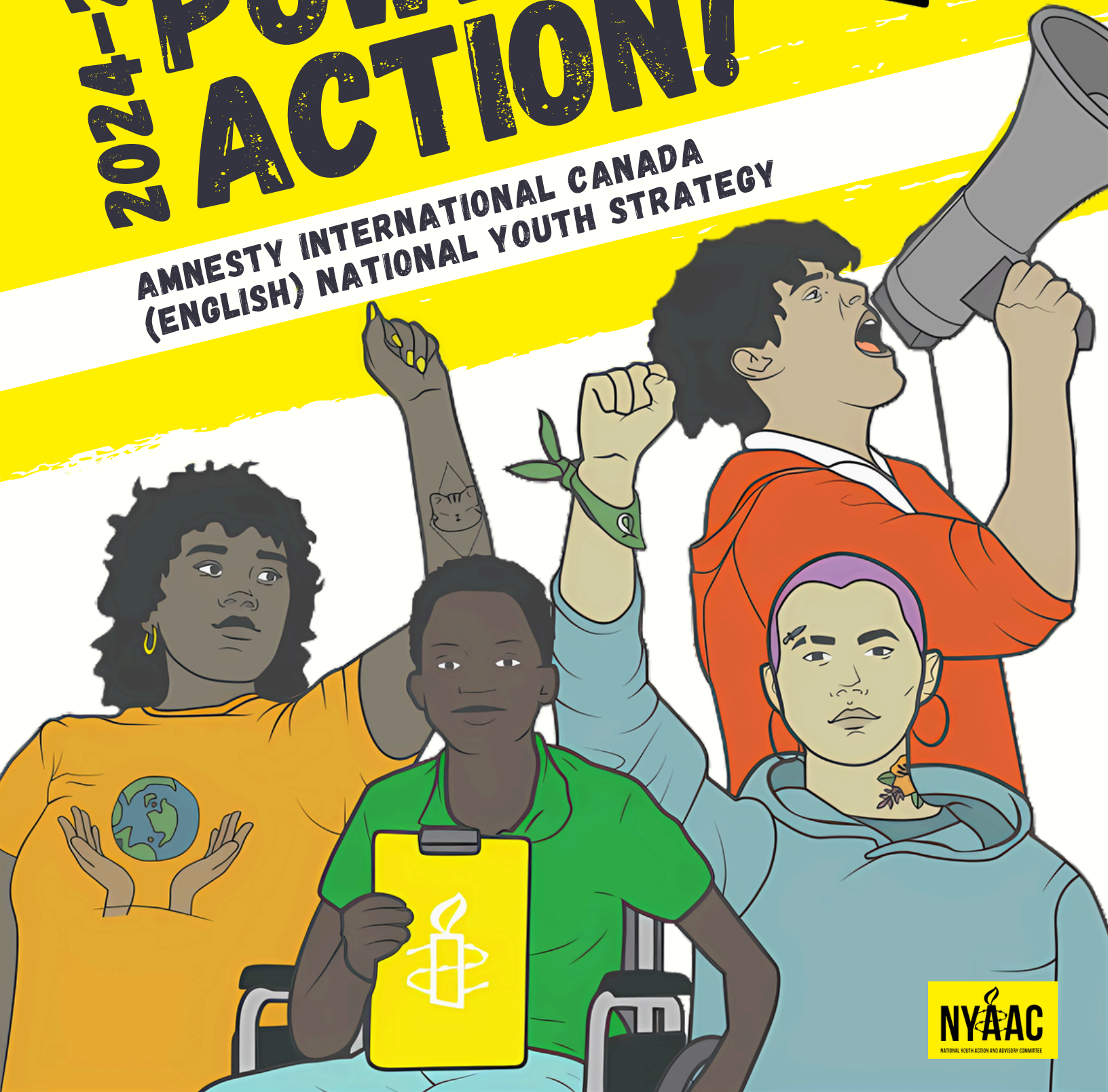


2024-2030 YOUTH POWER ACTION!

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL CANADA
(ENGLISH) NATIONAL YOUTH STRATEGY



2024-2030 YOUTH POWER ACTION!

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL CANADA (ENGLISH)
NATIONAL YOUTH STRATEGY

The National Youth Strategy sets the direction for Amnesty International Canada (English)'s work for, by, and with young people. It will be delivered by people from all generations, with children and young people in the driving seat.

Amnesty International Canada English Section (AICES) commits to these eight **guiding principles** to ensure consistency and quality in efforts towards the realization of the Global Children and Youth Strategy's goals:

1. Strengthen diverse and intersectional approaches
2. Build intergenerational respect and trust
3. Protect child and young human rights defenders
4. Invest in safeguarding children and youth
5. Champion child and youth participation and leadership
6. Invest in partnerships
7. Reduce our environmental footprint
8. Foster spaces to balance well-being



WE ENVISION THAT YOUNG PEOPLE PLAY ACTIVE ROLES IN CREATING A WORLD WHERE EVERYBODY ENJOYS HUMAN RIGHTS.



AICES's strategies, policies, programs, and projects are developed together with young people, integrating their realities, concerns, and experiences



Young people are recognized, connected and empowered through human rights education and capacity-building to defend human rights.



Develop frameworks and tools that promote youth engagement in all areas of our work

Goal 1. Young people's perspectives and agency are at the centre of Amnesty International's human rights work in the protection and promotion of human rights.



Provide training and capacity-building in governance, advocacy, research, strategic planning, public speaking, project management, and media relations.



Ensure there are inclusive and meaningful spaces and platforms for young people to lead actions and projects



Update existing communication channels & develop new channels and events by and for young people.



Design and implement campaigns specifically relevant to young people, such as climate justice, education rights, and digital freedom.



Recognize the contributions and achievements of young people, in all their diversity, within the movement.



AICES will champion cross-generational collaboration to empower youth; fostering increased youth leadership through self-care initiatives, chapter growth, intergenerational cooperation, and direct access to leadership.



AIC(ES) will empower young people to actively participate in and influence decisions across the organization, including those related to human rights and other key processes.



Increase the number of university and high school student chapters.

Goal 2. Young people, in all their diversity, are enabled and empowered to actively participate at all levels of our work, underpinned by mutual respect and trust.



Enable youth participation in decision-making at all levels of the organization by making the mechanisms, procedures and processes accessible to young people.



Ensure all young people in the movement have direct access to senior leadership and board members.



Increase the number of young people participating in decision-making bodies at all levels of the organization by election or co-option to 30% in 2030.



Create spaces and programs that support networking and collaboration across generations to facilitate knowledge sharing.



AICES will strive for true diversity among the youth it engages with, by using and prioritizing an intersectional approach in its work.

AICES engages an increasing number of young supporters on inspiring and impactful journeys towards becoming human rights defenders.



Strengthen existing partnerships and build new partnerships with diverse youth-led and youth-focused groups and organizations.

Goal 3. Young people, in all their diversity, make up one-third of Amnesty International's supporter base to contribute to human rights impact.



Strengthen digital engagement by working with young people, ensuring that their perspectives inform the creation of digital strategies and content.



Create an inclusive culture and resiliently anti-racist movement through increasing our diversity.



Develop robust supporter journeys for young people that will guide young people from initial engagement to active participation and leadership within the organization.



Foster belonging, connectedness and well-being among our youth activists, staff, and partners.



Develop supporter journeys for young people who move out of the youth constituency as they reach the age of 25, and ensure continued engagement with Amnesty International across generations.

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INTRODUCTION

In 1961, British lawyer Peter Benenson's outrage over the jailing of two Portuguese students led to the founding of Amnesty International, sparking a global justice movement. Amnesty International Canada (English Speaking Section) believes in the power of collective action, driven by the voices of many, to realize a future where the human rights of all are respected.



Youth have always been essential to Amnesty International's campaigns, supporting efforts like the Wet'suwet'en Land Defenders and Stolen Sisters campaigns. They continue to drive the vision of universal human rights with their energy and creativity.

Many of the 3.2 billion people under the age of 25 globally face barriers to participation and are often silenced as human rights defenders. Amnesty International aims to protect their rights and ability to actively contribute to a world where human rights are universally upheld.



POPULATION THAT IS MADE UP OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE:



Amnesty International's Global Strategic Framework (2022-2030) focuses on freedom of expression, civic space, equality, and non-discrimination. By involving youth, Amnesty seeks to strengthen its global presence and build a movement that defends human rights for all.

The organization's Global Youth Strategy (2022-2025) aligns with the Global Strategy, focusing on equality and non-discrimination. Amnesty International Canada (English Speaking Section) supports this through its National Youth Strategy, ensuring youth perspectives shape activities and decisions.

YOUNG PEOPLE ARE NOT HOMOGENOUS. THEY HAVE MULTIPLE IDENTITIES THAT RESULT IN MULTIPLE FORMS OF INTERSECTING DISCRIMINATION AND OPPRESSION.

THE CLIMATE JUSTICE MOVEMENT



THE FIGHT AGAINST RACISM



THE ADVANCEMENT OF GENDER EQUALITY



THE RECOGNITION OF LGBTI RIGHTS



Strong youth programs, like the Human Rights College, the National Organizers' Program and the National Youth Action and Advisory Committee, empower young activists and will thrive under the National Youth Strategy. Young people under 25 make up 28% of Canada's population, with diverse identities shaped by various factors.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. Strengthen diverse and intersectional approaches



2. Build intergenerational respect and trust

3. Protect child and young human rights defenders



4. Invest in safeguarding children and youth



5. Champion child and youth participation and leadership



6. Invest in partnerships



7. Reduce our environmental footprint

8. Foster spaces to balance well-being



DEFINITIONS

< 25

YOUTH AND YOUNG PEOPLES

Every human being under the age of 25 (this includes those who are under 18, and includes those who are 24, but excludes those who are 25).

YOUTH MAINSTREAMING

Ensuring the inclusion of youth perspectives, issues, and expectations in all policies, procedures, and practices in order to enable their full potential and participation as equal members of the movement.

ANTI-OPPRESSION

A way of thinking which recognizes the intricate systems of oppression which remove power from marginalized groups. Frameworks include a set of practices which unlearn oppressive behaviors to ensure an inclusive and safe space for all.

YOUTH LEADERS

Individuals under the age of 25 whose work increases AICES's capacity for promoting and protecting human rights.

YOUTH-LED ADVISORY BODIES

These include bodies and groupings which advise members and staff on youth participation in various aspects of our work, including governance, campaigns, activism, etc.

GOALS

Through this youth strategy, **AICES aims to empower young people to actively contribute to a world where human rights are universally upheld.**

By 2030, we will achieve key goals aligned with the Global Strategic Framework (2022–2030). These goals, rooted in Amnesty's vision, are drawn from multiple strategic sources, including the International Youth Strategy and the AICES National Strategic Plan (2022–2030). They are designed to be adaptable to national and regional contexts and to **work in unison, addressing barriers to youth engagement, empowering activists, and fostering an inclusive culture.**

GOAL 1



Young people's perspectives and agency are at the centre of Amnesty International's human rights work in the protection and promotion of human rights.

GOAL 2



Young people, in all their diversity, are enabled and empowered to actively participate at all levels of our work, underpinned by mutual respect and trust.

GOAL 3



Young people, in all their diversity, make up one-third of Amnesty International's supporter base to contribute to human rights impact.

To achieve these ambitious goals by 2030, AICES must commit fully, allocate adequate resources, and continuously build capacity within the organization. Ongoing capacity-building for those involved in youth work will also be crucial to fully realizing the strategy's potential.





GOAL 1

Young people's perspectives and agency are at the centre of Amnesty International's human rights work in the protection and promotion of human rights.

1.1 AICES's strategies, as well as its policies, programmes and projects, are developed together with young people, integrating their realities, concerns, and experiences, including and beyond youth matters specifically.

1.1.1 Develop frameworks and tools that **promote youth engagement in all areas** of our work (including but not limited to activism, advocacy, campaigning, fundraising, human rights education, media and research).

STRATEGY IN ACTION

- (1)** Collaborate when possible and always consult with young people including, but not limited to, campaigns and research.
- (2)** Organize bi-annual national consultations with young people to collect input on strategies and priorities.
- (3)** Implement feedback loops where young people see the impact of their input on decision-making and policy.

1.1.3 Project teams, including but not limited to campaigns and research teams, will **design and implement campaigns that address issues specifically relevant to young people**, such as climate justice, education rights, and digital freedom.

1.1.2 Ensure there are **inclusive and meaningful spaces and platforms** for young people to lead actions and projects, supporting youth leadership at all stages of the project cycle, including planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and impact assessment.



1.2 Young people are recognized, connected and empowered through human rights education and capacity-building to defend human rights.

1.2.1 Provide **training and capacity-building** for a diversity of young people to be involved in governance, advocacy, research, strategic planning, public speaking, project management, and media relations to enhance their effectiveness and impact as activists.

STRATEGY IN ACTION

- (1)** Provide up-to-date and user-friendly resources such as toolkits, guides, online workshops and training on effective advocacy and research practices.
- (2)** Host Activism 101 courses to support new youth activists in starting or restarting chapters, covering topics like AICES mission, letter-writing, campaigning, and collaboration.
- (3)** Support young activists to speak at national and international forums, conferences, and media events.

1.2.2 Update existing **communication channels** regularly with content and foster the development of new communication channels and events by and for young people.

STRATEGY IN ACTION

- (1)** Ensure the dedicated youth section on the Amnesty website is updated regularly.
- (2)** Support and promote active youth-focused social media accounts.
- (3)** Implement a LinkedIn chat for young activists to chat, share updates, and collaborate.

1.2.3 Recognize the **contributions and achievements of a diversity of young people** in all areas of AICES work in formal settings.

STRATEGY IN ACTION

Establish annual awards and recognition programs to celebrate the achievements of youth activists, and youth aging out of their youth designation.





GOAL 2

Young people, in all their diversity, are enabled and empowered to actively participate at all levels of our work, underpinned by mutual respect and trust.

2.1 AICES will champion cross-generational collaboration to empower youth; fostering increased youth leadership through self-care initiatives, chapter growth, intergenerational cooperation, and direct access to leadership.

2.1.1 Increase the number of campus, school, and community youth chapters and groups by supporting and maintaining existing chapters and promoting the formation of new ones.

STRATEGY IN ACTION

- (1)** Partner with educators, and schools by disseminating existing resources and integrating human rights topics into school curricula.
- (2)** Engage Grassroot Activist Leaders (GALs), Community Groups, and other structures to support and connect with chapters, ensuring their longevity through regular meetings and resource provision.

2.1.2 Create spaces and programs for interaction, networking, and collaboration across generations to facilitate knowledge sharing.

STRATEGY IN ACTION

Establish a structured mentorship program connecting board members and experienced activists, including researchers and campaign strategists, with youth leaders.

2.1.3 Ensure all young people in the movement, including those in formal advisory bodies, have **access to senior leadership and board members** to promote transparency, networking, and open communication.

STRATEGY IN ACTION

Organize fireside chats between youth leaders and board members, as well as human libraries with senior leadership.



2.2 AICES will empower young people to actively participate in and influence decisions across the organization, including those related to human rights and other key processes.

2.2.1 Enable **youth participation in decision-making at all levels** of the organisation by making the mechanisms, procedures and processes accessible to young people.

STRATEGY IN ACTION

- (1)** Provide training, support, simplified and user-friendly guides of the processes in advance of, and during AGMs.
- (2)** Provide travel grants, facilitate virtual attendance options, and fairly compensate young people for events and forums.

2.2.2 Increase the **number of young people participating in decision-making** bodies at all levels of the organisation by election or co-option **to 30%** in 2030. This will reflect the expected growth and retention of youth supporters over this period, and ensure a balance of diverse backgrounds and gender representation among leadership.

STRATEGY IN ACTION

- (1)** Recruiting young people through targeted outreach and partnerships with youth organizations.
- (2)** Develop a set of metrics to track youth participation in decision-making bodies, including demographic data, attendance rates, and levels of engagement.





GOAL 3

Young people, in all their diversity, make up one-third of Amnesty International's supporter base to contribute to human rights impact.

3.1 AICES will strive for true diversity among the young people it engages with, by using and prioritising an intersectional approach in its work.

3.1.1 Strengthen existing partnerships and will build new partnerships with diverse youth-led and youth-focused groups and organizations in order to jointly achieve human rights goals.

3.1.3 Foster belonging, connectedness, and well-being among our youth activists, staff, and partners, evaluating our relationships together to better uphold our accountability to our core values. This will be specifically addressed in times of crisis and changing circumstances.

3.1.2 Create an inclusive culture and resiliently anti-racist movement through increasing our diversity by attracting more young people to the movement, and by being relevant to youth-led groups who are under-represented in Amnesty International's supporter base.

STRATEGY IN ACTION

- (1)** Partner with community organizations, schools, and youth groups to reach EDIA populations and promote Amnesty's mission, especially to Indigenous youth and youth in rural communities.
- (2)** Allocate organizational resources to recruit and support volunteers from traditionally underrepresented groups within the movement.
- (3)** Develop outreach materials in multiple languages and accessible formats to ensure EDIA compliance.



3.2 AICES engages an increasing number of young supporters on inspiring and impactful journeys towards becoming human rights defenders.

3.2.1 Amnesty International will **strengthen its digital engagement by working with young people**, ensuring that their perspectives inform the creation of digital strategies that are reflected in digital content.

STRATEGY IN ACTION

(1) Develop a youth media team with 6-month terms for youth volunteers to create content for Amnesty's platforms, including blogs, videos, merch, and social media posts.

(2) Provide training for youth activists on effective social media engagement, content creation, and digital storytelling to enhance their communication skills and confidence.

3.2.2 **Develop supporter journeys to address sustainability** as a key factor for young people who move out of the youth constituency as they reach the age of 25, and ensure continued engagement with Amnesty International across generations.

STRATEGY IN ACTION

(1) Host an annual virtual event in which different volunteer structures can pitch their teams to activists transitioning out of youth structures.

(2) Develop a national supporter journey strategy for youth who move out of the youth constituency that identifies gaps, as well as current and potential challenges and opportunities.

3.2.2 **Towards the realization of strengthening our people-powered movement, develop robust supporter journeys for young people.** These supporter journeys will guide young people from initial engagement to active participation and leadership within the organization.



ACCOUNTABILITY & MONITORING



ACCOUNTABILITY

Amnesty International Canada (English) is responsible for integrating the National Youth Strategy into plans and creating specific projects.



MONITORING

AICES will monitor progress using data-gathering tools like the Standard Action Report (SAR), focusing on key indicators, including number and gender diversity of:



- Supporters, activists, and members (under 18 and aged 18 to 24)
- Board members under 25
- Staff members under 25

AICES will also aim to further disaggregate data on board and staff members aged 18 to 24. Entities will report on youth engagement through established reporting mechanisms.

MONITORING PROGRESS

Progress will be tracked globally, regionally, and nationally, with monitoring and evaluation aligned with the Theories of Change methodology. **Amnesty International Canada (English) will review progress through a baseline, mid-term review, and final evaluation at the end of 2030, sharing outcomes for organizational learning and decision-making.**



The strategy will be reviewed and updated as needed in 2027 to ensure its continued relevance and effectiveness.

FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS



1. The **Youth Leadership Summit** would recognize and celebrate youth achievements in human rights, discuss issues of particular interest to young activists, and provide networking opportunities with peers and established professionals.

2. The **Youth Fellowship Program** would offer paid positions to young people, demonstrating a commitment to providing job opportunities beyond volunteerism and giving them a structured entry into the field of human rights.



These initiatives would significantly enhance youth engagement and development. However, current limitations such as financial constraints, logistical challenges, and staffing needs prevent the implementation of these programs in this strategy. Future planning and resource allocation will be necessary to realize these important initiatives.

THANKS!

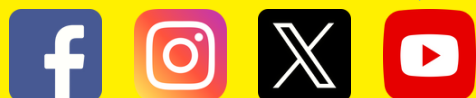
We extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who contributed to the survey. Your efforts and dedication have been invaluable to this project—a special thanks to **Shauna MacLean** and **Elena Dumitru**, the staff liaisons for this initiative.

Additionally, we would like to thank the **National Youth Strategy Advisory Committee (NYSAC)** members for leading and overseeing this initiative and the **Youth, Power, Action! Global Children and Youth Strategy 2022–2025 Team** for allowing us to use their language and the artist, **Bárbara Vil** for their graphics.

Your collective efforts have been instrumental in making this a success. Please reach out to the nyaac@amnesty.ca for any inquiries.



Pictured here from the NYSAC: Elena Dumitru, Aidan Sander, Haris Ahmad, Shauna MacLean, Ella Noel, Rajaa Berry, Rojina Haji-Mahmodzadeh and Jasmin Smith.



Stay up to date on our activities: Follow us on our socials and visit [amnesty.ca](https://www.amnesty.ca) for more information.

