



Statement by Simona Petrů and Kristina Šůsová

Czech UN Youth Delegates

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*Socially just transition towards sustainable development: the role of digital technologies on social development and well-being of all*

Thank you for the floor, Mr./Ms. Chair.

We are very grateful for the opportunity to speak here today on the behalf of the Czech youth. The COVID-19 pandemic caused various problems but we strongly believe that the crisis is an opportunity for a positive change and digital technologies can become one of the strong agents of this transformation.

In education, we have observed a steep rise in the use of technology to sustain learning while maintaining social distance. There are various applications and programmes that can make the learning process more effective and inclusive. However, it needs to be ensured that all pupils and students have equal access to digital technologies regardless of their location or parents' income. We have seen thousands of children losing access to education and, thus, to a better future. In order to prevent this, international cooperation across public, private, and voluntary sectors is truly crucial.

If we succeed in making the technology widely available, it will bring us not only more equality in education, but also many new possibilities to strengthen democracy and the rule of law in accordance with SDG 16. Through making information about the work of various state bodies accessible online, we can achieve greater transparency. Through making the state administration digital, we can make it faster and simpler and thus ensure equal access to justice for all.

We therefore believe that technology is a very useful tool in achieving sustainable development and that the COVID-19 pandemic provided us with a chance to step forward and take the opportunities that technologies offer us. However, we have to be very careful that no one will be left behind since in such case, it would only deepen inequalities created by the pandemic.

Thank you for the floor.