

COVID-19 EVENT CANCELLATION STATEMENT

As of March 17th 2020, UN Youth New Zealand has decided to cancel all of our events scheduled to take place before May 18th 2020 in response to the growing threat posed by the COVID-19 / novel coronavirus pandemic. This includes, but is not limited to, the following events:

- Aotearoa Youth Declaration (“AYD”).
- Canterbury Model United Nations (“CMUN”).
- Wellington Model United Nations (“WMUN”).
- Auckland Model United Nations (“AMUN”).

UN Youth appreciates the substantial disappointment and inconveniences that this will likely cause participants intending to attend our events. Running events that empower and inspire young New Zealanders is our passion. We do not cancel our events lightly and without deep regret on our part.

This decision has been influenced by the government’s proactive response to the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly in relation to events. Whilst there are no community outbreaks currently in New Zealand, event regulations may increase exponentially in response to even small increases in infection numbers. UN Youth has decided to follow this proactive approach rather than risk proceeding and having to cancel our events at the last minute, causing greater disappointment and frustration to all. We also feel an ethical and moral responsibility to act in line with New Zealand health authorities’ call for social and physical distancing, and for collective action to “flatten the curve”.

Above all, we have made this decision in consideration of the health and hauora of our participants, volunteers and communities. Education is our passion, but personal welfare is our absolute priority. Though the risk of infection at a UN Youth event is low, the lack of allocated seating and associated difficulty of tracing close contact at our events pose a serious threat if an infected individual was to attend. In the worst case scenario, every single event attendee could be required to self isolate. This is not a risk we are comfortable exposing our participants and volunteers to, nor their loved ones and community members with whom they come into regular contact.

Possible Postponements

Regional ‘Model UN’ events; CMUN, WMUN and AMUN, may be postponed to later in the year, at the discretion of our Regional Councils. If this is the case, information will be released by Regional Councils regarding this in the coming weeks. Sadly, our flagship civics education event AYD has been cancelled, as the timing and logistics of such a large national event means that postponement of AYD is not possible. UN Youth is exploring running an alternate civics programme later in the year to ensure we can still offer youth a platform to address the opportunities and challenges facing our society.

Refunds

If you have paid an event registration or attendance fee, you will be refunded. If you have been formally accepted into an event, have formally accepted a UN Youth travel scholarship to that event and have already paid for your travel costs, you will have your costs covered up to the value of the scholarship.

Please direct any questions to the National President of UN Youth, Mark Howard, at mark.howard@unyouth.org.nz. From all of our volunteers; we wish you a healthy and safe March and April, and hope to see you later in the year.