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Statement submitted by Verein zur Förderung der Völkerverständigung, 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

Assuming that, by 2050, 9 billion people will all aspire to the level of prosperity achieved in Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development nations, the economy would need to grow to 15 times its current size. This fact leads to a dilemma in that, although growth may be unsustainable, negative growth appears also to be unstable. First, this dilemma could be resolved by replacing the mechanistic economic view with a “humanity-bound economy” exemplified by corporate social responsibility and sustainability in a global context. Second, what is needed are new business models relying less on core competence and more on what is available to meet the basic needs of people. Future global challenges will require a shift from core businesses and economies of scale to multiple businesses concentrating on economies of scope. Third, another conventional response is to call for “decoupling” and “de-materialization”, where continuous growth is linked with a decline in material throughput. Since our modern capitalistic economies are good at improving efficiency, this seems an appealing approach. By changing business methods and strategies into those compatible with nature, an entirely new branch of industry can develop and a huge diversification of “green jobs” can be created, which will contribute to sustainable development and economic growth, and furthermore push forward the eradication of poverty. Corporate social responsibility could be used as an approach to stimulate sustainable patterns and foster solid public-private partnerships, the possibilities of which have not yet been fully exploited. The relevant entry points would be to establish, first, the extent to which business activities could be adapted to priorities of national or international development and, second, how Governments could effectively assist and facilitate those business manners.
