



## Economic and Social Council

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Item 2 (c) of the provisional agenda\*

**High-level segment: annual ministerial review**

### **Statement submitted by VIVAT International, 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.

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\* E/2012/100.



## **Statement**

### **Productive capacity, employment and decent work**

According to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, productive capacity is the productive resources, entrepreneurial capabilities and productive linkages that together determine the capacity of a country to produce goods and services and enable it to grow and develop. Promoting productive capacity in a country enhances employment and decent work, which in turn leads a country, especially the least developed countries, towards growth and development.

Development of the private sector with industrial upgrading and quality infrastructure service to attract private capital investment is essential. Additionally, the improvement of physical infrastructure, such as energy, transport and communication, and social infrastructure, such as education and health, play a key role in achieving development. The employment and decent work that result from such investment enhance skills development and prevent the increase of dependency.

### **Factors common to the least developed countries**

“Dependency syndrome” is a hallmark of poverty and is present in most of the least developed countries. The valuable resource of labour is often overlooked. When it is acknowledged, it is often exploited by employers. Governments need to reorient their development plans so that the voice of those living in poverty is heard and included in the discussion, formulation, execution and evaluation of new policies and programmes.

Most of the least developed countries have economies that are based on agriculture, involving either the cultivation of crops or animal husbandry. Strengthening agricultural productivity is a useful strategy and a practical means for promoting overall productivity in such countries. Increasing investments in farms and updating technology will transform basic agriculture into agribusiness, and a gardener into a farmer. This will strengthen food security and food sovereignty.

Unemployment, especially among youth, is an acute problem that affects developing countries. Since the greater portion of the population of those countries tends to be young, and given that the present formal system is incapable of absorbing this youth labour force into the mainstream, there are signs that youth will seek a stronger voice in determining policies that affect them and their future.

### **Recommendations**

1. Make agriculture an attractive and economically viable career choice for youth, and include in school curricula the study of agriculture and livelihood projects and training;
2. Promote programmes, for example, that teach about small-scale financial investment, making agricultural land available and providing practical mentoring, for those who have dropped out of formal education, in order to encourage more young people to consider farming as a worthy profession;
3. Expand career opportunities for youth; new business models for youth entrepreneurship and enhanced partnering with private sector industries will help achieve this.