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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 Arab Red Crescent and Red Cross Organization, 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

The role of humanitarian work in supporting the goals of the United Nations and sustainable development

The world is now facing unprecedented challenges, crises and disasters, the majority of which are, unfortunately, occurring in the Middle East and North Africa. This situation adversely affects the ability to achieve the goals of the United Nations goals and the sustainable development of peoples. According to Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the number of refugees and displaced persons around the world stands at 65 million.

All constituents of the Arab Red Crescent and Red Cross Organization, including its national bodies and societies in 21 Arab countries, are faced with a large and growing humanitarian responsibility as they strive to address these challenges and crises. The purpose of this statement is to review the role that humanitarian work plays in supporting the goals of the United Nations, social development and sustainable development.

In keeping with its noble humanitarian mission and with the principle of integration and active participation in the service of peoples and communities, the Arab Red Crescent and Red Cross Organization and its constituent bodies are carrying out several projects to eradicate poverty, preserve human dignity and achieve sustainable development. Following are some of those projects:

1. The Tamkin programme was implemented in Syria, Somalia, the Comoros and Mauritania, and also reached Syrian refugees in Turkey and Lebanon. The aim of the programme, which is being carried out in conjunction with the relevant Arab national societies, is to build the capacity of and retrain Arab refugee women, and transform them from needy to productive individuals by strengthening their capacity (we help them to help themselves) to meet their basic needs. Participants become productive women endowed with skills and expertise who are able to contribute to the rebuilding of their families and to meet their basic needs.

2. The Wa'i programme for training volunteers in the Arab region was designed to train teams of volunteers with the national societies of Arab States to effectively carry out humanitarian missions in emergency situations and disasters. The programme also seeks to ensure that volunteers have adequate knowledge of international law and are capable of working in accordance with the principles of conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

3. The Ammar programme was designed to train young refugees in particular and provide them with vocational training, so that they contribute to the reconstruction of their countries. Humanitarian work has become "a profession and a skill", and this is the slogan of the Organization. Humanitarian work is no longer simply a reflexive response to provide relief.

4. The Ra'id programme was designed to train youth leaders who can help lead humanitarian action at the international level and promote social development and sustainable development, in accordance with the circumstances of each country.

5. The Wasil programme is one of the Organization's technical projects. The aim of the programme is to utilize satellite mobile communication systems in disasters to provide a rapid and practical means of communication between individuals and the relevant agencies in areas where there are no means of communication, thus serving both the organizations that provide humanitarian assistance and relief services in the field, on the one hand, and volunteer organizations, on the other.

6. The focus of the Qarib programme is on remote volunteering. The Organization is aware of the importance of investing in this useful and effective type of volunteer work. Remote volunteers can contribute through an electronic platform that enables them to communicate and carry out their tasks, even though they are not part of the Organization. This is particularly important in relation to such activities as disseminating humanitarian information and representing the Organization at humanitarian conferences and forums.

7. The Uzama' programme, which is operated in conjunction with the national societies, is part of the Organization's ongoing efforts to develop sustainable development programmes that support the families of volunteers and staff members of national societies, in particular, who were killed while performing humanitarian work, as well ambulance and humanitarian action teams who respond to needs of soldiers and the victims of war. To that end, the Organization established a fund for the victims of humanitarian and relief work, which it manages with the support of the national societies.

The Organization has also developed other technical initiatives, such as Insijam, which is an electronic platform to coordinate the work of humanitarian agencies. The platform is a practical application that supports organizations working in the field and provides valuable information on needs to backers. The Salam programme provides psychological support to refugee children. The programme focuses on four areas: psychological health, physical health, education and values.

The Organization strives to ensure that its work is in line with international plans and strategies, at the forefront of which are the plans and strategies of the United Nations to eradicate poverty as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The foregoing offers a brief glimpse into the efforts of the Arab Red Crescent and Red Cross Organization to cast light on the important role and impact of humanitarian work and how it can be utilized to support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Recommendations:

In conclusion, the Organization would like to make the following recommendations:

- It is vitally important to benefit from the achievements made in the field of humanitarian work and the success that has been achieved in solving social development problems;
- Non-governmental organizations, government organizations and businesses that have an interest in humanitarian affairs must form alliances and partnerships by carrying out joint projects and supporting activities that are aimed at achieving established goals;
- The United Nations plan to eradicate poverty, one of the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, must be supported. To that end, United Nations and Arab humanitarian agencies must be encouraged to emulate some of the projects that the Organization has successfully implemented in the Arab region.