



## Statement by the German UN Youth Delegates

to the UN 65<sup>th</sup> General Assembly

**Distinguished Mr. Chairman, honourable delegates, dear fellow youth delegates,**

over the last six months we have travelled more than 50 000 km to meet the youth living in Germany. We spoke directly with thousands of young people of various backgrounds. We collected their concerns, visions and demands, which we will now express to you, honourable delegates, the ones responsible to overcome the challenges of the world.

The youth living in Germany strongly supports the idea of the United Nations as a platform where all leaders of the world come together to solve the problems of our times. But they urge the United Nations to reform its structures to make the processes more transparent and enable democratic contributions.

The young people have witnessed COP 15 as an excessive disappointment. Knowing that time is running out the missing commitment has been seen as unacceptable. We all deserve a sustainable future which maintains the environment and biodiversity.

They call upon all Member States to leave their national agenda behind and to act more as united, not as divided, nations.

With mixed feelings we experience the international year of youth. On the one hand it shows that the United Nations are already partially aware of the importance of youth but on the other hand the fact that basically nothing has happened so far reveals once again that the UN is often not able to fulfil the expectations they set up.

But the international year of youth is not over yet. There are a few more months left. Use them!

While discussing with young people about the Millennium Development Goals we were always asked one question, which we now want to ask you: Do you truly believe in the achievement till 2015?

The Youth does not question the fact that the achievement is technically possible. Therefore they call upon every single Member State to not only promise to increase their commitment, but to attain the goals! Keep in mind - The MDGs are only an important first step. Young people want to live in a world where extreme poverty is found in history books and not on the main agenda of international politics.

We, the youth, are the future and also an important part of the present.

We met a generation of young people who want to face the problems of today to create a better future for everyone. But far too often they have to experience that politicians and society do not appreciate their potential and contributions.

Only if young people are involved and appreciated as equal partners and key stakeholders on all local, national and international levels we are able to overcome the challenges we face in a successful and sustainable way. Youth participation is not just a dialogue. It comprises including young people in the whole decision making process, starting by defining the problem up to the realization of the solution which needs to be worked out together in a transparent and democratic way. To fill the idea of democracy and participation with life, young people have to get the possibility to experience it from the very beginning, for example in school by voting class representatives and in youth led organizations by being in charge.

Since 1981 the United Nations call upon all Member States, to include youth delegates in their national delegations. Honourable delegates, are you sitting here together with youth representatives of your country? If not, this is unacceptable, especially when celebrating the International Year of Youth at the same time.

We demand all Member States to include youth delegates, which have been selected through a transparent and democratic process in their delegation to all international conferences.

Facing discrimination denies especially young people the possibility to be an active part of society. The first article of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states, "*All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights*". This was written more than half a century ago, but still people suffer of discrimination. For example lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersexual people are discriminated, chased or even killed only because of their sexual orientation. This is unacceptable! We demand equality for every human being now!

Education is the key to improve the world.

We demand equal access to formal and non-formal education. The development of a young person should not be limited by any social or financial reason. The youth living in Germany also claims more financial and structural support for youth-led-organizations who are the main actors in non-formal education. We demand a better implementation of the living circumstances of young people and gender specific needs in the curriculum of schools and universities.

Today the economy has a huge impact on young people growing up. There is not enough space and time for self-discovery and leisure activities. Giving young people the possibility to learn and gain experience on their own is not just an investment - it is a value in itself.

Honourable delegates, remember the time when you were young. Ensure that one day everyone will reminisce their transition into adulthood as the best period of life.

The life of young people is full of fear about their future. Will I be able to get a job, to make a living, to support my family? These questions jeopardize in many ways social progress creating egoism, destructive competition and disinterest in the common welfare.

To deal with the challenges of the world everybody's individual potential is important, but growing up a young person learns that the value of somebody is measured by its economic success.

In times of crisis especially the youth faces unemployment which has long term negative effects on their development and creates marginalization and devastation. We cannot accept that the economy dictates young people's lives. We demand all member states to take actions to ensure that every young man and woman is able to choose their profession reflecting their interests and potential.

Honourable delegates, implement these concerns, visions and demands on every level.  
We, the youth, are ready to build a better world, now!

Thank you.



German UN Youth Delegates:

Clara Leiva Burger - [clara@germanyouthdelegate.de](mailto:clara@germanyouthdelegate.de) & Jens Christoph Parker - [jens@germanyouthdelegate.de](mailto:jens@germanyouthdelegate.de)

[www.germanyouthdelegate.de](http://www.germanyouthdelegate.de)