It’s been seven years since the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals were introduced. The world has lost 7 million young people to COVID-19. The pandemic, climate change, learning loss, and surging unemployment have drastically impeded development efforts and led to the rise of inequalities in all parts of life, everywhere. There is both urgency and an unprecedented opportunity to tackle the challenges during this pivotal point in time.

The United Nations Secretary General, António Guterres, states that “humanity faces a fork in the road, a stark choice: breakdown or breakthrough. The choice is ours — or it will be made for us. We will run out of time, at the point of no return. So, what do we choose? Are we going to silence our conscience, our critical awareness, our ability to act? Or do we choose together, to actually act now?”

We expect participants to experience The Youth Assembly not as an event, but as part of a journey that will sustain and empower them. We will ensure the Youth Assembly is a platform for young people to make a breakthrough to a better future. "We must unite and act together — we need a massive injection of young, enthusiastic, innovative thinking to address the urgent choice: breakdown or breakthrough. The United Nations Secretary General, António Guterres, states that "humanity faces a stark and urgent choice: breakdown or breakthrough. The choice is ours — or it will be made for us. We will run out of time, at the point of no return. So, what do we choose? Are we going to silence our conscience, our critical awareness, our ability to act? Or do we choose together, to actually act now?"

The Youth Assembly is convened by AFS Intercultural Programs, a global non-profit that empowers young, curious, and adventurous changemakers developing groundbreaking solutions to tackle the world’s greatest challenges. Furthermore, Delegates are encouraged to take on leadership roles within Youth Assembly programs, becoming the change they seek in their communities, and catalyzing those unique opportunities to young change makers around the globe.

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The Outcome of the Youth Assembly is a powerful cross-sector and cross-national network (already 20,000 strong across 160 countries) connecting the next generation of leaders, translated into action-based projects and initiatives after the conference. Delegates will leave the conference equipped to confront challenges, seeking out opportunities, and make a difference in their schools and communities.

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