

For immediate release:
Nov. 1, 2010

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African Youth Day celebrated by African Union

Coincides with United Nations' International Year of Youth

Today, Nov. 1, is African Youth Day, to be celebrated throughout the African continent. African Youth Day acknowledges the crucial role of young people in the nations of Africa and promotes the importance of African youth development. The overarching theme for this year's celebration is "Dialogue and Mutual Understanding."

This year's African Youth Day is being celebrated in conjunction with the United Nations' International Year of Youth. The U.N. will launch its African celebration of International Year of Youth today in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, the headquarters of the African Union.

The definition of "youth" by U.N. standards encompasses people between the ages of 15 and 24.

The 15 "youngest countries" are all on the African continent; with a median age of 15 years, Uganda is the youngest country in the world. By comparison the median age in the United States is 37 years old, with Japan at 45 and Monaco topping the list at 49. Of the 40 youngest countries in the world, only Gaza, Yemen, Afghanistan and Laos are not part of the African continent.

Youth comprises 18 percent of the current world population; 87 percent of youth live in developing countries. Under the theme of "Dialogue and Mutual Understanding," the International Year of Youth aims to promote the ideas of peace, respect for human rights and solidarity across generations, cultures, religions and civilizations. The United Nations General Assembly adopted resolution 64/134 proclaiming the International Year of Youth, which was launched in August.

"With such a large percentage of the African population being young it is a sign of a society that is vibrant and alive, a true culture of life that is ready to embrace a bold future," said MCCL GO's Scott Fischbach. "While some outside forces seek to undermine the brilliant future of Africa through the violence of abortion, the people—especially the youth of Africa—must resist them."

The celebration of African Youth Day is another opportunity for Africa's young people to remind governmental decision-makers that the heart of Africa beats for life. "The greatest natural resource of the continent is its people, and the future will be theirs to shape with peace, respect, solidarity and life," Fischbach added.

MCCL GO is a pro-life global outreach program of the Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life Education Fund with one goal: to save as many innocent lives as possible from the destruction of abortion. Learn more at www.mccl.org.

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