

First of all, I would like to thank you for allowing me to be the voice of the youth from a middle-income country. My name is Sude Balaban, and I am an 18-year-old youth from Turkey, which you refer to as the future. Today, I will talk about what it feels like to be a young person from a middle-income country.

Do you know Plato's Allegory of the Cave? Plato's Allegory of the Cave is a metaphor that explains how what people see in the sensory world is only a reflection of the truth. People chained in a cave see only the shadows projected on the wall and think these shadows are real. When someone exits the cave and sees the real world, they realize the truth and want to go back to enlighten the others.

We are like those inside the cave. We see a light at the end of the cave, but the chains that hold us back are economic, political, employment, social, and cultural factors. If we can break these chains, we can achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Once we have the light, we will not stop at illuminating our surroundings; we will work to illuminate our families, our communities, our country, and the whole world. We are the youth; we are the future.

I would like to talk about the Global Co Lab that I represent here. It is an organization where many young people from around the world participate and strive to address and solve global issues. In Global Co Lab, we do not say "we will do it later"; we do it now. We do not just talk; we take action. We love the world and work to make it a much better place.

I am also pleased to share that the Major Group for Children and Youth organised LDC-5 and LLDC-3 Youth Forum bringing together voices of youth advocates worldwide and we look forward to strengthening engagement of young people from the middle income countries on the road to UN social Summit 2025"

Today, I may be one person standing here, but I carry the dreams, hopes, and relentless energy of an entire generation. We are not just the leaders of tomorrow; we are the changemakers of today. So, I invite you to join us, to support us, to believe in us. Together, we can break the chains, shatter the shadows, and bring forth a brighter, more sustainable future. Thank you.