

4th Sustainable Development Goals Youth Summer Camp

**Closing remarks by
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Dear Young Scholars, ladies and gentlemen,

The fourth Sustainable Development Goals Youth Summer Camp is coming to its end.

In the past two weeks, we learned much about the current status of the SDGs implementation, and the efforts made to achieve Agenda 2030. As you are aware now, the SDGs cover a vast range of social, economic and environmental issues — as diverse as inequalities, climate action, consumption and production, decent work and economic growth, to name a few.

The youth are the key to sustainable development and their participation is needed more than ever for an effective implementation of the SDGs. I hope you now have a better idea of how you fit into this movement, striving for global sustainable development in the Decade of Action.

This year's camp was particularly special as the participants were able to learn about and apply the design thinking methodology to solve real problems. The design thinking approach helped you empathizing with people and their everyday life issues, which are, in fact, all SDGs-related issues, and come up with concrete solutions for concrete problems.

During the last few days, we could witness you discovering and also engaging with the SDGs. We watched your captivating presentations that showed your deep reflection on sustainable development. Throughout our journey, I was very impressed by your energy, proactivity and inventiveness, to solve problems, but also to appropriate the tools that were transmitted to you during the training.

It makes me feel very optimistic to see young people like you, with such enthusiasm and passion for the SDGs.

The final presentations covered urgent challenges that this country and the rest of the world are facing, such as energy, poverty, education, domestic violence,

plastic wastes, and over-tourism, and proved that the young generation has the ability to contribute to solve these problems. I would therefore like to thank all of you for your participation and for strengthening our faith in you, the young generation.

I would also like to convey my sincere appreciation to **Yonsei University** and the **Korea Environment Corporation** for their contribution and support to this event. We were able to think more deeply about SDGs through the design thinking approach with the help of the **Design Factory Korea team** from **Yonsei University**.

My special thanks also go to **Mr. Wai Kit Si-Tou** (Jackie), **Mr. Seunghoon Lee**, **Mr. Daniel Kim**, and **Mr. Youjin Nam** for their informative presentations. Without your contribution, this year's summer camp would not have been a success.

Once again, I'd like to thank the judges for their fair appreciation of the projects that were presented by the different groups. Last, but not least, I would like to thank the UNOSD's staff and interns who made this fully virtual summer camp happen in this exceptional context we are currently living in.

Although we explored sustainable development from diverse perspectives, challenges to the achievement of the SDGs still remain.

The UN Office for Sustainable Development will continue to carry out its leading role in educating youth and building capacity of, and partner with government officials, experts, academics, and members of the civil society.

UNOSD will host various events in the following months, including online webinars for the International Mayors Forum, and the Sustainable Development Transition Forum in October.

To train future leaders, our Office will also keep hosting the Summer Camp for young leaders as well. So, we urge you, the participants, to share your experience with your fellow students, and encourage them to participate in the implementation of the SDGs.

It is now time to say goodbye. I want to thank all the participants again for your energy and the reassurance you have given us: Change is coming, and it is coming because of you and through you. I encourage you to take everything you learned

here to your daily and professional lives, and to inspire and motivate other people around you to do the same.

Don't be discouraged when the road gets rough and bumpy; and always move forward with the utmost determination. It won't be easy to achieve the SDGs, but not achieving them is simply not even an option.

And achieving the SDGs without you, will simply not be feasible. The older generation believes in you, the young generation counts on you, and the future generation needs you.

I wish you all the best of luck in your future endeavours.

Thank you.