Peace	Film Teaser
Marshallese Educational Initiative (Arkansas)	The Impact of nuclear Testing and Climate Change on Frontline Communities	Workshop
Pax Christi	Art is Mightier than the Nuke	Exhibition
Sàhara Dempeus (Catalonia)	The Nonviolent Resistance Of Sahrawi People: The Gdeim Izik Case	Panel
World Youth Peace Organization	Song for Peace	Media Contribution
Young WILPF	Feminist Peace	Workshop
Youth and Student CND	"Protest and Survive": Youth, Peace and Enduring Time	Panel
Youth Fusion 2000	"3d Nuke Missile" Art Installation	Exhibition

To get a first-hand impression of the events, most of the workshops and panels have been recorded and will be available on our [Youtube-Channel](#). Here is just a small impression of all the passion and energy present at these contributions:





Further highlights included the contributions of speakers like a video greeting by UN Youth Envoy Jayathma Wickramanayake and Srishty Aware at the Round Table Discussion “Visions for Peace Conflicts and Tensions for Tomorrow”, sharing the microphone with Reiner Braun, Shirine Jurdi and Josep Mayoral i Antigas, Mayor of Granollas. With Chloe Meulewaeter, Emily Rubino (Peace Action New York State), Amani Aruri (Generating Equality Global

Youth Task Force), A-Young Moon (Peace MOMO), Sara Medi Jones (CND UK) and Vanda Prošková complementing their contributions, we are truly amazed by the many young voices taking the stage and sharing their perspectives at the Second World Peace Congress in Barcelona.

Instead of a final declaration, Sankalp Pawar, Emma Pritchard and Theo Valois Souza Ferreira prepared a statement for the final plenary “Stronger Together for Peace – A Call to Action” in an open process together with all IPBYN members and Youth attendees of the congress, introducing the IPBYN as a network “for the meaningful inclusion of youth in peacebuilding and disarmament in general, and in the IPB in specific” and calling on attendees to “engage with the ‘other’ to build understanding, collaborate for action, and to continue your work on creating a shared vision for the future”. The statement is available [on our website](#).



As the final speaker of the closing plenary, Yara El Harake (CIVICUS – World Alliance for Citizen Participation) raised the question why peace work always has to be serious, while the use of weapons and war is often marketed as a fun activity. After putting on a red nose, she proposed a future of peace work which is fun and creative instead of preoccupied with self-imposed institutionalized protocols and practices.



Post-Congress Results and Follow-Up

We were astounded by the commitment and passion from speakers, attendees, IPBYN members and volunteers, without whose support the great success of the congress could not have been realized.

For many of the existing IPBYN members, the congress was the first opportunity to connect in person. Along with the many new faces in the IPBYN's Slack channel and the many other conversations and encounters in person and online, the Second World Peace Congress rejuvenated the spirit of the IPB's existing youth focused work and grew the existing IPBYN working group by more than 10 new members.

To welcome them and discuss future actions and events, the IPBYN had already organized a first Youth Kick-Off Event on 4 November and will continue developing strategies and campaigns to work towards a sustainable, global and intersectional peace.

Lucas Maaser and Julia Auf dem Brinke
Coordinators of Youth Activities
International Peace Bureau

