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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: promoting empowerment of people in
achieving poverty eradication, social integration and full
employment and decent work for all**

Statement submitted by Verein zur Förderung der Völkerverständigung, 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.



Statement

Assuming that in 2050 around 10 billion people would aspire to the level of prosperity achieved in member nations of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the economy would need to grow 15 times the size of our current economy by 2050. This fact leads to a dilemma: growth may be unsustainable, but “degrowth” appears to be unstable too. First, this dilemma could be resolved by replacing the mechanistic view of economics with a view based on a “humanity-bound economy”, as exemplified in corporate social responsibility and sustainability in a global context. Second, what is needed are new business models that rely less on core competence and more on what is available to meet the basic needs of people. Coming global challenges ask for a shift from core business and economies of scale to multiple businesses concentrating on economies of scope. Third, another conventional response is to call for “decoupling” and “dematerialization”: continuous growth has to be linked with a decline in material throughput. Since our modern capitalistic economies are good at improving efficiency, this seems to be an appealing approach. In changing methods and strategies of business into those compatible with nature, an entirely new branch of industry can develop and a huge diversification of “green jobs” can be created, which will contribute to sustainable development and economic growth and, furthermore, push forward the eradication of poverty. Corporate social responsibility could be used as an approach to stimulate sustainable patterns and foster solid public-private partnerships, the possibilities of which have not been fully exploited yet. The relevant entry points are: first, to what extent business activities could be adapted to priorities of national or international development; and second, how Governments could effectively assist and facilitate the conduct of business.
