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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 Yayasan Cinta Anak Bangsa (YCAB), 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

Youth Development to Achieve Sustainability and Eradicate Poverty

Eradicating poverty is at the core of achieving a sustainable development for all. Although the United Nations Millennium Development Goals and the Sustainable Development Goals have driven organizations to take more action against poverty, there are still more than 700 million people living below the international poverty line of \$1.90 a day. Especially for a developing country such as Indonesia, poverty remains a widespread issue throughout the years. Yayasan Cinta Anak Bangsa (YCAB) Foundation, which translates to “loving the nation’s children,” strives to tackle poverty by focusing on youth development. Our vision aims for marginalized youths to achieve economic independence and a sustainable future through education. YCAB’s uniqueness — our premise of change — derives from our business model of mission driven micro finance, where education becomes a weapon to break the poverty cycle. Since 1999, our programs have reached more than 3.3 million youths living in poverty.

With education as an umbrella theme, YCAB Foundation implements three main programs: a healthy lifestyle promotion, basic and vocational education and economic empowerment.

The first program is on healthy lifestyle and life skills training, primarily for youths in secondary schools. Through this training, youths can make better decisions and attain new attitudes and lifestyle. Aside from certified counsellors, the youths themselves are also given the chance to educate and reach out to their fellow peers, building trust and a sense of unity within the community. From 1999 to 2017, the program has reached 2,831,920 youths across 26 provinces and 77 cities in Indonesia.

The second program focuses on two aspects: basic education and vocational training. YCAB Foundation currently has 55 learning centres across 16 provinces in Indonesia, providing basic education and skill advancement courses to underprivileged youths and school dropouts. With a low cost of \$1 per month, students are offered the equivalence of elementary, junior and senior high school levels of education. Additionally, the program includes English literacy and digital courses, as well as vocational training. The vocational training caters to the service and creative industries such as “batik” making, motorcycle mechanic, electronics repair, sewing and beauty skills. Since 2003, more than 45,615 underprivileged youths in Indonesia have received our basic or vocational education program. We believe that this kind of education will enable them to be employed and be financially independent, thus achieving true independence in sustainable ways.

The third program on Economic Empowerment, launched in 2010, is the most recent program out of the three. It focuses on two parts: employment and entrepreneurship. We assist graduates of our learning centres as well as students in our partners’ schools to find employment, by offering cover letter writing workshops, interviewing techniques, good manners skills and other related skills needed to prepare them in the professional world. We have also created job portals to give youths opportunities to connect with potential employers. To date, 72% of our graduates found employment within the first year after graduating. The second part of this program emphasizes on entrepreneurship, in which we offer a seed capital for youths who have shown entrepreneurial skills to start their own small businesses. Furthermore, this program extends beyond the youths — YCAB as a group of social enterprises, through YCAB Ventures also provides micro loans to the youths’ mothers, to assist them with their home-based, small businesses. In this program, the children’s enrolment in schools is a prerequisite for mothers to access

the capital. The returns from the loans are then reinvested to support our education programs. Hence micro finance is used as a means to an end, which is education for all. As of 2017, YCAB's micro finance institution has disbursed loans to 103,243 clients, which all of them are women and approximately 425,255 youths and children are benefiting from this program. Not only has this innovation led thousands of dropouts back to school and moved low-income families out of poverty, it has also created sustainability for YCAB operations and has enabled us to project a 40% growth in the next five years.

Nevertheless, our work doesn't just stop at these three programs. We give our graduates who have reached self-reliance, the opportunity to give back to the foundation. They can participate by teaching or volunteering at the learning centres, or invest some of their income into YCAB's future plan of social investment fund. Through this, we hope to create a mutual fund specifically for education and economic empowerment, whereby graduates can give back and invest in our micro finance program. They are therefore involved in closing the loop of change to break the financial barrier for education.

Despite the successful journey over the years, we still face some challenges both domestically and with our YCAB international branches. In Indonesia, we occasionally still find difficulties in maintaining partnerships with stakeholders as well as with the local government. We are currently developing better ways to broaden our network with program partners in targeted areas. As for our international programs in several ASEAN countries, a big challenge for us is communicating with the local areas to look for the right partners, especially if it is in a rural area such as Laos. Moreover, involving private sectors in the program to support funding or to provide internships is another challenge. Since YCAB's programs in the ASEAN countries are still small, it has been difficult reach out to private sectors. Unlike huge international Non-Governmental Organizations, YCAB has no legal entity in those countries.

With the challenges in mind, we plan to expand our network and reach out to more youths. Domestically, our plan for the near future until 2020, is to establish Centers of Change (CoC) that serve the local communities' needs. The Centers of Change will act as the hub for both school and community outreach programs through interventions with the youths and the microsystems of the families. This will establish better relationships with the school management and the community. Internationally, we are planning to reach ten ASEAN countries and implement programs in partnership with the local partners by 2020. YCAB Foundation aims to touch the lives of five million youths by the end of 2020. We believe that working on youth development through our educational and economic empowering programs serve as strategies to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainability for all.