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**Annual ministerial review: implementing the
internationally agreed goals and commitments
in regard to sustainable development**

Statement submitted by Fundación Diagrama, 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.



Statement**Innovation Fair Conference for Latin America
“Youth: the core of sustainable development”**

Fundación Diagrama together with the Ministry of Culture and Youth, and ILANUD organized the Conference “Youth at the core of sustainable development”. Held on 18 and 19 June in San Jose, Costa Rica, with the aim of encouraging innovation in the development of national and international strategies to tackle the specific issues that young people face in relation to sustainable development.

1. Fundación Diagrama has consultative status with the Economic and Social Council. Its main objective is to promote the development of centres, programmes and research aimed at protection, delinquency prevention, and integration of minors and young people in social difficulty, and to make public opinion and social agents aware of the problems of this sector of the population.

2. Fundación Diagrama’s international approach has always been guided by the Convention on the Rights of the Child, in particular articles 37 and 40 thereof, and other relevant United Nations standards and norms.¹ The International Conference “Youth At the Core of Sustainable Development” took place at the initiative of a number of different institutions from the public and not for profit sectors. Its purpose was to focus on the importance of the role of minors and young people in societal development. The main conclusions of this recent event can be summarised in the two following principles:

- The importance of young people’s participation and empowerment in sustainable development
- The need to promote good governance among young people

3. We would like to recall that Latin American Youth is a distinct and vulnerable segment of the population, uniquely affected by environmental, social and economic problems, with a particular need for protection; and at the same time, it is a valuable resource to promote and implement sustainable development.

4. We also recognise that the international community has already taken action by adopting programmes, projects and networks, including of national organizations and non-governmental youth organizations, to encourage the involvement of youth in sustainable development, in accordance with chapter 25 of Agenda 21 adopted by United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.

5. We welcome the recent entrance into force of the Iberoamerican Convention on Youth Rights adopted in 2005, which explicitly recognises social, economic and cultural rights, and the right to live in a sound environment, as a crucial basis for young people’s development (chapter III).

6. We would also like to highlight the intensive and comprehensive work accomplished under the framework of the United Nations Commission on sustainable development in different regions, and in particular the activities related to sustainable production and consumption, water management and sanitation.

¹ Including, amongst others: the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice (the Beijing Rules), the United Nations Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty (JDLs) and the United Nations Guidelines for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency (the Riyadh Guidelines).

7. Although legal and non-binding instruments, plans and programmes have already been adopted to protect youth rights to sustainable development at different levels, we are convinced that further action still needs to be taken in order to adequately protect youngsters regional cultural and social needs.

8. Therefore, we strongly support the creation of an implementation plan on youth sustainable development, based on three axes: research, innovation and indicators.

Research:

Explore ideas to ensure that environmental information is available to young people and to overcome barriers to their participation in the decision making process at the local, national and international level.

Research new ways to invest in future generations:

- finding financial and human resources for funding youth projects
- increasing government investments for ensuring the implementation of sustainable development strategies
- developing new partnerships between private and public investments in this field
- launching sustainable development projects which provide long term employment opportunity for young people

Find solutions to overcome the inequitable access to clean water, basic sanitation systems, health services and decent living conditions, particularly for excluded segments of the youth population.

Innovation:

Introduce innovation in the development of strategies to incorporate the challenges of youth and sustainable development principles in national and international policies.

Improve and renovate national and international programmes in order to ensure sustainable livelihoods and healthy lifestyles for young people.

Promote youth leadership and finance projects created for youth and led by youth: from educational and awareness-raising initiatives, to those which aim to directly contribute to sustainable development. Such projects offer opportunities to cultivate youth leadership, including among disenfranchised or “at risk” youth.

Empower young people for action in the field of SD and peace:

- by raising awareness, improving education and sustaining interest of youth in this area
- by providing youth with legitimacy and effective instruments to become the gateway of future and to act as the link between education and action.

Promote youth in the area of environmental entrepreneurship, education, training and development, to help in building sustainable cities and to reduce rural environmental degradation.

Indicators:

Elaborate social, economic and environmental indicators to assess the success of the Millennium Development Goals related to youth.

We would strongly encourage all United Nations agencies and other international organisations to promote the importance of a joint implementation plan for youth sustainable development, to national governments, public authorities and other relevant actors. This plan should be developed in a way that takes regionally specific characteristics into account.

Note: Statement made also on behalf of the International Juvenile Justice Observatory.