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Statement submitted by the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Association of World Citizens, Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation, Global Education Motivators, Global Family for Love and Peace, Institute of Inter-Balkan Relations, International Federation of Women in Legal Careers, Nonviolence International, Service for Peace, Inc., Sisters of Charity Federation, Society of Catholic Medical Missionaries, Soroptimist International, and United Religions Initiative, non-governmental organizations 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

Global Citizenship: A conceptual and practical prerequisite to the eradication of poverty

How do we create a global culture where poverty alleviation is no longer a necessity because its root causes are successfully managed? This joint statement is submitted on behalf of the Coalition for Global Citizenship 2030 (CGC2030), an ad hoc coalition dedicated to the oneness of humanity, working at the United Nations to better the world by affirming the interconnectedness of all and by helping to activate people and institutions to make choices on the basis of common good. CGC2030 develops and promotes values that can further wellbeing including inner and outer peace, collaboration, cooperation, partnership and equitable access to resources. The coalition works to manifest for every sentient being the UN's five core values — peace and security, justice, equality, human dignity, and environmental sustainability. Accordingly, CGC2030 promotes global citizenship as the state of consciousness and being wherein we recognize, relate, and respond according to the reality that we are tied in a single garment of destiny.

In Agenda 2030, our leaders resolved to free the human race from the tyranny of poverty and to heal and secure our planet. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) articulate a collective journey of global partnership and correction of present inequalities. The concept of global citizenship translates the interconnectivity between the goals and the people and systems who now must journey toward those goals.

Global Citizenship refers to a sense of belonging to a common humanity, to a broader world community, whose political, economic, social, and environmental policies that reflect our interconnectedness. It encompasses an understanding that, “the circumstances in which people are born, grow up, live, work and age, and the systems put in place to deal with illness are the social determinants of health. These conditions in which people live and die are, in turn, shaped by political, social and economic forces.” (WHO, 2008). Global citizens actively seek to align their habits and behaviours with their values and engage in the self-driven growth and reflection necessary to empower themselves and their communities. The shared reality of global citizenship is that unless we become more conscious of the way our actions influence others and the world we live in, we will continue to cause suffering to those we love and those we do not know.

Eliminating poverty requires developing our ethical foundations to the point that poverty is no longer acceptable in any form. In a world where there are enough resources for all to live dignified lives, poverty is not inevitable. Initiatives that fight poverty superficially are important but not sufficient. We must reorient our notions of existence to focus on universality, shared destiny and greater good. While most interventions treat the symptoms of an unjust world, the concept of global citizenship emphasizes the need to address the root causes of poverty.

A state of poverty is not only related to economics and social services, it is inextricably tied to the impoverishment of values which leads to greed, ignorance of privilege, violence, militarism, and fear-based decision making. The poverty of the human spirit is both a cause and effect of flawed mental, economic, health and social models, as well as decisions based thereon. In order to achieve the SDGs by 2030, we must evolve away from the present paradigm's narrowly individualistic and economic

concepts of success and instead, should work towards a collective consciousness built on relationship, responsibility, reciprocity and respect with/for one another.

Too often, discourse and action at the United Nations is focused solely on what is urgent, but neglecting the structural, social, and global mindset necessary to develop in a deeply sustainable way. Global mindset allows citizens to make positive contributions to their communities by connecting with others across boundaries and creating new forms of value. While many poverty eradication projects provide short-term solutions that have important impacts, until the community of nations realistically and comprehensively addresses the causes of the need for such programs, we cannot achieve sustained eradication of poverty, cultures of peace, or the transformation of society toward a world where all children go to bed safe, fed and warm.

The promise of the SDG's begins with a holistic education for global citizenship, Goal 4, Target 7, that are rooted in our common humanity and that acknowledges the equal value of each individual. Mentorship and guidance for all ages and levels of society are necessary to break through the societal constructs wherein the definition of happiness is tied up with material gain and hierarchies of power dictate treating one individual as more important than others. We must ensure that educational programs have a balanced focus on self-initiative and global interdependence and that they are cleansed of the corrupting influences of educational models that perpetuate materialism and individualism. Emphasis on creativity and character building through formal and informal global citizenship curricula (see UNESCO's and APCEIU's resources on education for global citizenship) will produce currently unimaginable solutions to critical world problems, including poverty. Global citizenship education develops a sense of responsibility to engage in and to assume an active role in facing and resolving global challenges, and of being a pro-active contributor to a healthier, more just, peaceful, tolerant, inclusive, secure and sustainable world.

The SDGs demonstrate that the expression of global citizenship takes many forms. If we promote gender equality and ensure that all are invested in it — men, women, old, young — and provide equal pay for equal work, we can tackle the deep-seated causes of poverty, war and unsustainable development. Satisfying the common rights of all humanity for clean water and a healthy environment strengthens our ability to feed, educate, innovate, and work. A new, global understanding of our common humanity will have the important impact of reducing the corruption in public and private sectors that siphons resources from the poor. In sum, the concept of global citizenship illuminates the interdependence and interconnectedness of all the SDGs

United Nations agreements make great rhetorical steps towards global citizenship which do much to ensure no one is left behind. The United Nations recognizes the importance of retaining and learning from the diversity of indigenous practices and knowledge and of the eight Programme of Action areas for the Culture of Peace. Such steps demonstrate that we have accrued the intellectual capital needed to strengthen the diverse tapestry that makes our humanity so rich and they provide much to draw from to empower global citizens as part of the solution to eradicating poverty. The concept of global citizenship serves to operationalize accrued intellectual capital in order to move humanity beyond current models of domination, oppression and aggression, and beyond the currently pervasive us-versus-them mentality, systemic models that sustain poverty.

Economic, environmental and social systems must be characterized by people-centred approaches focused on compassion and justice in order to promote the common good such that one's zip code is no longer a better indicator of longevity

than one's genetic code. Developing a happy and well global citizenry, one that has evolved itself beyond current poverty alleviation needs, requires a fundamental re-evaluation of global economic and social systems.

We can best respond to poverty by living in accordance with shared universal values and by making conscious choices in favour of the good of all.

In this light, we call upon:

- The United Nations and its Member States to focus their attention on the root causes that underlie the exigencies — including poverty — the world faces today, and on the structural, spiritual and social solutions that address these root causes. They must concurrently focus on changing the unjust structures of society while also working within them to manage immediate crises.
- Member States to promote, introduce and implement a plan that puts education for global citizenship at all levels and life stages of the population by redirecting excessive military funding toward global citizenship consciousness raising.
- Governments to support and improve efforts to ensure cooperation and integration among international educational systems, civil society, the private sector and socio-economic structures, as well as to emphasize global solidarity by embedding SDG17 in all deliberations.
- Civil Society and all stakeholders to include global citizenship in their advocacy, discourse, political initiatives, and social programs.
- Establish “Safe and Play Spaces” for pregnant women, mothers, caregivers and young children, for both forcibly displaced and host populations, where children's developmental needs can be met communally to facilitate integration into the host culture;
- Provide ECD programs and train social service providers to assist migrant and refugee children age 0-5 years old;
- Maintain family and/or extended family integrity during all stages of the migration experience and promote family reunification;
- Promote close collaboration among humanitarian and development agencies, NGOs, like OMEP, and other international partners to transform humanitarian crises into development opportunities;
- Publicize existing efforts by Member States to address the needs of migrant and refugee children and their families.