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**Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and
the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly:
priority theme: promoting empowerment of people in achieving
poverty eradication, social integration and full employment
and decent work for all**

Statement submitted by Service and Research Institute on Family and Children, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.



Statement

Poverty is a human problem. It is a hydra-headed social plague that paralyses families and keeps them from fulfilling their normal functions and roles in the care and nurturing of its members, especially women and children. Poverty hampers the overall development of society and undermines any form of social progress.

In the context of the fifty-second session of the Commission for Social Development on promoting empowerment of people in achieving poverty eradication, social integration and full employment and decent work for all, the present statement is submitted by Service and Research Institute on Family and Children and focuses on:

- (a) The interconnection between family health and social health;
- (b) The interconnection between family poverty and family breakdown;
- (c) The problem of family breakdown leading to social fragmentation.

These interconnected factors create new systems of poverty with consequences for the health, education and well-being of all its members, especially women and children. Because of enmeshed interconnections, families are trapped by circumstances, often lack the willpower to resist and easily become prey to social drift, which can lead to addiction, violence, mental illness, corruption, theft and even suicide. Such a cause and effect phenomenon is cyclic, takes its toll on human life, wastes human resources and impedes any form of development.

Two recent national consultations on human development goals and poverty eradication, organized by Service and Research Institute on Family and Children and held in New Delhi and Chennai, India, recognized the need for a firm and effective policy framework on families in poverty and the need for collaborative engagement among and from various stakeholders to aid in eradicating poverty, restoring, humanizing and rehabilitating these victims from social isolation and enabling them to become integrated citizens in society. Unless it is met on a war footing, social isolation will continue and unemployment will persist, profoundly affecting current family systems and creating intergenerational ramifications, wider social implications and oftentimes irreversible consequences.

At its recent global conference, entitled “In defense of the family: family, children and culture” held in Bangkok, Service and Research Institute on Family and Children adopted a declaration recognizing the urgent need for clearly framed and formulated policies and direct strategies by Governments and other stakeholders for including and strengthening the foundation of the institution of family. The statement further declared that such strategies and policies were indispensable and must be dealt with as a priority. Therefore, the key issues of dialogue, networking, advocacy, capacity-building, policy influencing, research and information dissemination resulting in and leading up to family-centric policies were some of the key factors that needed urgent attention.

Service and Research Institute on Family and Children suggests the way forward and reiterates the need for Governments and concerned stakeholders to collaborate with each other towards developing long-term strategies for the economic independence of families and its members, especially youth, so that they are not easily lured by or tempted towards radicalization and/or a culture of

violence. In the same vein, members of all religions must work towards harmony and respective national systems of integration. There is therefore a conscious need to revise, rebuild, provide and ensure adequate support systems for families in every country for health, education, social services, religious ceremonies, the protection of culture and employment. These things are critical for families so that they can face up to any pressure and constructively contribute to their own development and that of their countries.

There is a need and urgency on a global scale for countries to request industries, associations, chambers of commerce and corporations to contribute to measures for the advancement of family welfare by building robust corporate social responsibility programmes and by promoting welfare policies that create a work-life balance for their employees, thereby contributing to building up and sustaining community life systems through strategies and philanthropic measures.

Non-governmental organizations can be called upon to play an effective role in dealing with research, training and capacity-building, advocacy and information dissemination, which can contribute empirical ground work that can be constructively used by Governments and donor agencies for policymaking exercises for “family centric” poverty eradication projects in countries. In this task of poverty eradication, non-family institutions have a critical role in creating caring environments for families and children as a proactive approach that is inclusive and broadly based.

Religious groups and persons can also play an effective role in providing therapeutic interventions, thereby reducing forms of antisocial behaviour and constructively enabling families to emerge from poverty. Such an emergence will enable families to fulfil their role in the ever-changing social environments of commerce and competition and thereby build a base for sustainability, strong family cohesion, security and national identity.

Service and Research Institute on Family and Children humbly calls upon the global community, and Governments in particular, to establish a “Ministry of Family” in their governance, and calls upon the United Nations to establish a “Charter of Rights on the Family”. Such actions will help establish a dialogue, a peaceful process and a suitable framework for addressing the following issues:

- (a) Family relationships and values;
- (b) Improving family access to goods, services and infrastructure;
- (c) Expanding financial resources for poor families;
- (d) Empowering families for nation building;
- (e) Developing family-friendly institutions and agencies;
- (f) Fostering a family-friendly environment;
- (g) Coordinating and providing effective synergy for various institutions serving the family;
- (h) Strengthening policy and research institutes and foundations of service to families;
- (i) Mobilizing increased resources for services to families;

(j) Engaging corporate social responsibility frameworks, other global players and multinational institutions to become stakeholders in the task of alleviating poverty.

It is the firm belief of Service and Research Institute on Family and Children that such a coordinated approach will create synergistic momentum and will no doubt foster the empowerment of people in achieving poverty eradication, social integration and full employment and decent work for all, as recognized and embedded in the Millennium Development Goals and the post-2015 development agenda.

Note: The statement is endorsed by the following non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Council: International Youth and Student Movement for the United Nations.