

## Statement for Waste Management Thematic Discussion

### Major Group for Youth and Children

Thank you Mr Chair for the floor.

The Major Group for Youth and Children recognises the need for more **effective** waste management as an integral part to the achievement of sustainable development. The issue is complex, and we cannot overlook its fundamental connection to sustainable consumption and production.

There are 2 proposals that we wish to bring up.

#### **Firstly,**

To achieve sustainable waste management, we need to **shift** the mindsets of individuals and institutions. Our actions do not reflect patterns of sustainable consumption and production, thus our waste management systems are not able to cope. We must **re**-think our norms and values, become **actively** conscious of the impact of our daily actions and change our behaviours accordingly.

Ladies and gentlemen, by a show of hands, how many here have used more than **5** paper cups just within these past 3 days, here at the CSD? This is just one small example of the **pervasiveness** of waste in our daily lives, which therefore highlights the need for individuals to become **active agents** of change with regard to waste management. To achieve this, there is a need for both formal and informal education - with individuals and institutions alike - to enable us to move away from the existing systems and mentalities that define us. Youths especially, have the passion **and** the ability, through informal education and interactive media, to induce a societal change.

#### **Secondly,**

Systems and institutions need to **match** our ideas. As Dr Connett mentioned in his panelist speech yesterday, industries need to have the **infrastructure** for zero-waste capabilities.

Globalization, faster transportation systems, and economies of scale have provided for economically efficient production, assembly, and delivery of goods. It is thus evident that we **have** the capacity to design and implement massive technological advancements, so **why** do we find ourselves unable to effectively deal with waste? Undesirable financial costs **cannot** overrule the social and environmental costs of poor waste management, especially with regards to hazardous waste and e-waste.

It is imperative that the **life-cycle approach** of waste be taken into account, and we propose that **capacity building** for waste management be greatly enhanced. Greater communication of best practices needs to be fostered between national governments, academia and the private sector, as constantly mentioned by the panelists and speakers. Innovative concepts such as the "**cradle to cradle**" approach and "waste as food" should be integrated into planning processes, while taking into account **local** circumstances. Financial provision, tough environmental regulation and enforcement are crucial elements to this process.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, we need to aim for a **zero-waste** world. This can only be achieved through integrated solutions, the increasing of capacity, and most importantly a shift in mentality that defines our engagement with the natural world. As the youth, we are prepared to start this movement, and to lead by example, with the next cup of coffee. Let our vision be world embracing.

Thank you Mr Chair.