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Human Rights Council

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Agenda item 2

**Annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner
for Human Rights and reports of the Office of the
High Commissioner and the Secretary-General**

Written statement* submitted by Le Collectif des Femmes Africaines du Hainaut (C.F.A.H.), a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[26 August 2014]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

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Young People's Participation at UN to Shape the World They Want to See

On behalf of youth worldwide and the International NGOs CFAH: **Le Collectif des Femmes Africaines de Hainaut (C.F.A.H.)** and under its umbrella Ariel Foundation International

Across many different cultures, historical and traditional interpretations or definitions of the concept of **sustainable development are drawn to the theme of 'facilitating conditions that allow future generations to thrive'**.

We youth believe that the Right to Development must include direct young participation. Fundamental to this premise is the right for young people to be involved in shaping a world that they will not only have to live with, but also a world they want to see.

Young people account for a growing quarter of the world's population. In many countries, young people constitute more than 50% of the population. Young people throughout history have been leaders and change makers. Lured by moral obligation and optimism for positive impact, young people believe in change for social good and are driven to get involved or take action.

Today, the growing creative, technology and cultural sectors clearly demonstrate the abundance of youth leaders. These leaders are also highly influential across society, and are shaping the future for everyone, whilst in the process inspiring other young people to do the same. This is why youth participation at the UN in all sorts of issues affecting the world is not only desirable, but a wholly necessary obligation.

Ariel Foundation International under the umbrella of C.F.A.H. facilitated the organisation of a Youth Summit at the UN, driven by a very simple idea: young people need to be involved in shaping the world they want to see. Youth delegates from around the world came to Geneva to discuss important issues related to the Right to Development. Workshops were chosen by and capture the voices of youth in four key areas: Education, Business for Development, Employment and Slavery & Trafficking. The report covering the outcome from the Youth Summit and its recommendations for the Right to Development can be downloaded at **www.youthsummitun.org**. Recommendations from youth delegates were taken to the Right to Development Working Group in the form of concrete contributions towards shaping the development of a sub-criteria framework.

A key message that came from Summit delegates was the need for the UN to engage young people more deeply across all its work and policy developments. The Summit delegates passionately believe that greater youth engagement will bring mutual benefit to both the UN and young people around the world. The coming together of young people at the UN, participating in a focused summit upon which recommendations are disseminated directly into the work of the UN is considered a good and effective model. We would like to put forward an invitation to the HRC 27th Session to discuss and explore opportunities for real, concrete, outcome focused engagement of young people worldwide in HRC's work.

Youth Summit on RTD www.youthsummitun.org organized by Ariel Foundation International (www.arielfoundation.org) Under the umbrella of C.F.A.H. Collectif des Femmes Africaines du Hainaut (www.cfah.be/)