

Saudi Arabia – 2005

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UN Youth Delegate Programme

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Mr. Al-Ghannam (Saudi Arabia) (*spoke in Arabic*): On behalf of the young people of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, I would like to thank the Secretariat for organizing this international debate to assess the progress made in the implementation of the World Programme of Action for Youth and to provide an opportunity for young people to raise questions with regard to their prospects and aspirations, as well as to take part in the search for solutions.

Allow me to draw the Assembly's attention to a signal and very positive pioneering experience of Saudi young people who make up more than two thirds of Saudi society that took place under the auspices of the King Abdul Aziz Centre for National Dialogue.

That Centre works to foster a culture of dialogue in society that discusses issues of national interest at all levels and proposes recommendations for action. [*28*] The Centre has made issues impacting young people a national priority.

A national meeting was held in Saudi Arabia under the theme #Questions of youth: realities and aspirations#. Twenty-six preparatory workshops were held prior to the meeting, in which 650 young men and women participated, representing young people aged 16 to 25 in groups of 25 men and 25 women from each province. The goals of the workshops were to promote dialogue among young people, identify and discuss issues and ideas specific to them and, lastly, to consider proposals and work programmes to be submitted to decision-makers. Many people took part in those workshops, including scientists, intellectual and educated people of both genders and a great number of young men and women. Saudis participating in the workshops had an opportunity to ask many questions and to discuss issues of interest, including continuation of constructive dialogue.

In conclusion, those efforts have begun to bear fruit. They represent an initiative that is led by Saudi Arabia's young people themselves. They are our hope and we rely heavily on them.

