

# Australia – 2015

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Mr. Shea Spierings

## UN Youth Delegate Programme

Original: UN Doc. A/C.3/70/SR.4, 7 October 2015, p. 2

Youth Delegate Search: <https://youthdelegatesearch.org/australia-2015/>

4. **Mr. Spierings** (Australia), speaking as a youth delegate, said that earlier in 2015 he had travelled across Australia, consulting several thousand young Australians about the key issues and challenges facing them. They were concerned about drug and substance abuse, employment and career opportunities, racism and discrimination, mental health and gender equality, both in Australia and globally. Many had been the victims of racism and discrimination or had become trapped in drug or substance abuse in the absence of opportunities. Youth suicide was reaching epidemic proportions, particularly in indigenous communities [\*3\*] and youth homelessness was growing. However, he had also witnessed resilience, determination and a drive to participate in social and political processes. High quality, relevant education, including grass-roots community education, could solve many seemingly intractable social problems and empower young people to become agents for social change and functioning members of society. Indeed, education was the foundation of a decent life and of a peaceful, tolerant and inclusive society. The international community would therefore be unwise not to invest the huge sums needed each year to enable low and lower middle income countries to ensure universal access to pre-primary, primary and secondary education, in accordance with Goal 4 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

