

## CHARTER OF YOUTH FOR DRUG-FREE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY

WE, YOUNG PEOPLE OF THE WORLD CHAMPION THE FOLLOWING PRINCIPLES:

- **WORLD OF PEACE AND NON-VIOLENCE:**

Drugs create and encourage violence and exploitation of people. The income from drug sales is the driving fuel behind terrorism, crime, prostitution and people trafficking. Drugs jeopardise your personal rights for peace, democracy, solidarity, justice, safe environment, and financial safety.

- **SAFE ENVIRONMENT WHICH MEETS EXPECTATIONS:**

You have the right to safe environment without drug dealers and those who aid and protect them. Young people need room for gathering in which they will be able to be creative and practice sports.

- **PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND ACHIEVEMENTS:**

Young people most often resort to drugs because they feel their lives are empty and pointless, they feel useless, they lack self-confidence and positive motivation, but also because they want to escape violence, hardships and challenges of everyday life. This is why it is very important to find the right way to become an adult; to win the respect and love of others, to win support and respect for your values, dreams and plans.

- **RIGHT TO INFORMATION:**

Drugs mean denial of life; they are disastrous for your development; they devastate your physical and mental health. You have the right to access information on harmful effects of drugs, at school and out of school.

- **MUTUAL HELP AND SUPPORT:**

Drugs destroy mind and awareness of one's own behaviour and they control lives of addicts. Drugs are the utmost threat to personal freedom and friendship between young people. You have the right to control your own life and the obligation to help others and defend the rights of the youngest and endangered people.

- **AID TO ADDICTS:**

Drug addicts are very exposed to severe and incurable diseases, such as AIDS and hepatitis. Always bear in mind that addicts have the same rights as other people and that they cannot be rejected because of the state they are in. They need your help because most often they have no one to rely on. They are lonely – drugs have put an end to their social contacts and friendships.

- **RESPONSIBILITY OF ELDERS:**  
Parents and teachers should set an example for young people. It is completely natural to have the need to talk to them openly about everything, including drugs. You have the right to their advice and protection and they are obliged to provide that to you.
- **RESPONSIBILITY OF MEDIA:**  
Media have prominent role in our lives and this should be utilised in our commitment to objective information and participation in prevention of taking drugs.
- **FREEDOM TO REFUSE:**  
Many of your peers have tried drugs just because their friends had taken drugs before them. You have the right to refuse. Be sure your friends are going to respect you even more because of that. Fight for your attitude!
- **INTERNATIONAL FIGHT AGAINST DRUG PRODUCERS AND TRAFFICKERS:**  
By selling drugs, organised crime devastates health and lives of young people in order to boost its already high income. You have the right to demand from our state to join the fight against drug dealers and to impose severe legislation on those who participate in drug trafficking.
- **INCLUSION OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN DECISION-MAKING:**  
Drugs do not endanger only your generation but also the future generations, the children who have not been born yet. If you wish to protect yourself and the young people in your environment, insist on your right to participate in the fight against drugs on all levels of the society.

### FOR DRUG-FREE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY

You have not created 20<sup>th</sup> century in which you were born, yet you can help to have 21<sup>st</sup> century become a place without drugs.

If you really want this:

- fight against drugs
- do not take drugs and become a role model to others
- influence your peers against taking drugs
- get informed and share the information on harmful effects of drugs with others
- warn and protect your friends, especially those youngest ones
- offer help to whoever needs it, so no one is left without hope
- assume responsibility and work on solving problems of young people
- promote courage, feeling of responsibility and your own personality

- do not reject those who take drugs and those who are drug addicts – help them
- defend your rights
- build a better world and a better future.
- fight for drug-free 21<sup>st</sup> century, for drug-free schools and streets, for young people who do not need drugs!

This charter has been prepared through contribution of thousands of young people from over 80 countries worldwide. The activity was coordinated by the French Humanitarian Organisation, *Environment without Borders*, aided by UNESCO and the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP).

The charter was adopted at the UNESCO conference held in Paris in February 1998.