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**Forum on Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law**

**Item 4: Participation of youth in sustainable development and human rights protection in specific contexts**

**Statement by Finland**

Madam/Mr. Moderator,

Finland's national implementation plan of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is being finalized. The Government has appointed a National Commission on Sustainable Development (for 2016–2019). While we have a long tradition of National Commissions on Sustainable Development, the main task of the Commission appointed this year is to integrate the 2030 Agenda into an inherent part of national efforts. Another aim is to promote the implementation of the society's commitment to sustainability. In addition to Government representatives the Commission has representation from various stakeholders in the Finnish society, including a representative of Finnish Youth Cooperation – Allianssi, which is a national service and lobbying organization for youth work. Youth organizations have likewise been invited to take part in the expert network being created for the follow-up of the national implementation plan of the 2030 Agenda.

It is our conviction that the sustainable development goals cannot be reached unless our endeavors are built on international human rights. Finland is committed to implementing the 2030 Agenda on the basis of a human rights based approach to development. In this regard, it is a key question to involve all stakeholders, including youth, in the decision-making process. We need innovative ways to do this.

To enhance the involvement of the Finnish society as a whole, we have launched a campaign called *The Finland We Want by 2050 – Society’s Commitment to Sustainable Development*, which encourages the Finnish society to participate in the discussion on social media, as well as to make their own commitments towards achieving the SDGs.

A question to the panelists: how could we further ensure that the voices of youth are heard in the implementation of the sustainable development goals, are there good examples of youth involvement through social media or other media?

Thank you.