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Statement

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

and

**Ms. Urša Svetelj, Youth Delegate,
under Agenda Item 28 - Social Development**

Third Committee of the 73rd Session of the General Assembly

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Mr. Chairperson,

Slovenia aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of the European Union and with the statement delivered on behalf of the Group of Friends of Older Persons.

Our national statement focuses on the rights of older persons. To begin with, let me express our respect and support for the Older Human Rights Champions, in line with the theme of this year's International Day of Older Persons, observed on 1st October. Not only their dedication and commitment but efforts of all human rights defenders to promote the full realization of human rights around the world are invaluable in our common efforts to Leave No-One Behind.

Mr. Chairperson,

Population ageing and related demographic changes have become global phenomena in both developed and developing countries. Among EU Member States, Slovenia is among the most rapidly ageing countries; by 2030, judging by current trends, over 25% of Slovenia's population will be above 65.

Allow me to begin with a short recap of national activities relevant to the promotion and protection of the human rights of older persons. In 2017 debate in Slovenia continued on several issues related to ageing population, among them discussion of integrated and



comprehensive approach to long-term care and consultation of end-of-life issues from the humanistic, legal and medical view-point. The latter was organised in October 2017 by the National Council of the Republic of Slovenia and the Human Rights Ombudsman. Both issues remain topical in the national and international debates as also reflected at the 9th Session of the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing, which held its session end of July this year.

Mr. Chairperson,

Although a lot of work still remains to be done with respect to having reliable data and statistics the already existing and increasing amount of data clearly indicates that in societies older persons face serious challenges in exercising their human rights. Raising awareness about these challenges was the motivation behind the exhibition entitled "Ageing: A society for all". The traveling exhibition has been displayed in various locations throughout 2018 with the purpose of encouraging reflection on how ageing affects a society's attitude to an individual and on whether the rights we take for granted are actually ensured for older persons. We have heard repeatedly and in many locations around the world that safeguarding of dignity and rights of older persons most often depends on the public's attitude towards old age.

At the United Nations we jointly promote and call for the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In this respect it is also our joint responsibility to strengthen the promotion and full realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for older persons. We recognize the valuable efforts by civil society in improving the situation of older persons worldwide.

Mr. Chairperson,

Irrespective of age, we should strive to improved wellbeing of every member of our societies. First and foremost this beings with providing a platform for every voice to be heard. I am honoured that I can, for the fifth consecutive session of Third Committee, welcome Slovenian youth delegate Ms Urša Svetelj, who will in her personal capacity deliver part of the statement on behalf of the Slovenian youth.

Mr. Chair, distinguished delegates and my fellow youth delegates,

it is an honour for me to be speaking today on behalf of Slovenian youth.



Unemployed or employed precariously. Addicted to social media. Unable to move out of our parents' homes. Passive, when it comes to politics. Highly educated, but lacking experience. Depressed. Burned-out. Lost in life. This are just some of the issues young people face in many corners of the world, also in Slovenia. .

Overall, Slovenian youth shows high life satisfaction and we can be proud of that. We can be grateful for our free education on all three levels, our almost non-existent gender pay gap and our right to drinking water, written down in our constitution. At the same time, lack of youth participation is truly alarming.

Even though we are often seen as passive, we are ready to participate in decision-making processes. We are ready to co-create change and we are calling for a rise of transparency, responsibility, clear accountability, less bureaucracy and more action. I believe that these changes and raise of youth participation go hand in hand and one cannot happen without the other.

I also want to touch upon the Sustainable Development Goals. An important, but often overlooked is SDG10, aiming to reduce inequality among countries worldwide. If one dinner tonight here in New York amounts to a monthly salary on the other side of the world, how can we sleep calmly at night? If we have a UN youth delegates programme and most of the delegates come from Europe, how can we feel good about it?

I believe that with a rise of global youth participation, our generation will take global equality seriously. We will not just ask ourselves, which country has the highest GDP; we will rather ask ourselves, which country does the most good for the world. If that would become the value, that drivers our society, wouldn't that be amazing?

I thank you for your attention.