



**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF
BULGARIA**

TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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**71st UNGA, Third Committee
Item 26 (a) Social Development**

***Statement of Bulgarian Youth Delegates -
Ms. Aleksandra Mircheva and Ms. Iva Tsolova***

Madam Chair,

We represent a generation that is facing a world of challenges and constant change but also a world of opportunities and aspirations for a better future! Our generation has a tremendous potential to transform the challenges into powerful solutions and to contribute meaningfully not only to designing the future but also to shaping the present. Young people should not be considered only as passive recipients of policies designed by others but as active participants in their development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. We call upon the international community to ensure equal youth participation at all levels of decision-making by providing the necessary tools, space, support and opportunities so that our voice is heard and our opinions are taken into account in all processes.

Youth participation is a key factor for the empowerment of young people. This is the outcome of a recent nation-wide survey we conducted as youth delegates among young people in Bulgaria. Bulgarian youth sees a clear correlation between the low levels of youth participation and the lack of quality education and employment. Young people from Bulgaria highlight the importance of quality education for the development of key competences that will enable their meaningful participation in the social and economic life and the full realization of their human rights.

Currently, more and more young people in Bulgaria appreciate the advantages of non-formal education. From my own experience as a youth leader and trainer I have seen the transformative impact and the added value of non-formal education for the personal and professional development of young people. We call upon Governments to recognize the non-formal education and to develop systems for validation of competences acquired through non-formal education.

Governments must also ensure the necessary support and funding to the main providers of non-formal education, especially youth and youth-led organizations, to continuously build capacity.

Madam Chair,

The economic and social inclusion of young people is also connected to the pressing issue of youth unemployment, mostly affecting young persons who are vulnerable and marginalized. Young people should not only aim at entering the labour market but at creating job opportunities themselves that also contribute to solving major social issues through innovative solutions. As a social entrepreneur myself, working with persons with disabilities, I highly value the potential of social entrepreneurship for their inclusion in the labour market and in the society as a whole. New challenges call for new approaches. Technology and innovations developed at local level are the key to achieving sustainable results with global impact. We call upon the international community to actively promote and support the social entrepreneurship of young people as we are the ones who have the best solutions to the issues that affect us directly.

The role of young people has for the first time been recognized in a global document with the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The involvement of all stakeholders at all levels of implementation and monitoring is crucial for the success of the Agenda. Young people have the potential and the capacity to contribute significantly to translate the Goals into concrete action. Young people can be the drivers of positive change on local, national and global level. Our participation is essential for achieving sustainable future for all.

Thank you, Madam Chair!