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Statement submitted by Univers de solidarité et de développement, 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 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* E/2012/100.



Declaration

Poverty is not inevitable — it is created by humankind's unequal distribution of countries' resources. Achieving the Millennium Development Goals is one of the major challenges that the developing countries took up at the start of the millennium. Twelve years on, it has to be recognized that poverty, unemployment and their direct consequences — crime and immigration — are problems that the people of developing countries face on a daily basis. Young people, women and older persons are the most vulnerable. Young people and women, who are key to the economic growth of a country, are disregarded.

The Millennium Development Goals were to be met by 2015, yet the progress in eliminating hunger, unemployment and gender inequality that was achieved between 2000 and 2012 paints a bleak picture. Nonetheless, with demonstrated willingness on the part of Governments, the alarming social and economic conditions in the developing countries could still be remedied. Within the next three years, the authorities could create jobs by encouraging initiatives geared towards young unemployed graduates. Support could be given to rural women's income-generating activities and to their efforts to set up processing units for agricultural products. Governments could create an enabling environment for microcredit institutions as a sign of their support for the financing of micro-projects, particularly in rural areas.

Older persons should be given assistance so that they may live and die in dignity.

Young people are the driving force of development and should receive training that is tailored to market needs. Because modern markets are regulated by World Trade Organization rules, fostering trade growth requires well-functioning and well-connected markets where competition and consumer access stimulate growth and innovation. Innovation must be strongly encouraged at the policy level by taking measures to reduce taxes on goods and services, liberalize the market at all levels and create incentives for workers who contribute to growth. According to a report by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, only 4 per cent of arable land in developing countries is cultivated. The effort to reduce poverty in our countries cannot succeed without support for an agricultural sector that is free of discrimination and gives women access to land.
