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Statement submitted by NGO Coordination Committee for Iraq, 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

Technology, in particular information technology, has become an indispensable element for any successful operation, whether it is a non-governmental organization, a corporation, a political institution or any other type of entity. The world today, with the inclusion of developing countries, is closely linked through globalization and the increasing use of technology, and this is beneficial indeed if the purpose is to share information, perspectives and breakthroughs. Additionally, social norms and customs are being challenged and many countries, if not most, are realizing the need to adapt to the changing times. Preserving a culture is mostly measured by the ability of that culture to adapt and to remain relevant despite a constantly changing environment.

NGO Coordination Committee for Iraq is an organization that fosters coordination and an objective exchange of information between humanitarian and development actors in Iraq activities that are critical for bridging the gaps created by remote management and limited access to certain areas in Iraq. Our members work in fields that span the range of issues dealt with by the Millennium Development Goals and have collectively had a major impact on the development process in Iraq. Whether by working to improve economic conditions, promoting social and gender equality or working to protect the environment, our members have grasped the concept of coordination and adhered to it as critical to any successful endeavour.

Achievement of the objectives of the Committee is greatly facilitated by advancements in information technology. Gathering information and disseminating it in real time to over 68 member non-governmental organizations (international and national) and a network that includes around 1,000 civil society organizations in Iraq has had a direct impact on the development process in Iraq. This has been possible only through the utilization of technology in the service of supporting the development of Iraqi civil society.

Since Iraq is at a turning point, transitioning from emergency needs to more long-term developmental needs, it requires technological and scientific knowledge, and implementation of that knowledge, more than ever before. The use of information technology and electronic social platforms is making it possible for individuals and entities from different backgrounds to learn more about each other and engage in dialogues that foster solidarity and integration. Therefore, we recommend that:

- (a) Governments and organizations that are active in Iraq's reconstruction provide a focused approach when it comes to developing the country's infrastructure, in a manner that supports the utilization of information technology as a tool to achieve greater internal and external communication and knowledge-sharing;
- (b) Governments support actors and stakeholders in Iraq and the developing world with their coordination initiatives to better utilize information technology and scientific breakthroughs in the service of achieving economic and social development;
- (c) Stakeholders encourage the younger generations in Iraq and the developing world to invest more in education and in learning about the practical, beneficial uses of new technologies, as well as how these technologies can be utilized to bring people together and share information for the purpose of socioeconomic development and achieving social solidarity.