



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
24 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 Asociación Nacional de Empresarios de Colombia, 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

Public-private alliance: a strategy to promote productive capacity, employment and decent work to eradicate poverty

During recent years, Colombia's social, economic and productive environment has been changing positively. The country's gross domestic product, \$335 billion, grew between 3 and 6 per cent annually during the past 10 years, giving the country a privileged position in the region by becoming the fourth biggest economy of Latin America. At the same time, its security issues have improved significantly, which makes Colombia attractive for foreign direct investment. In 2011, Colombia's Central Bank reported \$14 billion in foreign direct investment, which demonstrates confidence in the country's economy.

As a direct consequence of its economic growth and growing foreign direct investment, Colombia's society and citizens have improved their living conditions. In 2002, the poverty rate was 49 per cent, but the activities of the Government and the private sector, which use corporate social responsibility as a complementary tool for action by the State, have caused a reduction of 12 percentage points over the past 10 years. Nowadays, this indicator is around 37 per cent; it is still high, but it is hoped that the trend will be towards further reductions in the percentage.

The strong public-private alliance has been reinforced in recent years with the implementation of a productive transformation policy. The national Government and the National Business Association of Colombia are working together in coordination with specific programmes to transform some of the country's economic sectors, making them more competitive in the international markets. The objective of the policy is to generate added-value production chains for final and intermediate goods and services, highly profitable companies and economic clusters that will improve the productive capacity of the country in order to create new job opportunities, higher levels of income and a reduction in the poverty rate. This is why during the past decade the unemployment rate was lowered to 10 per cent; on average, unemployment in Colombia in 2011 was 10.3 per cent.

The corporate social responsibility area of the National Business Association of Colombia promotes two programmes with the Inter-American Development Bank and the International Labour Organization. The first is a programme on productive enchainment, which promotes synergies along production chains by promoting efficiency, quality and job stability to the different levels of the added-value process in the production of final goods. The second works in the promotion of decent work policies, principles and good practices in the labour market.

The Association firmly believes that international technical cooperation, the productive transformation policy and the productive enchainment and decent work programmes are basic elements for fulfilling the Millennium Development Goals, in particular in the generation of decent work opportunities, poverty reduction and sustainable development.