



Statement by Zuzana Vuová

Czech UN Youth Delegate

at the 55th session of the Commission for Social Development

New York, 3 February 2017

Madam Chair, Your Excellencies,  
Distinguished delegates,  
Dear Fellow Youth Delegates,

My name is Zuzana Vuová and I am the first Czech Youth Delegate to the United Nations.

I am honored and privileged to sit here and speak on behalf of my country and the Czech youth today.

This year's review of the World Programme of Action for Youth is crucial to every other person on this planet, as more than half of the global population is under the age of 30. I count on all Member States to work together to create a progressive and comprehensive youth resolution.

In this regard, I welcome the positive progress we have achieved to defend youth rights in the recent years. I welcome the establishment of the Office of the Secretary General's Envoy on Youth and the annual ECOSOC Youth Forum and I am pleased that youth participation was the main theme of the recently concluded first UN Forum on Human Rights, Democracy and Rule of Law.

I would also like to bring into your attention the landmark Resolution 2250 that the Security Council unanimously passed in December 2015. For the first time, young people have been recognized as crucial actors of change in peace processes and conflict resolution. This matters because progress in peace and security positively contributes to social development of all of us.

When around 60 sub-targets of the Sustainable Development Goals directly or indirectly mention the youth, young people have been recognized not only as main beneficiaries of the SDGs, but as key drivers in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Young people have been recognized as valuable source of fresh ideas, limitless potential, and relentless energy.



But why, when I talk to young people back home, why do they feel the world paints a different picture than the one we paint in our statements and resolutions? When we talk about inclusion, I want to ask, how many Member States in this room have included a young person in their delegation? And how many Member States have consulted young people in formulating national development strategies?

We need to start acting on our words, we have to honor the commitment. I call on all Member States to strengthen youth participatory channels on all levels, join the UN Youth Delegate program, and support civil society bodies.

I also urge you not to lose sight of solidarity with those whose realities and pains we have not lived. The Sustainable Development Goals are for all and can only be achieved if we stand in unity with the less privileged, marginalized, and vulnerable groups.

This week here at the United Nations, I have been humbled to hear first-hand accounts of realities from young leaders from countries of the Global South – it made me confront my own privileges and reinforced my belief that with our common goals, their battle is our battle. So I stand in solidarity with young minority women, persons with disabilities, LGBTIQ community, refugees and those struggling with multiple forms of discrimination. Will you join me?

Madame Chair,  
Dear Fellow Delegates,

Make no mistake about why we are here. We have come together because we choose action over status quo, because we choose a vision of shared prosperity over individual gain, because we choose better future.

So let's build this sustainable, peaceful, tolerant and inclusive world, but don't forget that we have to build it together.

I thank you.