



STATEMENT BY

**THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
H.E. MR. JAN ELIASSON**

**AT THE 27TH PLENARY MEETING
DEVOTED TO THE EVALUATION OF THE PROGRESS
MADE IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
WORLD PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR YOUTH
TO THE YEAR 2000 AND BEYOND**

**UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS
NEW YORK, NEW YORK
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Madam Deputy Secretary-General, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates of all ages, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am very pleased to see a record number of youth representatives in the national delegations to the sixtieth session of General Assembly. Your presence is concrete evidence of the revitalization and rejuvenation often called for in these halls. It is also an encouraging indication of a growing recognition of the importance of youth participation in the implementation and evaluation of the World Programme of Action for Youth. You are reminding us of the need to involve young people in decision-making and you are bringing the realities of youth into these halls.

In the ten years since the adoption of the World Programme of Action for Youth, there have been notable achievements, including on gender issues and in the field of education. However, much remains to be done. As the World Youth Report 2005 – the Report of the Secretary-General – so vividly describes, many young people today continue to suffer poverty, discrimination and inequality, and far too great a number still lack access to proper education and health services. Most of those who become infected with HIV/AIDS are in their teens or early twenties. In many areas, rampant unemployment dulls their ambition and undermines morale. And we know that civil conflict can have a particularly devastating effect on the young.

Although the World Programme of Action for Youth is still highly relevant today, in the ten years that have passed since its adoption, new challenges

have emerged. In the mid-1990s, few could have predicted the enormous impact globalization, information and communication technologies, HIV/AIDS, conflict and intergenerational relations would have on young people. These issues will need substantive commitment and action as emerging areas of concern.

In addition to policies and programmes developed specifically for youth, the needs of young people must be better reflected in broader development agendas. A few weeks ago, the world leaders gathered here to review progress towards the Millennium Development Goals and the reform process facing the United Nations. Intensified commitment and investment now in the Millennium Development Goals will have enormous benefits for the young people of 2015 and future generations.

Young people should be seen as our partners and a positive force in achieving the full implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. As one of the youth representative so eloquently said at the informal, interactive roundtable yesterday, the current young generation should not be the next one to fail, but the first one to succeed in meeting the Millennium Development Goals.

That is a challenge for all of us to accept.

Let us all do our part to make that happen.