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Statement submitted by Organización de Entidades Mutuales de las Américas, 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

In 2009, the United Nations launched an initiative to assist States in achieving a social protection floor on the basis of decent work, social cohesion and inclusion, with a view to a fair and inclusive globalization. In 2011, the Social Protection Floor Advisory Group, chaired by Michelle Bachelet, prepared a report (the “Bachelet report”) in which it recommended 15 principles for effective action, including that States should develop their activities through an adequate institutional framework with sufficient budgetary resources, well-trained professionals and effective governance rules, with participation of the social partners and relevant civil society actors and stakeholders to complement the efforts of the State.

Organización de Entidades Mutuales de las Américas, a civil society organization in special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council since 2011, brings together mutual associations from over 17 countries. The organization supports the Social Protection Floor Initiative and has analysed the 15 principles of the Bachelet report, noting that, in practice, 8 tally with the services traditionally provided by mutuals to their affiliates. Accordingly, it considers that there is a direct link between the objectives of the Social Protection Floor Initiative and the objectives proposed as themes for the annual ministerial review of 2012. We believe that it is not possible to promote productive capacity, employment and decent work to eradicate poverty in the context of inclusive, sustainable and equitable economic growth at all levels for achieving the Millennium Development Goals unless we also achieve progress in the development and implementation of a universal social protection floor.

Mutual entities serve the common good and promote the social economy through solidarity. These entities have much experience in the promotion and provision of most components recommended in the Bachelet report. The studies undertaken leading to the Bachelet report have demonstrated that modest programmes such as money transfers for senior citizens and children have the potential to significantly reduce poverty. The studies highlight the effectiveness of a two-pronged strategy to combat extreme poverty: the development of a social protection floor and the reinforcement of social security systems. These tools offer advantages, such as guaranteeing effective distribution of benefits and services under appropriate national legislation with fiscal sustainability in a context that also promotes decent work and the development of sustainable microenterprises.

The need to share the burden implied in this goal is what prompts the recommendation in the Bachelet report that States should work closely with relevant civil society entities (such as mutuals), as they complement the efforts of the State in this regard. Since mutuals have been acknowledged as potential partners in the Social Protection Floor Initiative, it is fitting that they be so considered by the Economic and Social Council at the annual ministerial review in 2012. Therefore, the organization respectfully requests that the annual ministerial review declaration include a specific paragraph to that effect and/or recommend a specific study of the role of mutuals as natural complements to the State in order to achieve the Millennium Development Goal target of achieving full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people.