

Opening Statement: Major Group Children and Youth - CSD 19

We, the Major Group for Children and Youth, call for a sustainability revolution. We need systemic change. We all share a responsibility to create this change, recognising our fragile existence and fundamental interdependence. We have the opportunity to shape the future, and we are eager to work with you in turning this negotiating text into real commitments to action.

We must adopt the 10-year framework of programs at this CSD in order to shift to sustainable consumption and production patterns. Decisive commitments with clearly articulated goals and objectives on decoupling are necessary. This should be supported by solid financial mechanisms, accountable governance and programs that embody the underlying principles of equity, integrity and justice. As youth, we are committed to significantly decreasing the negative impacts of our generation's consumption and production, ever mindful of how our actions affect the world.

We hold Parties responsible for their own nuclear, hazardous, agricultural, medical and electronic wastes. Internationally, this responsibility must include ratifying the Basel and Bamako conventions. Domestically, all parties must protect the health of formal and informal waste workers, and implement zero-waste, zero-landfill, and waste-to-energy policies for a sustainable future.

Our world is saturated by dangerous chemicals that are harmful to us now and to generations to come. Along with the precautionary and polluter pays principles already in the text, we should strengthen regulation of the right-to-know and the substitution principles. Producer responsibility for managing chemicals in their life cycle perspective is essential to protect communities.

As the Major Group of Children and Youth, we cannot accept children working in mines. We ask delegations to reaffirm the commitment to eradicate all inappropriate forms of child labor. Secondly, we call for increased dedication to the local communities that are directly affected by both positive and negative impacts of mining. The cost for our generation of destroying environmentally sensitive areas is nowhere near the gains of mining, therefore the precautionary principle must be implemented.

Transportation must serve as a tool to improve the quality of life, for example, to increase access to high-quality education and meaningful employment. Community members must have a significant role in decision making to create safe, affordable and environmentally responsible transport systems.

This is what we expect. This is the future that we are prepared to inherit