

**Statement by the  
German UN Youth Delegates**

Carina Lange and Alexander Kauschanski  
to the 70<sup>th</sup> session of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Committee  
at the United Nations General Assembly

Honorable chair, distinguished delegates, dear fellow youth delegates,

Imagine yourself in a classroom. Wooden chairs, chalk boards. Voices chatter around. You enter. Heads turn. Eyes follow you. This school could not be further away from the UN Headquarters. People are wearing sweatshirts, not suits. They are not worrying about the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, but about their first love. As a Youth Delegate you are here to inspire them. To tell them about the United Nations and to ask: What is there to change in this world?

A girl raises her hand and asks: "How come that the UN discusses so much but accomplishes so little? The Security Council gets blocked by its veto powers. Climate conferences set modest goals that are never reached. How about those resolutions everyone signs without having to implement them?"

Next question. That guy on the left: "On a global level, only two percent of people in politics are younger than 30. Why is it that we young people, who account for more than half of the world's population, are so underrepresented in politics?"

Another question: "War, corruption, failed states and humanitarian catastrophes cause deaths, hunger, displacement and desperation. How is it possible that the global community does not react?"

"How can the UN hope to foster fair working conditions while its own interns go unpaid?"

"Why do we set global goals without reconsidering the paradigms of growth, exploitation and corporate power that define our current global system?"

As the Germany's Youth Delegates to the UN, we get asked a lot of questions. We tour our country and collect the opinions, demands and questions of 20 million young people. We have traveled to classrooms and summer camps, talked to refugees and visited a youth prison.

As you see, the questions we receive are very tough. Try to answer them for yourself. What does the UN have to do?

First: a REFORM.

And second: ACTION.

Honorable chair,

*First, we need a reform.* The United Nations is a sedentary, complex and sluggish institution. It works more like a dragging snail than a quick-witted cat. The world needs a reliable forum to solve its problems! The UN needs to be more efficient in order to fulfill its goals of securing peace, guaranteeing human rights, fostering international cooperation and protecting the environment. Let's get an update: The hardware is not the issue. But we need a better operating system: Clearer accountability, less bureaucracy. Make the United Nations relevant again!

Talking about updates: We call into question the "sacred" concept of economic growth. It is wrong to measure a country's progress solely by its GDP. Human needs are not a dollar sign. They require well-functioning infrastructure, stable governments, equal opportunities, fair wages, social justice and even-handed relations among all countries. Global justice needs global responsibility - by and for everyone.

Youth is the power to change the world. We are smart and visionary. What's missing is the window of opportunity to use our talents to the benefit of all. We call for permanent mechanisms on local, national and international scale. Young people reject hypocrisy. We are no photo ops, no unpaid staff, no uninspired hacks. Don't double cross us. We need to be part of all decisions. Nothing about us, without us.

*Second, we need action.* The Sustainable Development Goals are a tool to shape the world we want. They are an agenda for peace, prosperity and the preservation of our planet. Now it comes down to implementing them, to hold everyone accountable and to set the stage for true progress. Young people are drivers of change. Let's work together to make our goals come true!

Human rights are for all people. Yet they are violated every day. Nobody should be discriminated against based on their sexual orientation and gender identity. Every person has sexual and reproductive rights. No matter where you are, you shouldn't fear torture or death for loving whom you want. No matter where you are, you have the right to feel safe. Refugees have to feel welcomed anywhere. No life outweighs another. Human rights are for every-one.

Let's get back to that classroom. Imagine yourself standing there. Facing young people. Facing those questions. Think of it: What would you say? Finding answers is difficult. But in the end it's not about what we say, but about what we do. Our visions only count as far as we make them come true. Reform the UN. Actions speak louder than words. Let's work together. Let's make our global goals become our global victories.

Thank you very much.