



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
23 April 2012

Original: English

Substantive session of 2012

New York, 2-27 July 2012

Item 2 (c) of the provisional agenda*

High-level segment: annual ministerial review

Statement submitted by Peace Worldwide, 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.



Statement

Pakistan has been actively implementing the Millennium Development Goals. As expected, global progress towards the Goals has been far from encouraging, with most countries not being able to meet the targets of improving health, education and gender disparities, among others. Since its founding, Pakistan has been in a state of war, experiencing four periods of martial law and three wars, in addition to numerous internal conflicts since 11 September 2001, all of which have affected its economy.

The lack of financial resources and the war on terror have made the poor even poorer. The economy is a means of achieving almost all the Goals, but there are some hurdles to economic development, such as wars and internal conflicts.

Other problems are gender discrimination and population growth. There is a misconception that females merely have to manage the household after marriage while males have to earn, making education necessary for men but not for women. Girls are not allowed to go to colleges and universities because they are co-education institutes. There are very few schools and colleges for girls and those that do exist are being destroyed by the Taliban. Just as Talibanization is the major problem in conflict areas, the poor economy and limited thinking by parents are the major problems in the rest of the country.

Child labour is another factor influencing poverty in Pakistan as there are resolutions that prohibit children aged under 18 years from performing any kind of labour. One must ask, however, how orphan children are meant to eat. Underage children who are orphans cannot generate income for themselves and, if they are not allowed to earn, they may become involved in non-profitable and non-constructive activities involving narcotics, theft and other criminal acts, leading to increased crime rates.

Another major problem in Pakistan is the jirga system and political leadership in different provinces.

Recommendations

- Establish more vocational training centres for women and young people in remote areas so that they can generate income for themselves and their families.
- As the number of schools is falling, establish more schools for girls and teach young people, especially women.
- Provide young people with Internet facilities. More projects using the Internet should be undertaken in remote areas of Pakistan.
- The Government of Pakistan should empower its citizens or itself to take responsibility for educating orphans and giving them all relevant allowances until they attain the age of 18 years.
- Improve the economy of Pakistan through trade and export.
- Provide free books and health care to the poor and marginalized.