

Summary of the Community of Democracies' engagement in the Third Summit for Democracy

The Community of Democracies (CoD) was active throughout the Third Summit for Democracy held in Seoul, Republic of Korea, from March 18-20, 2024, participating in a series of strategic events and discussions covering the Ministerial Day, the Cohort, Civil Society and Youth Day, and the Leader's Virtual Plenary.

During the inauguration of the Ministerial Day by South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol, **United States Secretary of State Anthony Blinken emphasized the importance of supporting youth** in anticipation of the forthcoming **CoD-led Youth Democracy Network**. He underscored the imperative of investing in initiatives like the Network to connect young democratic leaders globally.

Alongside representatives of governments, civil society, and youth activists, **CoD Secretary General Thomas Garrett delivered opening remarks** during the Cohort, Civil Society, and Youth Day plenary. He expressed gratitude to CoD Governing Council member Republic of Korea for hosting the significant gathering and commended the state as a democracy champion. He also highlighted the successful CoD collaboration with International IDEA, OGP, and OECD as part of the **Platform for Engagement with Civil Society** supporting the host. The Secretary General conducted several interviews with media, one of which is accessible [through this link](#).



The main CoD event, “**Tech Talks: Digital Tools in Democracy,**” featured a lightning round of talks by the CoD YouthLeads and their dialogue with Governing Council member states represented by Acting U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Ms. Allison Peters, Ms. Ayesha Malette, Director of the Democracy Division for Global Affairs Canada, and Ms. Rumbidzai Kandawasvika-Nhundu, International IDEA's Principal Adviser, Democracy and Inclusion.

In their Tech Talks, the YouthLeads advocated for safeguarding access to trusted news sources, empowering youth voice in elections and fostering genuine engagement through social media. You may watch [video highlights here](#). The session garnered significant interest from the Summit audience, with topics continued to be discussed in bilateral meetings, including with **U.S. Special Envoy for Global Youth, Ms. Abby Finkenauer**, who discussed her unique leadership story.

Besides the main event, the CoD delegation participated in numerous sessions covering topics ranging from gender equality and civic space to political participation. Noteworthy engagements included the Secretary General's participation as a panelist at the session of Democracy Without Borders, "**Democracy International: UN Special Rapporteur on Democracy.**" You may find the [event summary here](#).

In another session, YouthLead Mr. Mwila Bwanga from Zambia, together with representatives from the International Republican Institute's Generation Democracy, discussed leveraging technology for political campaigns at the "**Future of Democracy in the Digital Age,**" moderated by YouthLead Mr. Bart Kubiak of Poland.

YouthLead Ms. Sohee Yang participated in a discussion organized by the **Civic Space Cohort** alongside representatives from Norway, Czech Republic, and ICNL. Moreover, she contributed to an event organized by the **Gender Cohort** that included governmental representatives from Sweden, Romania, and from International IDEA, and a Nigerian youth leader. Lastly, as a leader of VALID, a South Korean NGO, she organized a session titled "**Youth-led Democratic Renewal.**"



Similarly, YouthLead Ms. Hsin-Tzu Yang shared Taiwan's policies promoting youth electoral participation at the "**Youth in Policy: Ensuring Representation and Impact**" session by the Organization for Economic Inclusion, which advocated for youth representation. Additionally, the CoD delegation was delighted to attend a gathering with members of the **Asia Democracy Network**, a valuable member of the Civil Society Pillar.

On the final day of the Summit, the CoD organized a **youth stakeholder roundtable** led by CoD Youth Coordinator Ms. Daryna Onyshko. The roundtable, involving representatives of Youth Democracy Cohort, Generation Democracy, IFES, and youth leaders from various countries, reflected on the Summit from a youth perspective and discussed a way forward, with these reflections to be included in the upcoming post-Summit report.

Before the Leader's Virtual Plenary, the Secretary General and Senior Advisor Ms. Patricia Galdamez met with the RoK's Deputy Minister for Multilateral and Global Affairs Ki-hwan Kweon, to discuss the future Summit process. During the Plenary, the **Secretary General delivered a recorded message**, reaffirming CoD's commitment to advancing democracy globally.