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**Meeting with incredible youth peace builders in the Netherlands:
“where there is Unity there is always Victory” - Publilius Syrus**

Such an amazing experience!!!!

From 27 February to 1 March 2018, youth from Mali, Tunisia, Libya and the Netherlands met in The Hague at the invitation of the Human Security Collective, partner of the various organizations invited, for a workshop on "Security from a Global Youth Perspective". The objective of this meeting was to enable youth from different countries with different backgrounds to discuss the various issues and challenges they face every day and to form the Youth Advocacy Delegation that will go to New York in June for the UN Global Counterterrorism strategy review. As we work in different sectors with different approaches, we have each defined the word security as we see fit. For some it means, 'the absence of fear' or 'the freedom of movement without fear of being shot, kidnapped', for others it means 'no want in terms of: education, health, food', or 'living in an environment without problems'. We also had a presentation on the UN counter- terrorism and countering violent extremism architecture: a very important and uplifting session that I think is foundational in our being able to establish a good advocacy plan. After discussions and experience-sharing between the participants, 3 major points emerged:

- Low youth participation in decision-making
- Lack of trust between security forces and the population
- Lack of mechanism/s for the non-participation of young people in violence.

These three were common to all four countries, although the contexts in each country are different. But to counter these three major issues, proposals have been made to:

- Involve young people in all decision-making ,

- Create frameworks for exchange between policymakers and young people,
- Strengthen collaboration between security forces and the population
- Facilitate young people's access to resources and create jobs for young people as this will help reduce youth participation in extremist or terrorist groups.

The highlight for me was the sharing of good practice in communities, from which we all learned. All the participants of the workshop are driven by passion and unwavering courage that makes them do extraordinary things ranging from sports, mentoring, promoting debate and dialogue, preventing and countering radicalization and violent extremism to involving young girls in politics.

Everyone in his or her field does a good job in spite of the enormous challenges. The willingness to contribute was widely felt during each intervention by the youth and in the engagement and discussion with the audience at the public event on March 1 organized by Human Security Collective together with the Dutch Youth Delegates to the UN. I especially enjoyed the interaction and quality of intervention at this event, the feedback received and questions asked demonstrating the audience's interest.

The determination of one participant, Mohamed, stood out: "I am often afraid when I go out because I might be kidnapped", he said, but he continues to do what he does in spite of the permanent danger he faces daily.

My takeaways

- Unity, teamwork and collaboration are the keys to success.
- Despite our differences, we have one thing in common:
We all want to make our countries and communities safe and secure places with the involvement of everyone, especially youth who have a great role in building peace.

It was simply a very special week full to adventures, knowledges and skills.

Can't wait to see you guys in New York!