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**Statement by H.E. Ambassador Darja Bavdaž Kuret,
Ambassador, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Slovenia
to the United Nations**

and

Ms. Sabina Carli, Youth Delegate,

under Agenda Item 27 - Social Development

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Mr. Chairperson,

Slovenia aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of the EU and with the statement made by Argentina on behalf of Group of friends of Older Persons.

I would like to recall yesterday's International Day of Older Persons (IDOP). This year the lead topic of IDOP explored effective means of promoting and strengthening the participation of older persons in various aspects of social, cultural, economic, civic and political life. We firmly believe that enabling full participation is an essential part of creating truly cohesive societies, ensuring equal treatment for all in the exercise of their rights, obligations and fundamental freedoms, irrespective of personal circumstances, including age.

Mr. Chairperson,

In the first half of 2017 Slovenia conducted an intensive public consultation on the draft national Strategy for a Long-Lived Society. Upon its presentation the Prime Minister Mr. Miro Cerar underlined that it was "time for a new, decisive step forward in our thinking about intergenerational relations and co-existence." The Strategy, which was adopted in July, is based on the concept of active ageing, optimizing opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age. On the basis of the Strategy, specific departmental action plans will follow for the realisation of the Strategy's goals. We however fully recognise that any nationally devised measures, while welcome, would be reinforced by sufficient international standards in this area.

The interconnectedness between the welfare of the young and that of the older generation is often overlooked. The approach of choosing one over the other is misguided and harmful to intergenerational solidarity. Providing, protecting and empowering need and must not come at the cost of welfare of one generation for the sake of other, or social exclusion would surely follow.



Mr. Chairperson,

I am honoured that I can, for the fourth consecutive session, welcome our Slovenian youth representative Ms Sabina Carli, who will deliver part of the statement on behalf of the Slovenian youth.

Mister Chair, Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my greatest honour to address you today as the United Nations Youth Delegate of Slovenia.

Being surrounded by such a number of brilliant and vocal young people, my fellow youth delegates, is an indispensable reminder that we need to be given a seat at the table and a voice to be heard when it comes to the challenges that concern our common future.

Inclusiveness is one of the core aspirations of the 2030 Agenda. The way the pressing issues of today are dealt with will determine the way we will live in the decades to come – which is why I call upon you: We need to address them in a coordinated and inclusive manner, in dialogue with multiple stakeholders, together.

The challenges of the young generation in Slovenia are numerous – we are struggling with structural unemployment, different forms of unstable employment, lack and mismatch of skills for the future of work that all lead to a delayed transition to adulthood and full autonomy of young individuals.

We need to ensure the realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, provide youth with decent and stable work opportunities, empower young girls and women. We need to strive to develop effective mechanisms of inclusion and social protection for vulnerable groups such as NEETs, people with disabilities, minorities. It is our common duty to ensure access to quality education worldwide.

Embrace the potentials of new technologies, use the existing tools of international cooperation but develop new, more progressive ones. Keep in mind the effects our activities have on our planet and strengthen our efforts to preserve and protect the environment we live in.

The path we walk together must be paved with the tiles of sustainability. Implementation of youth policies demands a cross-sectorial approach that follows the principles of youth mainstreaming and brings on board youth, youth-led and youth-focused organizations.

But do not be mistaken. We, young people acknowledge that there are pressing challenges for other generations, especially for the elderly, as well and I see no alternative to the intergenerational cooperation, dialogue and solidarity.

Young people carry a huge potential – yet, young educated, engaged and empowered people, those are the agents of change. The change that we can all benefit from.

I thank you.