

Statement by H.E. Ambassador Katalin Bogyay

at the event on „*Promoting Mental Health and Well-being for Youth: A Strategy for Social Integration and Poverty Eradication*”

on the margins of the Committee for Social Development

7 February 2017, 13:15h

Your Excellences, Distinguished Colleagues, Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to thank the panellists for sharing their inspiring thoughts on this important and timely topic. We all know that physical and mental well-being is not only a question of economic or social indicators. Mental health and balance is essential for our ability to learn, work and contribute actively to social and economic life.

Persons with mental health problems are often **the most excluded groups** in society, facing stigmatisation, discrimination and exclusion. **Youth**, in this regard, are especially vulnerable, as mental health disorders, such as chronic anxiety or depression, are prone to develop during adolescence and early adulthood. Promoting mental health, therefore, is key in their empowerment. We must stand up together against discrimination and exclusion, which are major barriers to health, welfare and a fair quality of life.

The **Declaration of Agenda 2030** enshrines that health care and social protection should go hand in hand, in order to ensure for physical, mental and social well-being. The Agenda sets out the need for universal health coverage and access to quality health care, prevention and treatment of non-communicable diseases, including behavioural, developmental and neurological disorders, which constitute major challenges for sustainable development. SDG 3.4 promotes mental health and well-being as a way to reduce by one third premature mortality from non-communicable diseases.

Within the European Union, depression and anxiety are the two leading mental health problems. Joint EU action is complementing national policies to improve public health, prevent physical and mental illness and diseases. As part of the **Europe 2020 strategy**, Hungary pays special attention to people with mental health problems, which requires partnership between health and other social sectors: first and foremost housing, employment and quality education.

We are proud of **Hungary's achievements** in discovery research in neuropsychiatry concerning depression, anxiety and schizophrenia. Our **National Public Health Program** targets the prevention of mental disorders with specific policy efforts, especially on depression and suicide prevention. Strengthening the mental health of children and adolescents is a top priority in our **National Program on Child Health**. The **Better Health for Women Program** aims at increasing awareness of women's physical and mental health already as of 1998, and focuses particularly on the health of young women between ages of 15-24 years.

The Hungarian Government has introduced a programme for **mandatory daily physical education (PE)** in schools. From 2015-2016 onwards, students in all year groups receive compulsorily daily PE in the Hungarian primary and secondary education system. Besides the traditional sports and recreational content of PE, they focus more on **health objectives** and on the **cognitive content**, enabling mental and social development through motor activities.

Supporting the efforts of the UN and the World Health Organisation Hungary is committed to build solutions facing the challenges of mental health in Europe and beyond. I am convinced that this is a key contribution to achieving sustainable development in the long term. I thank you for your kind attention!