



## **Economic and Social Council**

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### **Commission for Social Development**

#### **Fifty-third session**

4-13 February 2015

**Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development  
and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly:  
priority theme: rethinking and strengthening social  
development in the contemporary world**

### **Statement submitted by Solar Cookers International, 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

Solar Cookers International fully supports the Commission for Social Development. The poorest populations in the world, a group of more than 3 billion, live mainly in Africa, Asia, the Pacific and Latin America, which are rich in solar energy, but poor in biomass and fossil fuels. The mission of Solar Cookers International is to empower vulnerable individuals who are often marginalized by society, including families in poverty, youth and older persons. These individuals are regularly at risk of health problems caused by indoor air pollution and must spend hours each day travelling long distances to collect firewood. They could benefit significantly from the adoption of solar thermal technology to meet household cooking needs and for water pasteurization, tasks that are fundamental for improving the daily life of those in need and that allow them to participate in society. Solar Cookers International advocates the increased adoption of solar cookers in regions that need them most.

Using solar energy and supplementing it with biomass or fossil fuels only when it is not available leads to a significant improvement in health, safety, quality of human life and the environment. The economic benefits of solar energy and water pasteurization are multiple. Poor families spend a large part of their meagre resources on purchasing charcoal, wood, dung and other biomass, as well as liquefied petroleum gas. By prioritizing the use of solar thermal energy, family income can be redirected to meeting alternative needs.

Families save money and time by using solar thermal cookers, allowing them to invest in other areas of economic growth, which is critical for socially disadvantaged persons to make progress. The money saved is used to pay for education and more food and to meet basic sanitary and health needs. Time is also a valuable economic resource. Because food can be left unattended in solar-cookers, the people who use them have more time to spend on microenterprises, education, rest and health. In short, solar cooking can help disadvantaged people to reach their full human potential. Solar thermal cooking tools make it possible for families to devote more time to growing additional crops and increasing food security. Hours of drudgery can turn into hours spent on education. This leads to a significant improvement in health, safety and quality of human life.

To accomplish these goals, Solar Cookers International has funded and provided assistance to two solar cooking programmes in the Lower Nyakach region of Kenya, entitled “Friends of the old” and “Sustainable utilization of renewable energy”. These programmes have spread the use of solar thermal technology through demonstrations in which thousands of people in at-risk communities, including elderly grandparents taking care of their orphaned grandchildren, have been shown how to solar cookers. Safe water packages, which consist of solar cookers and water pasteurization tools, are distributed at these demonstrations to people who need them.

Solar Cookers International provides free information on solar cookers on how to build various solar cookers, implement programmes abroad, follow research developments and contact others involved in solar cooking programmes. Our mission includes making information and resources available to all who want them.

Solar Cookers International sees that there is a dire need for solar thermal technology to be adopted and integrated into communities worldwide, and for such

technology to be used in the long term. The lack of knowledge on and access to solar thermal technology has proved to be the largest obstacle to our mission. The successful implementation of this vital resource will require the promotion and integration of solar thermal resources by large institutions. We recommend that solar thermal technology be included in development policies and programmes worldwide.

Solar thermal cooking helps improve family and community health, household economics and the quality of the physical environment. Household air pollution is reduced and contaminated water is pasteurized with free solar energy. The time and money that are saved make it possible to dedicate resources to health care and entrepreneurship, strengthen families and educate the citizenry.

For more than 25 years, Solar Cookers International has been the leader in spreading solar thermal cooking and water pasteurization knowledge globally.

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