



EUROPEAN STARS

YOUNG EUROPEAN LEADERSHIP'S
OFFICIAL MAGAZINE



MESSAGE FROM THE EDITORS

Having in mind that 2022 was the European Year of Youth, the Young European Leadership wanted to do something special to mark the celebration of the youth during this year.

One of the main goals of our organisation is to give the opportunity to the European youth to have a seat at the table. We are achieving this through the delegations that we are sending to the premier youth conferences such as the Y7 and Y20 Summit, as well as the biggest climate conference - the COP.

However, we wanted to do more this year and we have started working on the European Stars Magazine project, which is the official Magazine of our organisation. We wanted to give the opportunity to European Youth to express their views on the topics that are of paramount importance to all of the young people across our continent.

We hope that you are going to enjoy the Magazine that we have prepared for you and we are looking forward to receiving more articles and opinions from you - the YOUTH in the coming months and years!

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Sustaining The Agency Of Youth In Global Climate Change And Development Policy

Damilola Ogatunde



For the first time in 27 years since the inception of the United Nations Conference on Climate Change - Conference of Parties (COP), there was a pavilion dedicated to Children and Youth at COP27. This commendable effort symbolizes an important shift in the structural composition and substance of the global conference on climate change as young people were not only represented across different countries and organizations' delegations but also contributed actively

to the outcomes and key developments of the COP.

While this achievement will continue to stand as a precedent for inclusive decision making across local, regional and international development levels, more decisive steps need to be taken to sustain the agency and inclusion of youth as neutral, vibrant and action-oriented stakeholders on crucial decision making tables where decisions affecting their future and those of the next generations

are made.

During my panel intervention at the United Kingdom Pavilion on “Stronger Together for the Climate” hosted by the British Council with support from the Africa-Europe Foundation at COP27, I emphasized the fact that the role of youth in shaping climate action solutions and decision making should go beyond the mainstream narrative of involving youth in development issues. However, it must be based

on the understanding that youths have the strength, innovation, competence and future responsibility to upscale sustainability ambitions into action.

For example, young people have the capacity to decide and redefine the market trend of sustainability in the future through the exercise of their purchasing power on the choice of goods and services they buy or patronize.

Moving forward, it is crucial to maintain the fact that the enabler of action for the inclusion of youth in decision making processes globally is international law - through its substance and institution. Therefore, it is not only a matter of ambition and necessity to include youth in decision making processes but also an obligation. Specifically, the latest United Nations Secretary General António Guterres' report titled - "Our Common Agenda" underlies the need to listen to and work with young people in crucial decision making processes. Similarly, Article VIII of the COP26's Glasgow Climate Pact emphasizes the need for collaboration and engagement of youth in designing and implementing climate action solutions at the local, regional and international levels.

However, the challenge



remains - how do we transform these objectives from proclamations into action with youth at the center of that engagement? Here are my submissions:

First, we need to move beyond consultations with youth leaders or experts to institutionalize their agency and leadership into the relevant policy frameworks at the national, regional and international levels for accelerated climate action. The creation of the new United Nations youth office by General Assembly (GA) Resolution 76/306 and the recently launched Youth Action Plan by the European Union worth over €50 million set aside to engage,

empower and connect youth with concrete climate, energy and sustainability solutions are relevant case studies in support of this submission.

Second, the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) of each State should integrate youth-led climate solutions and projects within their frameworks. This way, youths actually participate in the policy co-creation and co-implementation processes with their respective governments.

Lastly, leaders must consolidate on capacity building efforts to strengthen youth leadership and preparedness for tackling present and emerging

Times Are Changing: A Woman's Place In Diplomacy

Annelies Coessens

As a Third Culture Kid (TCK), which defines a person being raised in a culture other than their parents or the country's culture named on their passport for a significant part of their early developmental years, one would believe that diplomacy runs through my veins. My experiences as a TCK will benefit my career in diplomacy as I have gained cultural intelligence, sensitivity to inclusion and diversity, improved my interpersonal skills, have a high tolerance to ambiguity through greater adaptiveness, and developed an innate curiosity and problem-solving. Nonetheless, as a young woman emerging in diplomacy, these essential skills might not be enough in a field that has been, and remains, decidedly masculine. It has been highlighted by scholars, such as Karin Aggestam and Ann E. Towns, that one of the most apparent trends in modern diplomacy is the predominance of men and the noticeable lack of female representation in critical diplomatic and negotiating roles. For any emerging

woman in diplomacy, entering the mysterious world of foreign affairs can be scary, daunting and challenging.

Despite having more women entering the public political spheres, the statistics still show a bleak picture of inclusive and diverse political representation. Men occupy approximately 77% of the world's parliamentary seats; 90% of heads of state or governments are men, as are 82% of senior ministers (UN Women 2017). When I look at my country, men remain overrepresented within our Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFAs). According to Belgium's MFA, Belgian diplomacy 'only' has 15% of women "heads of post", which refers to women

occupying the position of ambassador, permanent representative and consul general. Nonetheless, this bleak picture is changing. More women are searching for diplomatic careers and rising in rank within diplomacy. Several MFAs are actively implementing measures to encourage female applicants and to recruit women. Over the years, we have also witnessed the importance of aiming for an inclusive representation and participation in peace negotiations. The landmark resolution of the United Nations Security Council 1325 highlighted the critical role of women have in preventing and resolving conflicts





and peace negotiations. Nevertheless, there is a need to question where the female diplomats are. The lack of women in diplomacy or security politics is not caused by their not wanting a foreign affairs career. Instead, the current gendered structures and institutional norms, rules and practices of diplomacy make it harder for women to be posted in higher positions. Masculinity and assertiveness remain rooted in diplomacy and security politics. We have been 'trained' that men are the only rational creatures suited to discuss politics and war. In comparison, women are viewed as the opposite; emotional, sensitive and fragile creatures. These stereotypes and ways of viewing the world

remain problematic and dangerous when addressing political decisions. This is not to say that women have all the answers or solutions; however, the current structure should not characterise what it means to be a woman working in foreign affairs. We need to continue to push the boundaries and acknowledge the importance of having women and non-binary people in these positions and discussions because that is the only way we can have an inclusive and diverse diplomatic representation. We know it won't be easy, but I do not believe it was meant to be easy when entering a male-dominated field. However, we want to determine our expectations rather than

having those dictated to us by society. As women engaged in diplomacy, we need to be able to express our concerns, thoughts and experiences without being judged. Instead of the exception, we ought to be the rule. We can see how the mentality of our society is evolving gradually. However, we still have a long way to go in achieving gender balance in diplomacy. A big part of achieving a better representation in diplomacy is to continue the dialogue of how crucial it is to have women. To inspire women to pursue a career in foreign affairs because people lack the support they need to dream big, especially young women at the beginning of their careers.

Internet And Society - A Healthy Optimism

Alessio Arena and Davide Dal Maso

The perspectives of ideas between analog and digital

The severe and frequent abuses caused by the extended and dynamic digital universe should not discourage the expectations of those who legitimately identify the internet as the opportunity to test and innovate in numerous branches of knowledge. Despite the apparent hurdle – for most people - of establishing a healthy and productive relationship with these technologies, there are so many possibilities for experimentation that it is legitimate and reasonable to believe in an optimistic approach. Many devices and products that have been criticized since the very beginning, just like what happens with everything that concerns video games, today are subject to a delicate but fruitful evolutionary process in the

name of experimentation and contamination with other disciplines and research areas. Just like it happened to comic strips, filmmaking, radio, and television in the past, digital portals and the broad video gaming dimension are progressively experiencing today's healthy cultural empowerment, becoming channels of dissemination and elaboration of cultural and artistic contents.

Much of what is born as entertainment turns into art, just as several examples of high culture become mere entertainment, changing communication channels and interlocutors without giving up on their cultural value.

Video games as testing centres

Speaking of video games, which are thriving and finding a new habitat within the web, it is essential to acknowledge the value of

the research carried out by some of the most famous and expert pioneers in the field. In primis, it is worth mentioning Hideo Kojima, a visionary software maker who revolutionized the very same idea of narration of video games and perfected the shapes and dimensions of this aesthetic experience.

Video games, now totally incorporated into the web, are proving to be an optimal testing channel, not only concerning the complex topic of virtual reality but also in the strictly artistic and narrative scope.

Digital as the new frontier of creativity

The digital dimension allows us to overcome, creatively, many of the limits imposed by reality, which so far could only be overstepped by human imagination and synthesized through tools offered by the arts and, partially, the sciences.

The opportunities to represent not only the reality but also everything that concerns the imaginary has grown so that a research path could encompass the analog dimension, often mistakenly considered outdated by the digital one.

Before the arrival of the computer, calculus occurred without the aid of any accurate tools. It was rich in difficulties due to the imperfection of the human mind, which, in reality, turned out to be a resource, as the error can conceal an unforeseen opportunity to research and innovate.

In this regard, it is worth mentioning the study carried out by the artist and set designer Mattia Pirandello, creator of interactive and revolutionary devices regarding performative arts.

He privileged using recyclables, combining analog technologies and a few essential digital instruments. Pirandello's machines convert the gesture of who interacts with them into sounds and lights.

These machines produce a unique, unpredictable, and irreproducible sound response depending on mass, pressure applied, and area involved.

Pirandello's innovation overturns the traditional categories of performative arts and contributes to elaborating a brand new aesthetics founded on the communication between old and more recent tools.

In terms of experimentation, the digital finds a profitable path when interacting with the analog, not interpreted as an ancestor but as an alive communicative interlocutor. Many of Social Warning's interventions addressed to

the youth focus on praising the productive possibilities of these resources rather than demonizing the risks. In terms of experimentation, the digital finds a profitable path when interacting with the analog, not interpreted as an ancestor but as an alive communicative interlocutor. Many of Social Warning's interventions addressed to the youth focus on praising the productive possibilities of these resources rather than demonizing the risks.



Nothing Shines More Than Somebody Who Starts To Focus On Themselves

Alisha Houlihan

The pandemic gave us all something to think about, giving us this year we slowly started to come out of it. I feel like it paused life a little bit, gave us some space and time to ourselves.

It gave us time to do nothing. To do everything. To sit under the sun, to watch countless Netflix, to make endless cups of tea and enjoy family walks.

A lot of people had college virtual graduations, baked banana bread and attempted home workouts.

The pandemic gave us the opportunity to realise how amazing it is to make yourself a priority.

These are the things I started doing in my life that I genuinely feel make a positive impact to you and can untimely change your life.

Try to adapt the “Tomorrow is a new day” mentality.

Mindset. Mindset. Mindset.

Relax. Things happen. We lose track of it all. We drop the ball. Things spiral. THIS IS NORMAL!

You are human and you make mistakes. You still have time to pick it all up and get back on track. If you feel like you've been in a funk, that's okay. We sometimes have to sit in our emotions and start a fresh

the next day. If you wake up the next day and let yourself stay in the same pattern as the day before, you will stick in your rut. Life happens where we simply have to set the goals to the side. But you know yourself, if you want something bad enough, you are one decision away from doing so.



Health is your wealth

The amount of benefits there are from exercising, walking, dancing in your bedroom or even just some light stretching have on your physical but more importantly, your mental health.

It alleviates symptoms such from low self-esteem, anxiety and depression.

Find your niche –Starting off small with walking, yoga stretches, dancing, rowing, cycling, weight lifting or even running – the list is endless!

Filling your body with nutritious and whole foods will leave you full for longer, fuelled up and glowing from the outside in.

- Smile more.
- Be grateful for what you already have around you.
- Any positive changes must come from the drive behind YOU - you will always stay motivated because you are the person you are doing this for.
- Do something positive for somebody else.
- Make lists.
- Own up to what you have done wrong. A



simple let go of pride and an apology can change everything.

- Laugh and make it contagious. To me, self-care and self-love is putting yourself first, not getting too caught up in other's people's lives, focus on YOU.

Self-love is setting boundaries, setting time aside to that special person in your life, the person who gets you through day in, day

out.

I know it isn't a new year yet, but it is soon approaching. Everyone starts on January 1st, start now. Every day is a chance to grow.

6 months from now, your life could be completely different when you just prioritise who you are.

Watch you glow up from within.

Y7 Summit Experience

Rosalind Skillen

Many people will already be familiar with the Group of Seven (G7). Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States form the G7, representing roughly 18% of global GDP. The European Union also has observer status at G7 meetings, and international partner countries are annually invited to participate. These

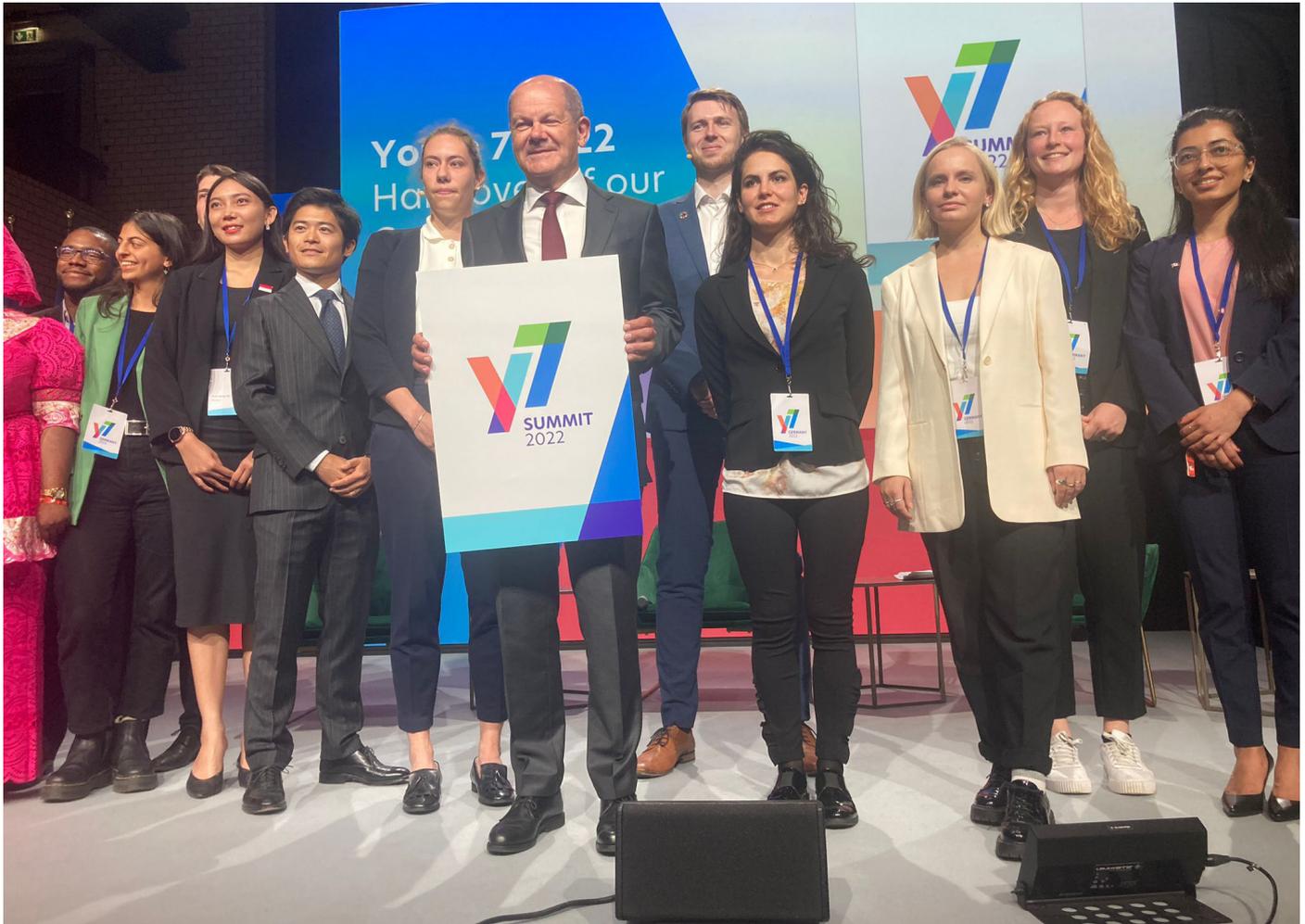
partners differ year on year, depending on which member state holds the G7 presidency. In 2022, Germany assumed presidency of the G7.

To widen public engagement and increase participation, G7 countries call on civil society to provide input into their multilateral discussions. These civil society groups – such as Business 7, Labour

7, Women's 7, Science 7 and Think 7 – have a unique role: to highlight what they think is missing from the presidential programme. Arguably, Youth 7 (Y7) is one of the most important civil society groups to G7.

Y7 is the official youth engagement group to G7, convening youth delegates from G7 member states,





the European Union, and selected partner countries. Y7 ensures meaningful youth participation: giving young people an opportunity to shape the direction of global policy, and propose solutions to geopolitical challenges.

Just as the G7 centres around an annual summit, the Y7 Summit also forms an integral part of the Y7 process. This year, Berlin hosted the Y7 Summit under German G7 presidency, and each member state selected four delegates to participate.

Young European Leadership had the privilege of selecting

the EU Delegation, and chose participants from four countries in Europe: Jessica Antonisse (Head Delegate) from the Netherlands, Josias Knöppler from Germany, Rosalind Skillen from Ireland, and Nicholas Moulrier from Greece. Each Y7 delegate had a specific area of thematic focus (or ‘track’), and the tracks included: ‘Sustainable and Green Planet’, ‘Economic Transformation’, ‘Resilience of Democracies’, and ‘Global Health and Solidarity’. Notably, this year, an additional track was added (‘Youth, Peace and Security’) because of Russia’s invasion

of Ukraine.

Before meeting in-person in Berlin, the Y7 delegates spent months in online calls: negotiating and developing a set of concrete recommendations on these topics. Online discussions were directed by track Sherpas and co-chairs, who supported and guided the delegates. Leading policy experts were also invited to contribute to these online meetings, which provided a tremendous opportunity for further learning and development.

These online meetings

provided the groundwork for the Summit itself, which took place in Berlin in May. We had determined and outlined the focus of our policy recommendations, and the aim of the Summit was to draft the Communiqué: the document summarising our demands which would be handed over to Federal Chancellor Olaf Scholz by the end of the week.

It was not easy to summarise different views and needs in a Communiqué. The word count was limited, and there was some disagreement on specific language between various delegations. However, all the delegations worked intensively and collaboratively to reach an agreement. Clear demands were formulated, presented to Chancellor Scholz, and published.

Although drafting the Communiqué was the main goal of the Summit, delegates were also able to benefit throughout the week from workshops and capacity-building across a range of themes. There was also keynote speeches from ministers, like Ms. Bettina Bundszus, panel discussions with policy-makers, like Family Minister Lisa Paus, and high-level exchanges with world leaders, like Chancellor Scholz.

There were also organised visits to the political heart of Berlin, including the Bundestag and Federal Foreign Office. These excursions made the programme varied and diverse, while creating meaningful opportunities for the delegates to connect and forge friendships. Taking time to understand different peoples' worldviews was critical to the success of our negotiations. This created a culture of trust and respect among delegates. Trust and

respect enabled powerful ideas and bold visions emerge.

While the Y7 Summit is over, the work is far from finished. After the Summit, youth delegates have been engaging in advocacy, lobbying decision-makers to elevate their level of ambition. For example, the EU Delegation met in Brussels during European Development Days to meet with MEPs, and deliver the Communiqué to G7 Sherpa





Frédéric Bernard. These opportunities for exchange and dialogue proved invaluable. It maximised the level of engagement and interaction, and even meant that we could receive some feedback on our policy recommendations. The G7 Summit in Elmau is also behind us, but Germany still has six months remaining of their G7 Presidency. The EU Delegation are therefore determined to use these months to continue our conversations, advocacy and engagement.

Representing young people across the European Union

– particularly during the European Year of Youth – has been an enormous privilege: not one we hold lightly.

Young people are living through a period of extraordinary change and complexity. We face many interlocking challenges. Economic, environmental and social concerns place question marks over our futures. The Y7 process, then, provided a powerful space to imagine, and more importantly, to begin shaping the futures that we imagined and articulated.

Being part of the EU delegation offered us the

flexibility and freedom to push beyond the limitations of what we often think is possible. To draft bold and ambitious recommendations. To deepen our understanding of policy-making and negotiating. To participate in meaningful political discussions.

Most importantly, it allowed us to cultivate strong partnerships and deep friendships.

We know that we do not have all the answers to today's problems – but as a delegation, we will make sense of them together.

My Y20 Journey: From Zoom-Calls On The Streets Of Avignon To Conference Centres In Indonesia

Jonas Wilcks

My Y20 experience started with a plethora of online calls and negotiations and culminated in signing and handing over a document that 100 youth from across the world had laboured over for the better part of six months in the historic Bandung conference centre in Indonesia. In short Y20 is one of the engagement groups for the G20, which publish a communique prior to the leaders summit and lobby for the inclusion of youth perspectives into the G20 process and national- (and EU) level policy.

However, the real strength of Y20 lies not in the output, but in the process.

The Y20 process, beginning in February 2022, allowed each participant to challenge their views and learn from peers across the world.

In particular, I grew close with delegates from South Africa and Indonesia, which allowed me to scrutinise my own perspectives, through

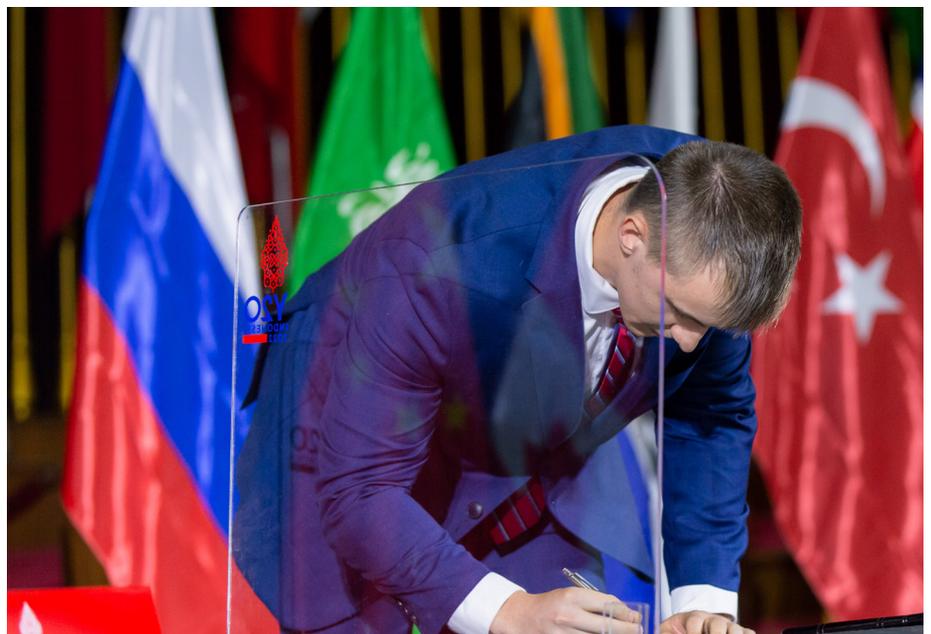
their experiences. For the first five months of the process all of this occurred online with almost weekly zoom calls.

Being based in Europe, this generally meant calls in the middle of the day, and forced some creative locations, such as joining a call from a square in Avignon, surrounded by pigeons and papal tourists.

After submitting an initial policy proposal on digital transformation, my policy area, and attempting to encapsulate the wealth

and breadth of EU youth opinion on this topic, we quickly as a forum on digital transformation of around 23 people (20 G20 members and 3 observers, the UAE, the WTO, and ASEAN) turned to reaching a consensus on our key priorities. This was easier said than done and took us 4 months.

After months of coworking virtually, we finally met in Jakarta on the 17th of July. Months of working together, and socialising, online could finally be substituted by in-person chatter. We spent the





first few days getting to know each other, being subject to kindness by the Indonesian hosts that exceeded any expectations. We saw the key attractions in Jakarta, before heading to the real location of the actual negotiations of the Summit – Bandung, the capital of West Java, placed a few hours drive east of Jakarta.

Here we hastily entered final negotiations, and then turned to negotiations only between the head delegates on general issues of the communique, the preamble and a cross-cutting proposal on health,

borne out of a desire to deliver priorities from youth from the experience of the COVID-19 pandemic. After much deliberation, on average sleeping three hours a night for a week, I stumbled into the plenary session on the morning of the 22nd of July, together with the rest of the EU delegation.

Here we signed the communique, and the EU, definitely not alphabetically, was last in the order so I had the privilege of handing over the communique to the Indonesian organising committee.

After the initial jubilation had subsided, an immense feeling of exhaustion, but also gratitude towards my fellow EU delegates, delegates from across the globe and the organisers. The opportunities granted through this experience, whether substantive or more eventful such as meeting and greeting with governors, imams and bishops, are truly unique.

Terima kasih! [thank you]

