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|  |  **PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF** **BULGARIA** **TO THE UNITED NATIONS** |

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**69th UNGA, Second Committee**

**General Debate**

***Statement of Bulgarian Youth Delegates***

Mr. Chair,

Distinguished Delegates,

On behalf of the young people in Bulgaria, we are honored to address the Second Committee of the General Assembly at this historical moment when the discussions on the post-2015 development agenda enter their crucial stage.

Young people between the age of 10 and 24 form a quarter of the world’s population, yet they do not participate in the decision-making in any way. Having a very limited say in designing national and international policies, young people are only passive observers of processes that directly affect their lives. Young people are a major human resource for development and should be the key agents for positive social change globally.

On a daily basis, young people around the world struggle with numerous challenges, including youth unemployment, lack of quality education and healthcare as well as discrimination based on age, qualification, gender, disability, etc.

Unemployment is a major obstacle for young people to actively contribute to development. Regardless of the amount of education or qualifications young people may have, this potential is wasted if they are not given the opportunity to hone their skills through practical experience.

Young people tend to be three times more likely than adults to be unemployed. One in six young people is without a job and not in education or training. An increasing number of young people are forced to turn to unskilled part-time jobs to support themselves, which may offer a short-term solution to their financial struggles but rarely contributes to their development in the long run. When young people cannot fulfill their full potential, development is delayed.

We call upon governments to substantially reduce the proportion of young people not in employment or training by providing support and investment in formal and non-formal education. We need to increase the number of young people who have the skills to improve the likelihood of employment. All forms of education should focus on entrepreneurial and leadership skills. Equipped with a self-starter mindset, young people can be proactive and create opportunities for themselves even when such have not been previously available.

Mr. Chair,

As youth delegates, we are advocating for the active participation of young people in development as drivers of social, political and economic change. We believe that young people should not only be the objects of policies but should also be recognized as key partners in their elaboration. The full participation of young people in the post-2015 development agenda is essential. We would like to ensure that young people would be included in decision-making processes and will fully enjoy their right to participate in the discussions towards any future development framework.

The MDGs have proven that a set of clear and measurable targets can be an important driver of progress. A lot has already been achieved since the adoption of the MDGs. However, the world has changed over this period and so have the global challenges. Any new framework should take into account those changes and build upon the progress made so far.

We call for an inclusive post-2015 development agenda based on human rights. Sustainable development must be people-centered, benefiting and involving all persons, including the most vulnerable and marginalized groups. Special attention should be paid also to persons with disabilities and their inclusion in all aspects of development.

Mr. Chair,

Young people should be given the opportunity to take an active part in these important processes. In order to build a better world for the next generations, we would need to utilize to the full the potential, the innovative ideas and the creative energy of young people because ***there can be no peace, no prosperity and no progress without the full and equal participation of young people in decision-making processes all over the world!***

Thank you, Mr. Chair!