



WPC Youth Committee READY TO ROCK THE BOAT

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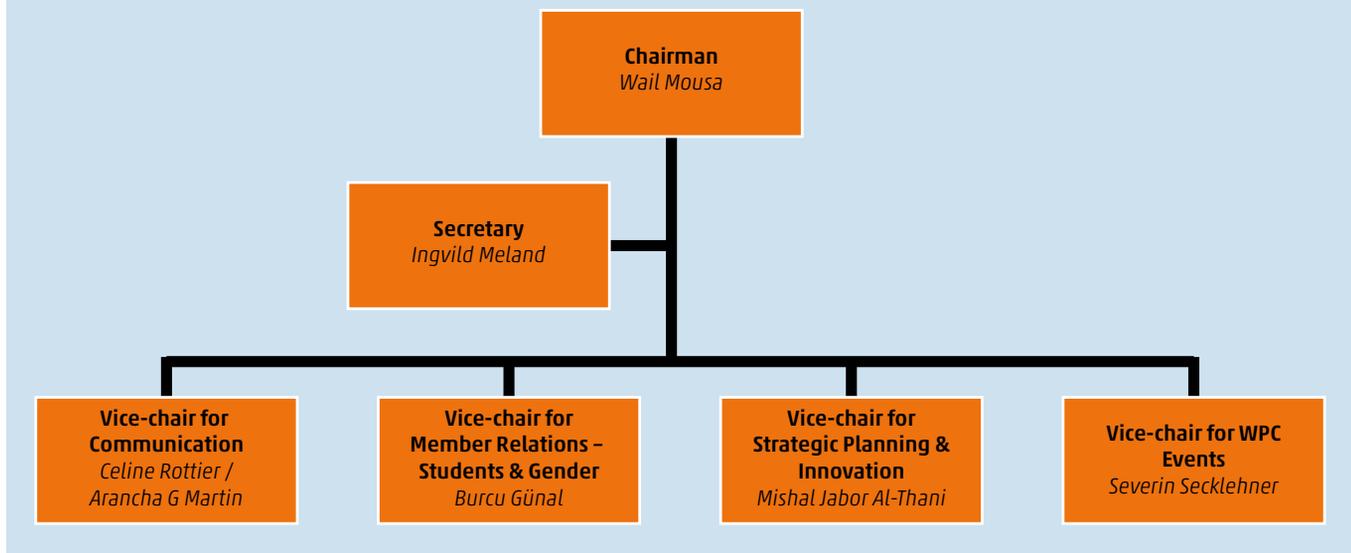


Although it will only celebrate its 5th anniversary in Qatar, the WPC Youth Committee (WPC YC) has already been involved in the organisation of six international events, gathered over six thousand young people from all over the world and millions of posts on the internet about a variety of topics related to the petroleum industry. Over the past few years, the Youth Committee has truly developed itself as the link between the Council and the next generation of the petroleum industry.

The WPC Youth Committee was established in 2007, with an ambitious objective: to engage the youth of the petroleum industry to design a sustainable future. It is this aspiration that motivates more than 20 Youth Committee members from the different member countries to contribute to the different taskforces, lead by the 4 Vice-Chairs of the formal board, including: Events, Member Relations, Students & Gender, Communication and Strategic Planning & Innovation.

The Youth Committee intends to achieve its objectives not only by championing new ideas, but also by promoting a realistic image of the petroleum industry. In order to bridge the generation gap, in 2011 the Committee has launched a pilot group as a first step in creating a mentorship network. Most remarkable are the global Youth Events that the Committee has been able to setup for young people (under 35) to be heard.

Not only has the Youth Committee organised youth activities at the 19th WPC in Madrid and the 20th WPC in Qatar, but it has also delivered three global Youth Forums, including: China (2005), France (2009) and India (2010). Such events have been so successful that they have been able to gather over a thousand delegates: attracting bright young men and women from all over the world, with different educational backgrounds and cultures, to share their ideas. Through these events, the YC has been able to create a permanent global network between its members, to exchange ideas and to apply the shared lessons learned.



After such a global success, the Youth Committee is keen to reach out to the youth that are more involved on a national level. So, as a next step, the Youth Committee has decided to go local! At present the different Youth Committee members are looking for opportunities in their countries to promote interaction between young people involved in the petroleum industry and to build local networks, with the support of all the experience gained by the WPC YC members.

As a result of these efforts, some remarkable initiatives have taken place at national level. Together with countries such as Canada and Brazil, Russia is at the forefront of this development. Anna Illarionova explains: "At the beginning of 2011, Russia organised a special youth programme during the 1st Russian Petroleum Forum in Moscow (14-16 March) aiming to build a real dialogue at a national level between young experts and senior colleagues from government, leading petroleum companies, local communities and organisations. The programme included a Youth Forum: *Energy Solutions Through Innovation*, a contest for the prize in the petroleum industry: *Youth Choice* and a platform to exchange youth innovative projects: *Open Dialogue*. Over 100 young Russians from the key national universities and oil companies joined the event. In the near future they can be fully engaged in the WPC youth activities on a national level and as such have the opportunity to express their opinion and demonstrate their skills."

Brazil has been one of the first countries to set up a National Youth Committee, in 2007. This was an initiative of the Brazilian Petroleum, Gas and Biofuels Institute (IBP), that is also involved in the WPC as a representative of the Brazilian National Committee. "Since then", Jaime Turazzi Naveiro explains, "we have attracted young professionals from all sorts of institutions to join the YC (NOCs and IOCs, service companies, universities, government agencies, independent institutes, consultants, etc), in order to create awareness among young Brazilians of oil industry themes, attract and engage them with the sector, making sure the generation of tomorrow is ready to face the challenges of today. Some of the greatest achievements include an annual

Young Professionals' event, where IBP's 200-seater auditorium is packed for lectures and networking opportunities. Also, the YC has helped to organise a bi-annual event, called *Professionals of the Future*, which is held during the Rio Oil & Gas show, Brazil's main oil conference. In 2010, this event gathered about 2,000 students, from 25 different universities and technical centres, over four days, to listen to industry executives and learn from their experience. It is also important to highlight that during Rio Oil & Gas 2010, a prize for the best young author was given for the first time, another initiative to promote the engagement of young people."

Furthermore, Anna Illarionova adds: "Whereas members of the global WPC Youth Committee act as 'ambassadors' in their native country, young people that join the national initiatives in their own country can derive various benefits from such participation. Thanks to online communications tools such as e-mail, Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn, young people from different regions can tie into a local network of the country so that they can communicate with each other, find job opportunities or special education and internship programmes in the leading oil and gas companies, and finally, carry forward initiatives never realised before by our senior colleagues. This is even more true for a country with such a vast territory as Russia."

The WPC Youth Committee hopes that, through the widespread creation and consolidation of National Youth Committees, both young and senior people will feel inspired to join forces and work together on new strategies for the future development of the oil and gas sector. This will allow them to pursue the common goal of creating a more sustainable petroleum industry and making the world, a safer, cleaner, more just and better place to live, for our generation and the next. Several countries are already showing us the way through their National Youth Committees. The WPC Youth Committee wants to encourage all member countries to do the same.

That is why we appeal to you, dear colleagues, to support this youth initiative in your own country. All of you are entitled to a say now! ■