



**Statement by H. E. Mr. Michal Mlynár, Permanent Representative of Slovakia to the UN Security Council Arria Formula Meeting on Youth, Peace and Security:  
*Capitalising on Intergenerational Dialogue to build and sustain peace and enhance social cohesion at community levels***

Thank you, Mr. President,

We appreciate the effort by South Africa and other co-hosts in organizing this important debate.

Allow me to highlight three key points as a reflection on recent 5 years of role of youth in peace and security.

First, **participation**. Right to participate in public affairs is not only recognized by the UDHR and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, but it has also proven to be beneficial as young people can bring different perspectives, new ideas and unconventional solutions.

Young people must be part of peace processes and negotiations and they have to be empowered to take roles within UN missions. This Council must continuously reflect on youth when establishing mission mandates, include them as briefers during its meetings, and engage them as standard partners during their country visits. Only active and systematic participation of youth is what really counts.

Second, **coordination**. We have just heard about many initiatives in different parts of the World that aim to engage, empower and create space for young people. These are often led by enthusiasts or volunteers, without proper planning, funding or support.

That is where the governments and the UN as well should step in, by developing dedicated roadmaps, creating partnerships and networks, and ensuring adequate funding for the implementation efforts. Only with effective coordination at local, national and international level, and by inclusive approach of all stakeholders, we can achieve tangible results.

My last point is on **contribution**. Nowadays, more than before, we invite young people to attend and sometimes even to speak at peace and security related efforts. Unfortunately, that is not enough.

We need to provide them with adequate space to actively contribute to those efforts, and most of all we need to start listening to what they are saying. Without young people being heard or invited to actively participate and contribute to peacebuilding and peacekeeping efforts, we cannot achieve sustainable peace, and we will fail on our promise to leave no one behind.

I thank you.