



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
1 December 2016

Original: English

Commission for Social Development

Fifty-fifth session

1-10 February 2017

**Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and
the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly:
priority theme: strategies for the eradication of poverty to
achieve sustainable development for all**

Statement submitted by Fédération européenne des centres de recherche et d'information sur le sectarisme, 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.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.



Statement

Those who are victims of cults are in serious need of strategies for the eradication of poverty and to fulfil the promise of the 2030 Agenda — To Leave No One Behind.

Factors that contribute to the induced and unnecessary causes of poverty amongst sect or cult members are a real human tragedy. The Commission for Social Development has developed resources and policies for decades that can be quite useful for cult victims and their communities. The real challenges that prevent this application of accomplishments are rooted in the nature of authoritarian and totalitarian structure of cults and their leadership policies. Destructive cults and extremist terrorist religious organisations cause poverty as economic inequities oppress and enslave many of their followers. This is especially true for women, females and children who work in extreme poverty due to their perceived status as lesser beings. Child and sex abuse is all too common and goes completely unreported due to the intensive and indoctrinated fear of the outside world. Young females are subjected to illegal human sex trafficking driven by crass economic greed by extremist terrorists and other notorious cults. Many of these women live in preventable extreme poverty due to totalitarian control with abusive violence and are deprived of the most basic of human rights.

The accomplishment of the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action is a vital tool to address some of these matters. We at the Federation of Centres of Research and Information on Sectarianism can network with the 55th session of the Commission for Social Development and other relevant Non-Government Organisations with civil society actors with common interests. It is important to develop an integrated approach to social development and address inequities or critical deficiencies.

The International Day for the Eradication of Poverty this year established a universal vision for peace, prosperity and dignity for all people on a healthy planet. In order to advance these noble ideals it is important to examine the rights of individual cult victims and access to exercise these rights. It is essential to be informed of those rights and that is the challenge before us. The Federation of Centers of Research and Information on Sectarianism works with former cult victims and their families only to encounter the lack of truly informed consent due to cult policies and practice that restrict legal rights information. Many destructive groups deny access to secular helping agencies due to false information disseminated by cult leadership to interfere with human rights information for all. It is vital for the 55th Session of the Commission for Social Development and all those attending to be updated with background information regarding denied human rights to cult members linked to poverty.

In order to develop strategies to achieve real accomplishments for the future and especially toward the 2030 Agenda it is important to identify what is interfering with preventable poverty and decent work for all cult members. It should be noted that some poverty is caused by marginalisation and social exclusion. The us versus them adversarial worldview with cult members is generated by group indoctrination methods that make sect members not trust outside worldly enemy institutions. This exclusion mentality or mind set protects cult leadership and policy from transparent

financial accountability and abuse of individual human rights. Some new small unknown cults that began in the 1960's and now are well into the twenty-first century are multi-million and even billions of dollar organisations on the backs of impoverished cult labour and most have no retirement benefits for being lifelong career cult members. The Federation of Centres of Research and Information on Sectarianism work with communication concerning cult victims and their families allowing us the ability to play a vital role with the Commission for Social Development by networking our mutual resources for empowering human rights and reducing poverty by decent work for all. The human potential of cult members is under recognised with seriously gifted and talented resource. Academic studies have demonstrated that most cult members are above average in intelligence and express idealistic ideals for a better world and self-improvement.

On October 17 2016 the Secretary General of the United Nations on highlighted that it is the duty of all Governments and societies to address systemic socio-economic inequalities and facilitate the engagement of all people living in extreme poverty so they can help themselves. Governments can have a crucial role in the inclusion relationship that is needed. Communication channels should be clear so legal venues with qualified personnel are able to assist those who are most needy in this arena. Humiliation and exclusion prevent sect victims who really need understanding and support to access these resources. Governments are also in need educational programs and with qualified specialists the Federation of Centres of Research and Information on Sectarianism is equip for those who need such education.

Inclusion to participation is a critical factor for improving and leading toward ending poverty in all its forms. It is important to break down barriers of poverty and exclusion that plague so many including extremist terrorist families and sect organisations. The enforced dependency factor enslaves cult victims, interfering with options to escape their highly restricted world. Options need to be restored and the Commission for Social Development can play a vital role in restoring truly informed human rights and legal options to those who need them now.

There are social protection programs depending on the jurisdiction of cult victims and resource access is vital to those who need it. The 55th Session of the Commission for Social Development and the Federation of Centres of Research and Information on Sectarianism have the ability to network concerning these social protection programs where human rights have been violated. Reporting procedures need to be specified and refined when addressing cult afflicted families and communities. Re-employment resources with technical networking could really tap into a labour effort with individuals who have lived a sacrificial lifestyle with poverty resources. These highly motivated individuals who need assistance out of poverty have the potential of being productive members of free and open democratic societies with contributions for a better world.

Growing transparencies and accountability by the government and other strategic stakeholders make resources more accessible to those who need quality education on how to receive them. This can go a long way for cult afflicted members to recovery and get back on their feet to be fully self-supporting and invest in career paths toward a brighter future. A more literate citizenry will emerge as a counter voice to casualties that cannot imagine a way out of their poverty thus

providing hope where it was lacking before. Human capital formation can move toward potential poverty eradication with networking support resources when utilised correctly.

Primary education for isolated religious extremist children and young sect females especially can make low achieving students outside of their closed cult environments into higher achieving classmates when applied appropriately. This educational foundation including direct instruction for children's actual learning levels and outcomes is vital for future gainful employment and the skill sets required for work in the 21st century. There is a need for more secure and sustainable livelihoods. Cult victims struggle with complex, interrelated challenges, not just livelihood issues. Evaluation of innovative programs and the use concrete evidence in the decision-making process is essential. Good health is also a serious foundation for gainful employment where sound nutrition is lacking in many cults due to financial exploitation factors. Real nutrition education and resources will help remove a major impairment toward a real source of poverty in sects globally.
