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**Introduction**

Thank you and greetings to everyone present here today.

My name is Haaziq Kazi from the Ervis Foundation in India. I am speaking on behalf of the UN Major Group for Children and Youth.

**Impact of the Pandemic**

Today, no person and no place is untouched by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Human rights and intergenerational injustices have worsened, especially for those in vulnerable situations.

Although the full scope of the impact is yet to be defined, instruments such as the 2030 Agenda, Paris Climate Agreement, Sendai Framework for Disaster Risks Reduction, and Financing for Development Agenda serve as a compass to guide us towards an inclusive, sustainable, and green recovery.

We must remember that we have not only inherited this planet from our grandparents, but also borrowed it from our grandchildren.

Today, more than ever, we need to drive a generational change if we want to make the 'Decade of Action' more than just a catchy slogan. Capacity building of young people, and civil society more generally, is needed to raise awareness and localize actions.

Nations can no longer put people, planet and peace on a backseat and give a front seat to profit. There is a need to rethink the economic frameworks that underpin the current form of globalization, halting the continued exploitation of labour and ecology. Rights-based participation of critical segments of society can no longer be seen as a choice, but rather a fundamental part of the solution for our collective prosperity.

**Recommendations/Call to Action**

To galvanize efforts in the decade of action, we have the following recommendations:

- 1) At the global level, the withdrawal from international agreements jeopardizes our collective well-being. Global economic and environmental governance needs to be democratized through reformed, renewed and newly created multilateral institutions.
- 2) At the national level, around the world, democratic spaces are shrinking. Follow-up and review mechanisms must encourage active stakeholder participation and peer learning for example through parallel reports, as well as regional and local reviews.

## **Conclusion**

While the pandemic is a huge obstacle hindering progress on the SDGs, let's turn this period into an opportunity to reaffirm the universality of the SDGs and importance of defending the global commons. The greatest barrier to progress is not a lack of solutions - it is our love of models that have proven their insufficiency in the face of current realities. No matter who we are or where we come from, everyone can contribute and support one another in achieving the future we want.