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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: strategies for the eradication of poverty to achieve sustainable development for all

Statement submitted by the Restoration World Outreach Ministries, 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

Restoration World Outreach Ministries Incorporated (RWOMI), is an organization dedicated to the social development of all, particularly the most vulnerable and the poor among us.

We make this statement confident in the belief that the strategies we outline can address the internationally agreed sustainable development goals (SDGs), and in particular, SDG 1 which is at the core of today's deliberation. Our organization sees poverty as a state of mind and that is why we carry out seminars and empower the people to utilize what they have to get what they want, regardless of the little they may have.

It is widely accepted that addressing the root causes of poverty and inequality requires a mix of policy instruments to ensure more equitable opportunities and outcomes for people at the macro level. This includes a combination of strategies with respect to income distribution, fiscal policies, employment and labour market policies, social policies (especially universal provision of good quality education, health and social protection mechanisms), access to infrastructure and basic amenities, and special attention to particularly disadvantaged groups. Tackling these inter-related issues is the only way to ensure achievement of sustainable development for all, as envisaged under Agenda 2030.

We cannot overstate how important it is for us all to genuinely engage in action toward poverty eradication. As we reflect in the goal of ensuring that no one is left behind, we are convinced that there is need for more execution and less talk.

At the micro level, our organization has embarked on a Feed the Homeless program. We serve and continue to serve anyone in need who comes forward to receive the help being extended. Our feeding programs and clothing drives are not specific to any sect. However, where communities or countries in which we serve are in dire need, our efforts are intensified and specific. We feed over 1000 homeless persons each week and continue to embark on clothing and shoes collection drives for them. Additionally, we assist the homeless to transition back into the society, by supporting their job hunting endeavours. We have an on-site expert to assist them with job searches and completing job applications.

We also host continual Community Empowerment Seminars in various communities in the United States.

We continue to serve communities in South America, the Caribbean, India and several African countries and have established Water Bore Wells and primary-level education schools for children who cannot afford to go to school. We are raising up Volunteer Youth Ambassadors who will focus on sustainable development in order to achieve the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

Our teams go into other countries to teach poor communities how to utilize the resources they would normally consider waste, in order to achieve sustainable development.

We have embarked on another major program to assist persons in several communities who have a vision for self reliance and sustainable development but do not know how to execute it, to bring it to the fore and have it materialize.

Food and water will be the focus of every nation and it is critical for each country to have an excellent contingency plan if we are going to break the ack of poverty.

People often say they do not have the resources to start a business. However, they may something in their possession that can allow that, but they do not know how to utilize it. Today's cell phone, for example, can be someone's virtual office. Thus, empowerment and self-reliance are keys to reducing poverty.

While the threat of poverty growth seems imminent, as a result of companies now looking to hire robots in addition to the already fast-paced technological changes, the future may seem daunting in that respect. Technological changes today are so rapid that the introduction of new technology is taking much shorter times. The audio cassette player was invented in 1962 and patented in the United States in 1964. The first basic Compact Disc was invented in 1989 and by the early 2000s, the CD player had largely replaced the audio cassette player as standard equipment in new automobiles. Today, we now have Bluetooth, digital downloading, flash drives, apps and many other things.

The mind is one of the most important parts of any human being as that is where success or failure begins. Thus, there needs to be a new way of thinking in everyone regarding the eradication of poverty. If we envision poverty, joblessness and hopelessness daily, then that will be the only outcome. Each of us has the ability to think of great ideas, solutions and inventions. All great inventions come from a thought which, when executed with the faith to support it, brings manifestation. Italian physicist Alessandro Volta, is credited with inventing the battery. Volta invented the first electrochemical battery cell using zinc, copper and an electrolyte - sulfuric acid and water. George Washington Carver made 100 different products from the peanut, including dyes, plastic and gasoline. Who knows, if there is not a cure for cancer or diabetes within the peanut husks?

Every nation has resources of some kind that has the potential to reduce poverty and create jobs. All that is needed is empowerment through knowledge, and funding.

The following strategies will support the achievement of poverty eradication, while contributing to sustainable development for all:

- Nations need to actively engage in intensive food security programs at both national and individual levels. This extends to protecting marine life, including fish stocks which, given environmental and other threats to the oceans, means the world food supply will diminish even further as world population grows.
- There is also a need to carry out intensive 'river-training' activities and build protective walls and more dams for safe communities, thereby assisting poor people living in low-lying areas, including old riverbeds.
- Lower insurance rates for second-hand vehicles to grant more access to personal transportation in low income communities.
- We call for a change in the tax system so that the poor pays lower tax rates using an Assessment Scale.
- Implement a no-tax policy for small businesses for the first three years, to encourage business start-ups among the poor.
- The removal of taxes on badly needed medical equipment and increase of Mobile Clinics in rural areas, particularly poorer communities.
- Provide grants for start-ups, self-reliance programs and training for the poorest of the poor.
- Give more support for farming, not just promote it as a viable means of income. Train those in poverty-stricken nations to improve their farming

methods and output; thus, increasing productivity and establish a market for the produce.

- Coordinate with churches and other non-governmental organisations to provide support in their various areas of expertise.
- Support the development of micro-industries such as plant nurseries to grow flowers; or water purification plants to produce water for sale, thereby creating employment.

Governments and other stakeholders should promote more health fairs with the participation of volunteer medical personnel to attend to the poorest among us.

There is much more we can do for the poor, particularly if we want the next generation to rise to meet the challenges, and overcome them for the growth and sustainable development of our respective nations.

We support the hosting of national sensitization seminars where representatives from government agencies and civil society organization can educate the public about poverty, its root causes and possible solutions. All strategies discussed should offer opportunities for poor communities such as job opportunities and monetary assistance for basic needs.

To address the challenge of data limitations, more case workers should conduct fact finding missions in rural areas and document community needs. Where monetary assistance can be extended, this should be granted to everyone living below the poverty line. We envision an ambitious 4-year assistance program, to be complemented with follow-up seminars to observe the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats of the program and to measure its success.

There are numerous suggestions on accomplishing poverty eradication at the micro and macro levels. Like others attending this forum, we recognize that poverty eradication in pursuit of sustainable development for all is an ambitious goal. However, the lessons learned from previous goals and targets set by the world community renders this mandate achievable if indeed there is real commitment to realize zero poverty by 2030.
