

# Netherlands – 2003

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Anna Chojnacka

## UN Youth Delegate Programme

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Youth Delegate Search: <https://youthdelegatesearch.org/netherlands-2003/>

23. **Ms. Chojnacka** (the Netherlands), speaking as a youth delegate, said that including young people in decision-making and in implementing those decisions was of increasing importance. In addition to the problems of poverty, unemployment and lack of education, the AIDS pandemic deprived many young people of their families at a young age. Moreover, young people between the ages of 15 and 25 were themselves the major group directly affected by the disease. A vast majority of youth suffered from exclusion, which meant lack of participation and access to wealth, education and jobs — in short, no hope. Since so many young people were excluded, they were experts on many of the issues that the United Nations dealt with, yet many felt that their voices were not heard in the discussion of world problems. Frustration led many young people to apathy, or even worse, to aggression and violence.

24. It was encouraging that Member States had succeeded in adopting the Millennium Development Goals, but the spirit to act on them appeared to be lacking. One reason could be that not enough people were aware of their existence, and the Millennium Development Goals campaign was thus welcome. It was also possible that the concept of “We, the peoples”, which formed the very basis of the United Nations system, had not yet been fully incorporated into global ways of thinking. Many still divided the world into “us” and “them”. It seemed that those divisions were becoming stronger, and youth should be actively involved in turning the tide. Not only could they contribute to a change in attitude, but they should also be involved in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. Their views should be heard and they should be employed as advisers, policy makers and field workers.

25. Meaningful youth participation must take place on terms set by youth themselves. Therefore, States should facilitate creation of national youth councils by providing financial support and giving such councils a voice. She also called upon States to use young people as policy advisers, especially concerning youth issues, and to include youth representatives in official delegations to important United Nations meetings.

