

Statement - First thematic session: Population dynamics and sustainable development

19 October 2023 - 15:00-16:30

Today, I stand before you on behalf of the young people, united in our dedication to shape a sustainable and inclusive future for all. As a young person being born in the 21st century, and considering all the progress that we as a society have made, I would not imagine conflicts and wars still occurring. We, as young people, recognize the profound interplay between population dynamics and sustainable development, and we wish to convey our unwavering commitment to address these intertwined challenges.

We insist that every young person, regardless of their gender, location, or socioeconomic background, has **access to quality education**. It's central to break the cycle of intergenerational poverty and to foster healthier societies. We are advocating for **eradication** of gender-based violence.

We call upon governments to ensure **meaningful youth participation** in decision-making to address the consequences of population dynamics in our region, and ensure sustainable development through investment in young people. Commitments to meaningful participation and prioritizing young people, without a budget allocated, is meaningless. Governments must use **financial means to empower young people**.

We urge governments to invest in young people, especially professional development, and to consider the lack of expertise as something that can prompt the birth of impactful, ground-breaking ideas. We advocate for **universal access to health, including both sexual and reproductive health**, a world where every individual can access essential healthcare services is not just an aspiration; it is an imperative for a healthier and more equitable future. Furthermore, investing in healthcare **infrastructure**, disease prevention, and mental health support are vital components of creating a brighter future for all.

As young environmental stewards, we demand governments make significant commitments and allocate resources to **address climate change**, protect biodiversity, and ensure the responsible use of natural resources. A sustainable future requires comprehensive action now, or there will be no future for humanity. National budgets must be accompanied by analysis on how initiative contributes to transform the lives of young people to end discrimination, stigma, and exclusion.

We are aware of how difficult the tasks ahead will be. However, we approach them with hope, devotion, and a firm dedication to promote impactful change. Together, we can create a world where sustainable growth is a reality, everyone's rights are safeguarded, and our planet is thriving for future generations.

To make our vision a reality, we, as youth of the world, are eager to work together with governments, NGOs, and all other stakeholders. As we cooperate to create a better, more sustainable future, let's make a promise to leave no one behind.