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Statement submitted by World Youth Alliance, 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.

* E/2011/100.

Statement*

World Youth Alliance is a global coalition of young people promoting the dignity of the human person in policy culture. Our mission is three-fold: educate young people about the dignity of the human person and how to move from fundamental principles to concrete actions; promote the dignity of the human person through lived experiences of culture; and advocate for person-centred policies at the international institutions. Our primary goal is the education and empowerment of young people. World Youth Alliance engages in informal education and we believe that informal education is an important way of guaranteeing access to education generally, in fulfilment of internationally agreed commitments.

Informal education should empower young people to actively engage society and prepare them to play decision-making roles in their communities. All interns for the World Youth Alliance must complete the Track A training, which is a 400-page curriculum that includes United Nations documents, philosophical, legal and political readings, excerpts from novels and statements from world leaders and leaders of movements. The goal of the training is to form young people in an understanding of the dignity of the human person as the foundation of human rights, so that they can effectively engage policymakers at international institutions like the United Nations. This training must be completed by any member of World Youth Alliance who wishes to represent it at the international institutions.

Informal education should be accessible to those in developing countries, especially those who live in rural areas. Our training can be accessed free of charge on the Internet through our “online training zone”, which makes it available to all of our members worldwide. Members can download the training, read it, answer the questions and submit those answers through e-mail to their regional directors for feedback. Our certification programme related to the training gives members tangible goals to achieve and shows them how hard work can open up pathways to excellence and leadership opportunities.

Informal education should build solidarity, especially intergenerational solidarity. Our programme helps to build solidarity by being a uniform programme that all members from different countries and cultures are participating in. Once the programme is completed, members can participate in international conferences together, sharing experiences and their new-found knowledge and expertise. Because our training programme has readings from authors of every political, religious and social background, members learn about the dignity of the human person through exposure to different cultures or ways of expressing the dignity of the human person.

The contribution that non-governmental organizations make to education, especially in terms of access, should be recognized and promoted. Often it is civil society that is most willing to educate children who are vulnerable to exclusion: the poor, the disabled, orphans and those suffering from HIV/AIDS. Civil society is essential for creating social inclusion through the provision of both formal and informal education and should be supported in its work.

* The present statement is being issued without formal editing.