

India – 2000

Mr. Bremley Lyngdoh

UN Youth Delegate Programme

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12. **Mr. Lyngdoh** (India), speaking as his country's first youth representative, said that more support should be given to the promotion and development of economically and environmentally sustainable livelihoods for young people, who would inherit many of the environmental, economic and social problems created over the past decades. The creation of sustainable livelihoods was an important factor in sustainable development as a whole.

13. Young people were the future leaders of their communities. Encouraging their involvement and investing in their key concerns should therefore be an urgent priority for Governments and civil society. International conferences had addressed the issue, but the resolutions emerging from them had not always been fully implemented. Young people had therefore decided to take action consistent with the commitments made by Governments. A great public gathering — the Youth Employment Summit — was to be held in the autumn of 2002, with the goal of launching a campaign of action to ensure that 500 million young adults would have productive and sustainable livelihoods by 2012.

14. Much remained to be done. With better policies and programmes in the areas of education, training and credit, young people would be better equipped to develop and sustain self-employment initiatives; and their improved skills and self-motivation would lead to greater social and economic productivity, as well as reducing the social and political problems due to youth unemployment. Since young people between 15 and 35 accounted for some 34 per cent of India's population, a national youth policy had been initiated and various programmes were being implemented to open up economic opportunities for young people and to develop their leadership qualities.

15. It would be better to speak of livelihood rather than employment since that was more in line with the reality faced by many young people in developing countries. Adaptability was the key. Governments should adopt strategies to promote self-employment and entrepreneurship, partnership with the private sector should be strengthened and the use of new information technologies to support youth employment should be encouraged. Young people themselves should be empowered to generate the solutions to youth unemployment, since they brought dedication and a sense of possibility to international planning. Youth organizations must keep up the pressure so as to forge a coherent follow-up to the commitments of Governments. He urged the Committee to embark on true partnership with young people in the international community.

