

**Opening Session**  
**Mr. Mohammed Badran**  
**Syrian Volunteers in the Netherlands (SYVNL)**  
**Netherlands / Syrian Arab Republic**

I am talking today on behalf of every young person in this world who has fled their homes.

In preparing for this summit, I received so many messages from refugees, desperate to be heard. Reading them all out would take too long. But there is one message that I have to share. It's a message from Zoher, a Palestinian Syrian, like me. Stateless and stuck. With no possibility of escaping the war. He said: "We are living on the edge of hell. We have been waiting for so long, for the day that the world would hear our voice. I hope it is today."

From the time I arrived in the Netherlands, I saw how even Europe is struggling with the growing number of refugees. There is intense public fear about refugees. As young refugees, we face this anger and fear every day. Doors are closed to us. Higher education is denied to us. We are often dismissed, not taken seriously and underestimated. But this will not stop us from taking action.

Crisis after crisis, conference after conference, It seems inaction is the only thing that the international community can agree on. If today world leaders are unable to find a solution for the Syrian crisis and the refugee crisis, then this summit is no different from the rest.

However, and as Eleanor Roosevelt once said: "it's better to light a candle than curse the darkness". We, young refugees, have dedicated our youthful energy to help in our own communities, in our new homes and the ones we have left behind. We have established a new NGO, Syrian Volunteers in the Netherlands (SYVNL). An organization that I am representing here today that in less than two years, we have grown a network of more than 600 volunteers ready to give back and to grow.

Let's hope that today's summit will be different and the international community is going to share responsibility for refugees and agrees upon action:

- To end the violence now
- To guarantee safe routes for all refugees
- To empower refugees to lead projects for refugees
- To provide access to higher education for all young refugees, and to stop putting their lives on hold.

In our small way, refugees are already taking action; we want world leaders to do the same.