



Children & Youth Major Group

Closing Statement

15th May 2009

For the past two weeks, delegates from around the world have gathered to discuss, debate and negotiate. We've been monitoring this process.

Coming here, we have no hidden agenda - we are fighting for our future - and this future has become a battleground, fought over with commas, brackets and watered-down words. We are thrilled that youth involvement has been emphasised in multiple parts of the text and that free access to capacity building in rural development and education has been secured. However, we find it surprising, and unacceptable, that occupational safety and the elimination of exploitative child labour has been completely left out, despite repeated attempts and concrete and constructive amendments provided by the Youth and submitted by some national delegations. The importance of this in terms of agricultural development and access to education cannot be emphasised enough.

We urge the increased involvement of local communities and education for sustainable development through both formal and non-formal learning. We would like to clarify that youth are not vulnerable, and our inclusion in development strategies is crucial.

We are ethically and morally bound to take action in implementing the necessary measures for true sustainability. The vision must be followed by the venture. Let it not be tomorrow and let it not be others. Let it be now, and let it be us.

Thank you Madame Chair, **you** have the floor.

Thanks to all the youth that helped put this statement together... it's been a long night!