

CSD-14 Children and Youth Intervention

Afternoon Plenary of 05/05/06

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank the distinguished panelists for the meaningful and insightful contributions to this discussion.

Over the last few days, we have been discussing issues we youth in particular will have to address down the road. As we stated in our international youth declaration in Montreal last December entitled “Our climate, our challenge, our future”, youth around the world are committed to protecting the climate. We seek to respect cultural diversity, indigenous rights, traditional knowledge, and humanity’s place in nature. We are supporting clean energy through our consumption choices. We are engaging our communities and expanding our involvement at the domestic and international levels. We are encouraging broader participation on the part of our peers.

However, we feel so much more could be accomplished through enhanced partnership and support of youth-lead initiatives. And there is much to be addressed before we meet again for the fifteen session of this commission.

For instance, we need to explore ways to mainstream sustainable technologies and youth employment. Youth around the world have taken steps to bring these technologies to their communities, and which have improved the lives of youth and their families. We are happy to provide numerous case studies of youth working in this area. These renewable technology projects are crucial to sustainable development and all such projects must be supported through increased political will and funding.

There remain numerous constraints requiring our attention:

Mitigation technologies need to be accessible to developing countries, especially in the interest of building capacity to enhance commitments made through the UFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol. We recognize the importance of industry involvement in mitigating the challenges of our generation. Partnerships between local governments and industry, with fair levels of participation, can help mitigate climate change from the local to the global level.

Another major constraint is that the implementation of sustainable technologies at the country-level has been far too slow. Current efforts to implement renewable and carbon-neutral technologies are encouraging but do not reflect the severity of the crisis. A good place to start might be reducing and eliminating subsidies of fossil fuels that perpetuate our reliance on a process that gravely threatens our planet, our families, our future.

Finally, we are encouraged to have heard several delegates at this session stress the importance of education as a crosscutting issue. We could not agree more, and wish to highlight the role we as youth play in current education and outreach efforts at present. We hope that with your support we can enhance these educational programs as we move from the present toward a world where the dominant goal of energy is to support people and our planet.

Thank you very much.