

**Statement of the European Youth Forum and Pax Romana delivered
to the 45th session of the Commission for Social Development
Presentation of the World Youth Report 2007**

Dear Chair- dear Delegates-

The slow and delayed progress in achieving the Millennium Development Goals is, frankly speaking, a major disappointment for all, and particularly, for the youth of the world: this failure in acting to solve humanity's most agonising problems is unsatisfactory and dangerous. As youth organisations, we will comprehend our responsibility and duty to hold governments accountable for their actions and their inaction in this regard.

With twelve years of the World Programme on Action for Youth having passed, a great deal of work still remains to be done; yet while the list of problems that need to be tackled continues to grow, the willingness and enthusiasm of young people to contribute to the success of the programme remain unbroken. As it is imperative that all possible means and tools are mobilised to achieve the MDGs –it is therefore evident that the World Programme of Action for Youth needs to be connected to the MDGs and must itself have targets and goals.

Youth organisations continue to be steadfast advocates for the participation and inclusion of young people in all levels of decision-making - equally crucial throughout the world. While the mainstream media continually portrays an over-simplistic image of young people as passive and apathetic or violent, we know this is unreflective of our true diversity, potential and passion; obvious, indeed, through the dedication and professionalism exhibited by the youth representatives here at the CSocD. But looking at the origin of the youth representatives does, however, make it evident once again that there is a need for resources and commitment to assure youth representation from all regions of the world.

I can only remind governments of the apparent need to have more youth representatives involved in the UN system, as well as to promote and recognise the key role of national youth councils, international and regional youth platforms and NGOs. Youth organisations together with governments and the UN system, can define priorities, set goals and targets, and implement decisions on the local, national and international level, while monitoring indicators.

Many Agencies and Programmes of the UN system, as well as governments, have already acknowledged that youth is key to development most explicitly the World Bank. It is essential for governments and the UN System to make sure young people are not only a rhetorical priority in speeches and sound

bites, but a genuine priority in policies and budgets. Governments, the UN and youth organisations together are responsible for being guardians, promoters and multipliers of the World Programme of Action for Youth by complementing each other in order to address shared concerns in a holistic manner.

In addition there is a clear need for inter-agency coordination on Youth issues in the UN system. We strongly recommend that the UN Youth Programme, in constant consultation with youth organisations, should undertake this coordination.

Young people are often seen as those most susceptible to influence and of having their opinions and ideas swayed by trends, but it is us, in fact, that can provide a sense of stability and cling to long-held visions of peace and cooperation. We are the ones that have already understood that Sustainable development is a basis for all political work. All political decisions must be marked by the right of all coming generations to shape their world without being required to face the consequences of an earlier generation's ecological, social or economic activities.

Our generation has developed an understanding that poverty is an outrageous violation of human rights and climate change a threat to humanity; and that the solution is a global partnership for development. The Millennium Development Goals are ambitious, but they are not unreachable. There is an urgent need for a renewed commitment from political leaders and a real commitment for the full and effective involvement of civil society in the decision-making that will affect us.

Mister chair - let me conclude:

- It is imperative to establish goals for the World Programme of Action for Youth in accordance with the MDGs.
- It is essential to increase youth participation at all levels and assure greater regional balance of youth delegates to the UN.
- It is indispensable to have a greater UN inter agency coordination led by the UN Youth Programme.

Thank you chair.