



55th session of the Commission for Social Development

Agenda item 3b

Promoting Integrated Policies for Poverty Education: Youth Development in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

New York, 2 February 2017

Declaration by Swiss Youth Rep

Mr. Chair,

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including its central pledge to *leave no one behind*, underlines the importance of social justice, equality and inclusion in economic, social and cultural life of all vulnerable groups for achieving a sustainable future. Development cannot be considered inclusive if poverty, inequality and the lack of decent work opportunities are not addressed.

Due to their vulnerability, youth can be strongly affected by stigma and social exclusion, bringing potential adverse long-term consequences. The international community should discuss within the United Nations the implications of this phenomenon and address this issue with dynamic and efficient policies which should involve listening to the voices of the most unheard vulnerable youth.

Mr. Chair,

The focus should in particular be set on young people. In this regard, the World Programme of Action for Youth established as a priority the full and effective participation of youth in the life of society and in decision-making. Developing and strengthening opportunities for young people to learn about their rights and responsibilities is crucial for the inclusion of youth in politics.

The unique perspective of youth and their intellectual contributions should be essential to the international community when adopting policies that build and design the world of the future. Switzerland promotes policies that further democratic values and give young people the possibility to express their ideas. For example, every year a young parliamentary session is held in the capital in Bern. This event offers young people the possibility to express their opinion and be politically included in the society.

Mr. Chair,

Each year, it is estimated that 20 % of the world's youth experience mental health conditions, which means approximately 240 million people. About half of mental disorders begin before the age of 14. The impact of a mental health condition, especially during this delicate and vulnerable phase of development of the human being, can entail dramatic consequences.

In order to tackle this issue, Switzerland strongly supports the WHO Mental Health Action Plan 2013-2020 and calls upon Member States to implement it. Furthermore, Switzerland is one of the few member states with a suicide prevention program and a national sensibilisation campaign against stigmatization which promotes the integration of information on the matter of mental health at the educational level and in the media.

Prevent mental disorders, provide services for care and assistance, break the stigma and the barriers to seek help and enhance recovery should be top priorities of the international community's legal and policy framework for national measures. Mental health matters and we share the responsibility to address this issue to ensure that by 2030, no one is indeed left behind.

I thank you
