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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: strategies
for the eradication of poverty to achieve sustainable
development for all**

Statement submitted by the Islamic Research and Information Artistic & Cultural Institute, 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.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.



Statement

Poverty is a complex phenomenon. It has persisted in varied degrees in societies and communities around the world since recorded history, regardless of resource endowment, the stage of development, level of technology, social structure or culture.

Poverty has many causes and expressions — including political, environmental, educational, cultural, and spiritual — economic reform is therefore not a panacea. To eradicate poverty, we must instead develop a multidimensional set of remedies.

War is the primary cause of poverty. Political violence and organized crime have affected many countries which bring about to War and violence. Each day children are exposed to death and trauma as the result of war, terror, crime and disease resulting from political and social events over which they have no possible control. United Nations could play a crucial role in confronting transnational threats, organized crime, terrorism, violent extremism.

The other cause of poverty is the exploitation of the poor by the rich. Unfortunately, the poor countries have been helpless victims. Because of a rich natural resource, they are exploited by the rich countries and they don't have the opportunity to use the natural resources for the benefit of their own countries. So, they experience a very slow economic growth which has contributed to the persistence of poverty. In order to reduce the extent of their exploitation of natural resources, these poor countries need to receive more consideration from United Nations in order that they could reach to the satisfactory level of economic growth.

The capacity of human resource also must be considered in the eradication of poverty. Development requires skills and knowledge and high education. Lack of knowledge and good skills is a big limitation toward prosperity of the country in all different area; such as social, cultural and economic area. The United Nations could create a suitable situation in needy countries to enhance human resource development through education.

Spiritual and cultural factor also play a role in poverty eradication. By creating the culture of affection toward a needy, we could pave the way for the poor to get rid of the harsh situation he is experiencing.

Islam, as the religion of affection and peace, has accorded topmost priority and concern to poverty and has taken a substantial number of strategies towards not only reducing it but also eradicating it at all levels of human endeavours. Islam as a religion of peace encourages whatever will contribute to the strengthening of kindness and brotherhood among the entire members of communities since their absence will result in the absence of peace, unity and tranquillity. To avoid such distracting situation, Islam instructs Muslims to be kind and to assist one another especially the rich among them with a view to standing at the side of the poor and tackling his problems.

There are the teeming strategies adopted by Islam in a bid to eradicate poverty towards sustainable development. Khums is one of the pillars of Islam which was ordained by Allah. One fifth of a person's excess income has to be dedicated, according to the Qur'an, for the following:

And know that whatever profit you make, verily, one-fifth of it is assigned to Allah and to the Messenger and to his family and also the orphans, the destitute, and the wayfarer, if you have believed in Allah, and in that which We sent down to our servant. [8:41]

Among other solutions for poverty as well, is legislating Zakat and encouraging people to give charity so that the money will not be monopolized by the rich. So also, it has to be given only to a specific category of people as clearly mentioned in the Holy Qur'an in the following verse:

Zakat expenditures are only for the poor and for the needy and for those employed to collect [zakah] and for bringing hearts together and for freeing captives [or slaves] and for those in debt and for the cause of Allah and for the [stranded] traveller — an obligation [imposed] by Allah. And Allah is Knowing and Wise. [9:60]

Legislation of waqf (endowment) is the other Islamic strategy to eradicate the poverty which is recommended to the faithful people. In Islamic terms, it refers to a voluntary and irrevocable dedication of one's wealth or a portion of it — in cash or kind and its disbursement for Islamic compliant projects such as mosques, religious schools, etc... It is a permanent donation. Once intended, initiated and endowed, it has become out of the belongings and control of the endower. Therefore, it can never be inherited, given as a gift, bought or sold. Legislating such kind of provision will go a long way in contributing towards eradicating poverty since it will ease the cost of living of the people as they can get access to so many benefits free of charge.

Thus, poverty is a global challenge to the entire world hence it requires a systematic solution that will finally eradicate it and debar it from future re-emergence as well. Building a more widespread commitment to overcoming poverty is an essential first step in overcoming poverty. We urge each and every member of the United Nations to take serious steps in this regard.
