



Praise youth and it will prosper!

“Our Year, Our Voice” that is what we are shouting out loud while living youth participation at the United Nations.



In the last two weeks the General Assembly, especially the third committee got inspired by Youth Delegates from all over the world. They gave clear statements, influenced the negotiations and conduct powerful Working Breakfasts and Side Events. But why are they always wearing these buttons with colourful bubbles?

Because there is a need for! The colourful bubbles are the symbol of the International Year of Youth “Dialogue and mutual understanding”, which was adopted by the UN General Assembly in December 2009 and starts just a few months later – at August, 12th 2010. But until yet, nothing has happened so far! Even the highlight of the year, the World Conference of Youth is still up in the air.

We demand actions! This year should be taken as an opportunity to appreciate the importance of the youth and to strengthen youth participation on local, national and international level. During events the celebration of the Year of Youth is a chance to increase awareness for the contributions of young people, which are fundamental to overcome the challenges we face in a sustainable and successful way. Another task of every single Member State is to give youth a platform to present themselves and their contributions in the society as a whole. As well as to take the chance to review the development policies and programs on every level.

The international Year of Youth is not over yet! Let us start to take actions and to praise the youth. It will prosper!

Clara Leiva Burger (Germany)
& Gitte Briffa (Belgium)

Toward a sustainable UN

In a Working Breakfast on Youth Participation in Environmental Policy, the Sustainable Development Officer from the DESA, experts from UNICEF and UNFPA have explored together with the Youth Delegates and the guests, the various possibilities of Youth involvement to achieve social, economic and ecological goals. In the perspective of COP 16, next CSD and Rio+20, the lobbying to members states for effective youth representation and action through the official inclusion of a Youth Delegate in each delegation has to start now. The interesting discussion has widened the opportunities for cooperation among UN institutions and youth society, and generated energy for dynamic engagement.

Strongly convinced that sustainable economic and social development includes an environmental dimension, we demand to member states to join their efforts to make UN conferences more eco-friendly. By printing resolutions draft and statements on recycled paper, sorting the garbage for recycling, improving energy efficiency and serving bio-products are small but significant steps that also have to be implemented in own permanent mission. Efforts committed by the international community enhance its credibility and legitimacy towards the civil society of the world. Let's be a model of green leadership!

Laura Crivelli (Switzerland)

We'd love to hear from you! Please contact the editors Clara Leiva Burger and Jens Christoph Parker (both Germany) on clara or jens@jugenddelegierte.de

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UN Parliament Assembly, a vision of hope?

"More than ever before in human history, we share a common destiny. We can master it only if we face it together. And that, my friends, is why we have the United Nations." Kofi Annan

The United Nations system is a platform for all states. It has been created after the second World War to prevent any kind of hell. There have been enormous successes, but at the same time there are areas, in which progress is not taking place, because the options of the delegates are limited by their national agenda. To create a more global responsibility and mandate, the idea of a united nations parliament assembly representing the people living on this planet could be interesting.

We are now facing global problems in the world which no longer can be solved only at the national level but which needs to be managed at the global level, for example climate changes. The CO² doesn't have borders, when CO² is produced in any country, it has consequences all over the world. The COP 15 in Copenhagen last year has shown that the current UN system is unable to solve this huge problem.

Why? Because the UN is currently founded on the same diplomatic procedures established by the treaties of Westphalia in 1648 by the old European system. Each state (through the voice of their diplomats) is there to negotiate an inter-national treaty which has to be the most convenient possible for them. Each state is concerned with its own interests. In 1648 and for three centuries, this was a very important step for humanity. But now, this system is not able to give solutions for the global problems we are facing.

To reform the system, humanity has to involve the peoples in the global decision makings. The current system represents the governments of each state, but not the people of the world. To give the voice to the people, we need to implement and create a parliamentary assembly of the United Nations. At first, this parliament would be a new institution within the UN system, composed by delegations from the parliaments of each member states. It would be consultative in the beginning, giving advice to the Security Council and the General Assembly. And then, in the following years, it would acquire more and more importance in the UN system, following the will of the people.

The UN system needs reforms to face the new problems that are currently arising. As Albert Einstein said, "we can't solve problems using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them."

Matthieu Content (Belgium)