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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 Ecoforum of NGOs of Uzbekistan, 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

New initiatives of Uzbekistan to observe human interests as an example of a targeted approach to poverty eradication in developing countries

In Uzbekistan, since it has become independent, annual State target programs have been developed and implemented to solve the most socially important issues aiming at improving the well-being of citizens. Thus, 2017 is declared as the Year of Dialogue with People and Human Interests. Accordingly, the corresponding State Program has been developed and approved; it provides solutions for many issues related to raising the level and quality of people's life. Among them — issues of improving pension coverage, increasing social benefits for indigent and large families, expanding benefits list for aged people and children, etc. Measures to ensure workplaces for graduates of higher and secondary educational institutions are of particular importance as well as construction of affordable housing, especially for rural population and young families. Monitoring of health facilities for provision of quality free medical service is strengthened as well as control prices for medicine.

Along with the annual programs, long-term strategies also address the issues of improving population welfare. So, Action Strategy on Five Priority Development Directions of The Republic of Uzbekistan for 2017-2021 was approved by Decree of President. Social Development Direction includes implementation of measures for increasing employment, improving social protection and health care system, developing and improving social infrastructure, improving power and gas supply to the rural population, improving quality of social care services for vulnerable segments of the population, mainstreaming of women into social and political life, ensuring accessibility of pre-school educational institutions.

In particular, this document stipulates unconditional implementation of employment programs by creating 256,400 workplaces through the implementation of about 25,000 investment projects on integrated development of territories. It is planned to create 46,800 new workplaces, allocate loans to 10,000 graduates of educational institutions to start business in regions with the highest level of unemployment. It is planned to build 15,000 affordable residential houses, 415 km of water supply lines, 316 km of gas supply lines and 291 km of internal roads in rural areas. There are measures aimed at supporting the older generation, improving social allowance distribution procedures, and restructuring the health care system.

Undoubtedly, civil society organizations can also contribute to promoting (lobbying) solutions for poverty eradication issues at the governmental level, as well as by direct participating at these programs. In particular, Uzbekistan has accumulated good experience in involving NGOs' potential in creating workplaces.

The Ecoforum of Uzbekistan agrees that any policy should be aimed at improving the welfare of the people and eradicating poverty, and believes that, based on ECOSOC, it is necessary to create mechanisms for dissemination positive experience of countries and strategic planning of successful solutions in the field of poverty reduction in developing countries, taking into account local conditions and national features.

In this regard, as one of the first steps, The Ecoforum of Uzbekistan proposes to work out the issue of establishing Central Asian Regional Forum aiming to exchanging experience between Central Asian countries, and possible developing appropriate regional action plans.