WFWP Vienna, Austria: Side Event at CND69 - Environment For Youth Growth

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Creating A Supportive Environment For A Healthy Development Of Young People

Diplomats, international experts and representatives of youth and civil society organisations came together in a United Nations conference room to discuss one of the key challenges of our time: Protecting young people from the dangers of drugs and creating a supportive environment for their healthy development.

Maria Riehl, Head of the WFWPI Vienna Office underlined the importance of a supportive social and educational environment for young people. This is the only way young people can develop skills that help them overcome challenges and avoid risky behaviour.

Karen Peters from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime presented the importance of integrated prevention strategies that take into account social and economic risk factors. Effective prevention requires close cooperation between educational institutions, families and local communities.

Sonia Turpo, Secretary General of the WFWP -Santo Domingo, highlighted the role of values-based education. Personal development programmes could help to strengthen critical thinking, a sense of

responsibility and social skills in young people and thus have a preventive effect against crime and drug abuse.

Moriko Hori, President of the Women's Federation for World Peace International, presented initiatives to encourage young people worldwide to take responsibility in their communities.

Rogers Kasirye, head of the Ugandan organization UYDEL, reported on his work with young people in particularly disadvantaged communities and emphasized the importance of education and training programs as effective prevention measures.

Laurenc Klas IAYSP, underlined the importance of actively involving young people in the design of prevention programmes.

Father Georg Schwarz from the Cenacolo rehabilitation project explained approaches to support former drug addicts in their social reintegration.

Paul Kogi Mburu, founder and director of Sober Life International, emphasized the importance of early education and social awareness as central elements of sustainable drug prevention.

The discussion made it clear that prevention must already begin in the family and school environment. Education, the teaching of values and social skills play a decisive role in this. It was also emphasised that young people should be more involved in the development and implementation of prevention programmes.

In addition, the participants highlighted the need for close cooperation between governments, international organisations and civil society in order to develop effective long-term strategies for drug prevention and support for young people.

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