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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 Orphan Charity Foundation, 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

Poverty and associated problems such as disease, illiteracy, violence and migration continue to be a global and challenging threat to the international community to achieve the goals of sustainable development, and still many individuals and social groups in many countries of the world are under poverty and suffer marginalization and deprivation in various forms, such as discrimination and lack of access to employment, housing, medical services and others.

With the current poverty problem combined with other problems such as economic crises, natural disasters and armed conflict, these issues pose a real threat to global efforts to achieve sustainable social development.

The injustice and unfairness of the distribution and disbursement of wealth and the delivery of social services are among the main causes of poverty and it is at the same time a serious threat to health, well-being, human dignity and human rights because it is a difficult barrier to penetrate in front of the poor's full participation in the development of their societies.

The prevalence of administrative corruption, lack of transparency and accountability in many countries are also among the reasons for the misuse of national wealth, which has increased the number of poor and disadvantaged people in the world.

The absence of justice in the distribution of wealth and the unjust waste of funds is still preventing all plans and strategies to eliminating poverty which statistics has associated with increasing numbers of poor people in the world, such as armed conflict and armaments in all its forms.

Because the problem of poverty has become one of the most serious problems faced by the international community, successful solutions and plans to eliminate this problem should be implemented by international and local committees, and it is essential that the efforts of governments, civil society and the private sector be combined in order to find economic mechanisms that are useful in fighting poverty to create decent jobs for all, especially those who are from the marginalized and disadvantaged classes to ensure that they are lifted out of poverty and are integrated into society. Additional focus needs to be made on the importance of educating all society member because education is the cornerstone of empowering the individual and preventing them from falling into poverty and deprivation.

On the occasion of the 56th Session of the Social Development Conference, Orphan Charity Foundation which is considered one of the institutions of civil society in Iraq, would like to take the opportunity of this major international gathering to reassert the importance of focusing efforts and policies on addressing the root causes of poverty and focusing on the proposed solutions and programs to combat poverty to create real jobs rather than short term growth and limited benefits programs, with the need to focus on a set of internationally agreed principles as necessary steps for the eradication of poverty and deprivation in the world such as:

A) the need for all Member States to fulfill their obligation to ensure that all individuals have access to primary education; and work to strengthen local institutions of higher education and to increase opportunities for university and vocational education

B) Work to ensure that people living in poverty have access to productive resources and social protection for the purpose of empowering and integrating them into societies and reducing their vulnerability to exploitation

C) Working in partnership with civil society and the private sector to develop policies to empower young people through training programs and program fellowships and work to develop programs that provide alternative educational opportunities for youth groups from marginalized and poor social groups

D) Develop appropriate policies and structures to ensure the inclusion and participation of persons with disabilities in the economic and social life and addressing their health and educational needs

E) Issuing effective laws to reduce exploitation in labor, combating human trafficking and sexual exploitation based on the principles of justice and human rights

F) Establish ethical economic rules and laws to prevent speculative countries and encourage local governments and private sector companies adopting socially responsible and ethical policies that focus on public good and work to lay the foundations for social justice based on religious and moral values, human rights and human dignity in order to promote the values of solidarity and social development that leads to social integration.

Orphan Charity Foundation would like to take the opportunity of this session to reiterate the call to study the principles and legislations of the religions to reduce exploitation and eradicate poverty and to explore the possibility of benefiting from them in the development of international strategies to combat poverty such as the legislation which is found in the Islamic religion which aims to eradicate poverty and achieve economic development and social solidarity among human beings through the practices of Zakat and Khoms, which are paid from the rich to the poor and the legislation to prohibit unjust financial interest in order to prevent financial exploitation, and all other legislations aimed to strengthen solidarity among members of society.

With regard to the problem of poverty in Iraq, there are still many sectors suffering from poverty and unemployment despite the efforts of the national government. Political instability due to repeated terrorist attacks is among the reasons of the continuation of this negative phenomenon.

Since its establishment, Orphan Charity Foundation has implemented many programs aimed at combating poverty and assisting marginalized social groups. The Orphan Sponsorship Project, is one of the foundation's programs which has more than 100,000 orphans and about 40,000 widow beneficiaries from poor families.

The Foundation has also implemented several programs aimed at helping young people to start building their lives through both financial and logistic support, in addition to the foundation's continued efforts to ensure that orphans continue to be able to attend school and to assist their families in carrying out the material costs of the study in order to reduce the phenomenon of children dropping out of school to pursue manual labor where they may be subject to ignorance as well as different kinds of exploitation.