

Foreword by the Mayor of Nuremberg

Ladies and gentlemen,

A hearty welcome to all BayernMUN participants, who arrived not only from Bavaria, but from many countries around the world!

We have been supporting this format here in Nuremberg with public funds for several years now, and we do so very consciously and gladly because,

Peace, economic prosperity, social justice, tolerance - all these and many other values solely depend on how the potential of young people is mobilised and heard today as well as tomorrow.

There are currently around 1.8 billion people between the ages of ten and 24 living on our planet. Accounting for almost a quarter of the world's population; they have been the largest young generation ever. Almost ninety percent of young people live in the so-called developing countries, where they contribute the largest share of entire population.

The challenges the international community faces today are more diverse and more serious than ever: wars and conflicts are claiming lives, not only in Ukraine and the Middle East, but in many places around the world.

They are shaking the basic principles of the world order and are paralysing international cooperation. Added to this the climate crisis and environmental disasters that threaten the livelihoods of future generations. While the global wealth gap and unequal access to resources are hampering human development and fuelling social tensions. Technological developments such as the digital revolution and artificial intelligence offer new opportunities, but also entail considerable risks to which global answers must be found.

Young people and future generations are particularly affected by these challenges. All of you sitting here will spend a large part of your lives in a world for which we are setting the course today. You should therefore be entitled to participate and have a say.

However, youth participation and representation remain subpar: The UN Secretary-General's envoy for youth presented in an interview that although around half of the world's population is under 30 years old, this age group only makes up around two per cent of the world's parliamentarians. She continued: "There is no doubt that we need the innovative power, the creativity of young people and, above all, the unwavering optimism that a better world is possible for everyone."

Recent years have shown that young people are engaged - they rightly demand participation in political processes. The United Nations has also recognised involving young people is not an annoying compulsory exercise, but a necessary element of policymaking. So, a number of youth participation formats have been introduced in the meantime, such as the Youth Delegates Programme, in which the Federal Republic of Germany also participates.

I admit that the United Nations are not easy to grasp in everyday life: This is not least due to the complicated network of different bodies and sub- organisations and the power structures and decision-making mechanisms that are often difficult to understand for

outsiders. Added to this is the increasingly vocal questioning of multilateralism and the restriction of its creative power by state interests and claims to sovereignty.

It is therefore, even more important to understand the political practice of the United Nations, which is geared towards seeking consensus or compromise between - at least formally - equal states. Practising this, as is the case in the BayernMUN will certainly further your negotiation and public speaking skills as well as a convincing behaviour in doing so.

It also creates understanding for the position of the other negotiating parties and, in the best case, motivates you to greater political and social commitment or perhaps even provides you an exciting professional path.

The two topics you have chosen are of utmost important for our current discussion but at its core highly explosive - I am looking forward to the resolutions that you will adopt at the end of three hopefully stimulating and productive days!