

Statement made by the major group YOUTH on Agenda Item 4 a) iv

Long-term strategy on the engagement and involvement of young people

20 February 2013

Thank you Madame Chair.

My name is Nhattan Nguyen, speaking on behalf of the Major Group of Children and Youth.

We welcome the COW's decision to work on item (iii) Long-term strategy on the engagement and involvement of young people, also known as the Tunza strategy. This strategy is very important, as it concerns not only how UNEP will address children and youth today, but how tomorrow's decision-makers will have the capacity needed to properly respond to environmental challenges.

We would like to reaffirm Paragraph 50 of the Rio+20 outcome document on importance of the active participation of young people in decision-making processes and the Doha work programme on Article 6 of the UNFCCC to re-emphasize the need to work more collaboratively with other UN bodies on environmental issues.

In the MGCY position paper, Children and Youth have adopted a clear position regarding this strategy:

Regarding the Tunza strategy 2009-2014:

Children & Youth greatly appreciate UNEP's long-term strategy on the engagement and involvement of young people in environmental issues, which we call the Tunza strategy. The Tunza programme brings young environmentalists together from all parts of the globe in an amazing network to exchange experiences, build capacity and get empowered to make a difference. Through its outreach activities the Tunza strategy and its magazine is an effective tool for raising awareness and involving more young people in environmental issues. As young people we wish to thank UNEP, governments and other partners to the Tunza strategy for providing this platform for us. Much has been done, but much more can be done in the future. We need to bring the Tunza programme to new heights.

Regarding the development of a new Tunza strategy for 2015-2020

Children & Youth strongly believe that there is a need for UNEP's work with Children & Youth to continue. The current Tunza strategy adopted in 2009 expires in 2014, and we believe that a new strategy is needed for a new 6-years period to start immediately thereafter. It is already 2013 and it is time to start an inclusive process of developing the content of the new Tunza strategy. Together with the Tunza network we want to not only be consulted, but take the lead in drafting the 3rd UNEP long-term strategy for the engagement and involvement of young people in environmental issues, to be adopted in the UNEP Governing Council 2015 for the period 2015-2020. This drafting process should start immediately and happen both online and offline in all regions of the world and include as many young people as possible.

Improving UNEP's coordination of children & youth issues

The UNEP Tunza office and the Major Groups and Stakeholders Branch are currently both responsible for youth engagement in UNEP. This leads to overlap and fragmentation. The offices need to collaborate more closely and preferably be merged into one office. Environmental Governance is part of the Tunza strategy, and the UNEP Tunza programme and the UNEP Major Group of Children & Youth want to work very closely together.

My colleague from Tunza will add a few words regarding this year's Tunza Youth Statement.

My name is Gracia Paramitha, speaking on behalf of TUNZA Youth Advisory Council. TUNZA has been working as progressive network for children and youth under UNEP. Last week, TUNZA has been held in the same venue here in Nairobi from 10-14 February which engage 300 participants over 100 countries. Regarding TUNZA strategy and youth participation, we have important proposals for the First Universal Session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum.

5. This point concerns participation of youth in decision making:

- a. Leading by example, UNEP needs to encourage a system that facilitates young people in decision making structures that are not tokenistic.
- b. UNEP also needs to provide training and enable individuals to develop and share skills for inclusive involvement in other key stakeholders group.

To strengthen effective management of TUNZA, we highly purpose UNEP to enhance TUNZA organizational framework into such an official institution under UNEP, which will be easier to make further partnership with all stakeholders, especially the governments. We highly purpose UNEP to hold special session for TUNZA during the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Meeting in the future. We believe that UNEP support children and youth as well as TUNZA for better generation and better world.

Thank you for your attention.