

Excellences, influential representatives, ladies and gentlemen,

We would like to express our deepest gratitude for the opportunity to represent our countries and the youth from all over the world. Our contrasting backgrounds and experiences have allowed us to see and gain awareness of different perspectives on the world drug problem phenomenon and we stand here to ask you to do the same. We, the youth are an easy target of the world drug problem and acknowledge that we at times may be a contributing part of it, but we are also an integral part of the solution.

Increasing political conflict, grave social inequalities, relentless organized crime and violence makes for a very unstable and insecure world for youth. The ease of accessibility of drugs, absence of evidence-based health and social services and immense pressure on youth to manoeuvre these challenges makes our generation more vulnerable to adopting unhealthy and unsafe coping mechanisms and curious about the perceived allure of drugs

We urge Member States to strengthen collaboration between government and NGO's promoting youth to influence drug policy, positively engaging with, and consulting youth. Member States need to increase access to and awareness of human rights-based health centred drug dependence treatment and care and reduce stigma around drug use.

Last year, we called on UNODC to develop a guide for member states on how to positively engage youth in drug prevention. This year, we call on UNODC to support the implementation of this guide and train Member States on it. Moreover, to bring the gap between policy makers and youth closer by creating a regular forum for exchange.

Maybe our demands are too ambitious, maybe they are not yet well-formed. But, we are ready and must work together, because we see substance abuse every day amongst our peers and in our communities. It is crucial to engage youth in substance use prevention, to see the situation through our eyes. This is a demonstration of our trust in you, as our policy makers and role models. Together, we have the ability to save the lives, which we are losing, EVERY SINGLE DAY!