

Statement from Dutch youth representative regarding the Netherlands voluntary national review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

The youth representative was selected to be part of the Dutch delegation for the High Level Political Forum through a process involving the national youth council.

Thank you for the introduction. I want to take you all back to my first unconfident steps into high school, the moment that I thought I would never survive all these years of studying. But in a few months I will have my university graduation ceremony and in the end it feels like a fraction of time. Don't we all recognise this feeling of time flying by? Actually it was 13 years since my first steps into high school. This exact same time is now left to push the world into a huge transition.

So we better start working today. We identified three key issues that should be prioritised in the Kingdom of the Netherlands. Firstly, education. We need 21st century skills that better align with the job market and the challenges of tomorrow. Skills like entrepreneurship, system thinking and ICT literacy are just a few examples of these. Books are not enough, we need to learn with the mind, heart and hands. Education is also one of the key ways to empower young women and girls, without their input we cannot achieve the 2030 agenda.

Secondly, Climate action: we are concerned about climate change. The Political Youth Organisations in the Netherlands demonstrated this by all signing a Manifesto for bold climate action when the adult politicians failed to reach consensus. Promising politicians you might think, but we can't wait till we are in the driver seat, we need action today.

Finally, equality. To us this is of extreme importance. Because LGBTQI+, youth who have been subject to child abuse, youth with disabilities, youth with a migration background and other groups are still left behind. For example, Girls and boys who are deaf have lower quality of education and a lot of educational material is not accessible for them. We need to activate marginalised groups so everyone in our society contributes to the 2030 agenda. And in order to do so, you need to be trusted with ownership.

Last year there were only 6 youth representatives at the HLPF, this year we are with 20(?), and I am standing here, presenting the vision of the youth being trusted with ownership. We challenge all of you to trust ownership to young people and bring youth representatives to the HLPF. After all, the 2030 agenda is so much more than a piece of paper with high level signatures, it's a promise to us, to the people, it's about our common future. 13 years left, it might sound like a long time, but actually it is extremely short to implement this transformative agenda. Yet we are ready for it and want to

work together with all of you to make this promise a reality.
Thank you.