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Statement submitted by African Citizens Development Foundation, 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/2012/100.



Statement

Many factors stand at the root of poverty, militating against its eradication in spite of years of sustained effort globally. Chief among these factors are the lack of discipline and order, which has given rise to every other societal ill, such as corruption, which has grown to become endemic in many developing countries and has reduced the respect and inspiration for hard work.

To protect any society against the ugly phenomenon of poverty, citizens should be duly empowered, especially with those capacities that will change their orientation from the culture of hunting only for money to that of offering service to the society and the nation. Every human being, if allowed to develop and not be tainted by wrong ambitions, is endowed with the unlimited capacity to strengthen existing institutions and other national development platforms.

A nation will do well to establish, nurture and sustain volunteerism, in particular to create a platform for the older generations who have retired. Such activity will hold back the usual deterioration of health and early death, while it will also encourage the transfer of knowledge acquired over the years of practical experience that remains an invaluable asset to the upcoming generations and a blessing to the nation.

Such experience will encourage and promote decent work, reduce unemployment and limit the number of citizens involved in informal activities, which often reduces a nation's qualitative and steady growth while only artificially raising its economic status. The immediate and future consequences of decent work guarantee sustainability to a nation, as individual contributions will stabilize productivity. Effective rule of law will also help to discourage superficial tendencies and promote originality for sustainability.

Building and sustaining citizens' capacity will facilitate inclusion. It is essential for every nation to create strong institutions where the capacity of citizens is constantly developed. The best of such initiatives is the volunteer scheme where youth and the elderly can interact and become involved. This will stimulate inclusiveness and give rise to decent work, with the aim of promoting productivity and economic sustainability. Member nations should place an emphasis on volunteerism and specifically recognize every participant.

Sooner or later, inequity will cause a nation to suffer unfavourable consequences and a slowdown in development, which will impact on the chances of achieving the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals.

Just four years away from the targeted year for the achievement of the Goals, the unfair gap between the poor and the rich continues to create conditions that will prevent many developing nations from achieving their development target. Nations must ensure a balanced approach to promoting fair trade and the proper distribution of wealth, which will prevent unnecessary scheming for ill-gotten wealth. Efforts must be accelerated to close the gap created by those factors that constantly promote envy, hatred and enmity.

The effects of years of inequity in every society are now heavily burdening the entire human race, which belongs to one indivisible planet in terms of climate change, food insecurity, crime rates, conflict or war. The promotion of initiatives that could facilitate decent work is an idea whose time is now.