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**Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development
and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly:
priority theme: strategies for the eradication of poverty
to achieve sustainable development for all**

Statement submitted by Restoration World Outreach Ministries, 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 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.



Statement

Restoration World Outreach Ministries Inc. (RWOMI) is an organization dedicated to the social development of humankind, in particular, the most vulnerable and poor among us.

We are confident in the belief that the strategies outlined can address all of the sustainable development goals delineated by the United Nations. We at Restoration World Outreach Ministries, Inc., believe that changing outdated and misinformed thinking and mind-sets is critical for embarking on an initiative focused on eradicating poverty. We recognize that vision is a function of the heart and a light unto the path taken towards attaining successful outcomes, both incrementally and on a grander scale. Each person is created with the necessary vision from birth, to fulfil their purpose. Unfortunately not every individual or the society from which one serves necessarily has the opportunity to experience or benefit from his or her own self-actualization. In essence, every individual has the propensity to create and deliver positive community, societal, and global contributions. It is therefore imperative that for such contributions to take place, an understanding of how the association and inter-connectivity between vision, knowledge, and internal and external influences are shaped is of paramount importance.

The need for agreeing to genuinely and fervently engage in poverty eradication and realize sustainable development for all, begins firstly by eradicating discrimination at the global level. This presents as a major initiative towards reducing inequality within and among nations in accordance with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 10. The implementation of programs that discourage and alleviate discrimination based on nationality, race, skin colour, religion, culture or gender is one way to achieve this and ensure proper distribution of resources to poverty-ridden communities everywhere. Additionally, we must necessarily eliminate the employment of a "Credit Scoring System" in order to determine the financial capabilities of an individual as such a system lends itself to a certain level of discrimination and will hinder any progress we could make towards poverty eradication. Such a system permeates the stigma that "once poor, always poor."

Through our Feed the Homeless program, our organization serves and continues to serve anyone in need that comes forward to receive the help being extended. Our feeding and clothing drive initiatives are not targeted towards a specific market. However, where communities or countries are in dire need then our efforts may warrant a specific and intensified focus. For example, we feed over 650 homeless persons each week and continue to embark on clothing and shoes collection drives for such persons as well as others within local communities who ask for such assistance in addition to those whom we serve in South American, Caribbean and African countries.

We at Restoration World Outreach Ministries, Inc., design and implement training programs in various countries for the purpose of empowering communities with an awareness of and resources to develop and excel in areas such as education, financial planning/budgeting, starting a business and entrepreneurship. Consequently, such areas are intended to serve among the necessary building blocks and stepping-stones towards striving for the eradication of poverty. In addition, we consistently host and provide forums for various successful business-owners and

educators to motivate community members to start their own businesses while learning network strategies necessary for forming on-going professional relationships. Furthermore, we engage in mentorship for the youth in different communities, identify the diverse and unique gifts and talents that each possess. We encourage and teach our youth how to embrace their unique and valuable gifts and how to best apply these gifts towards creating his or her legacy grounded in global servitude.

The proper and ethical development of people must be the first priority for many non-governmental and community-based organizations. Proposed initiatives for attaining successful outcomes may begin with organizing a talent identification system for the purpose of allowing an individual's gifts and talents to be identified, harnessed, and applied towards income generating activities. Talents and gifts should not be negated or marginalized and academic achievements are to be glorified in its stead. In turn, this enhances the quality of the education system and ultimately helps to create a better society and eradicate poverty thus supporting SDG 4. Therefore, we must adopt an approach which not only objectively views people as the central objective in development thought and policy, but also utilizes their potential, skills, innate gifts and talents to realize social development objectives in a sustainable manner.

Our organization believes that by allowing illegal immigrants the opportunity of a pathway to citizenship, this will also contribute towards reducing poverty as they will be required to pay taxes, contribute to the school and economic systems, the real estate industry, while reducing the burden of the government to provide public assistance.

The implementation of a 3-year tax break for new businesses started by the poor is proposed so as to encourage socio-economically disadvantaged individuals to start their own businesses thereby engaging in job creation, making a positive contribution to economic growth and sustainable development for all and creating an environment for responsible production and consumption. This initiative is proposed to reduce poverty, unemployment, and crime, thus addressing SDGs 8, 9, 11 and 12.

Our diverse organizational initiatives include the request for duty free/tax free status on solar energy panels, farming materials and health equipment. UN entities can also work along with small NGOs to remove all duty from solar energy, especially in countries and regions where energy costs are high. This is intended to ultimately reduce poverty and benefit all stakeholders. This, in addition to being one of the cleanest forms of energy, will address SDGs 7 and 12. We also propose the application of a flat meter system on water usage; as well as an efficient re-design of the energy metering and calculations so as to ensure fairness and that the calculations can be easily explained. The need for building more tanks and wells for water use/storage are proposed as well.

Nations should facilitate access to funding by streamlining criteria to prevent exclusion of smaller NGOs to the pools of funds.

It is imperative to aggressively deal with drug lords, extortionists and their partners as their actions interfere with foreign exchange and trade.

Debt Forgiveness — Major countries need to write-off the debts of smaller countries. Accordingly, this would result in less of a burden and benefit all parties. Furthermore, a proposal to reduce taxes, particularly the sales tax/consumption tax/VAT is recommended.

Cash and capital contributions should be provided to build more labs and research centres for studying the impact on fruits and herbs for curing illnesses. This would allow and encourage farmers to plant fruit trees which impact greatly the economic growth and development in communities. Furthermore, revitalizing the health insurance platform must ensure that diverse medical issues for all and the benefits that accompany them are provided.

Implement programs to include schools and shelters where chefs voluntarily donate time, while instructing children and adults with special needs to prepare healthy meals. The adults can in turn use that as an income generating activity.

Governments can utilize idle buildings to become transitional homes to help the homeless. Furthermore, governments, the privates sector and banks must create a practical and user-friendly system to help those suffering financial hardship to avoid losing their homes in foreclosure resulting in homelessness. Within each person, are solutions for economic development and eradication of poverty. Accordingly, governments and all stakeholders must create an information database to listen to the various ideas for economic development and poverty eradication, thus ensuring implementation!

Finance is the most challenging of all the areas we face today. Most donors focus primarily on large humanitarian organizations, although the presence of the smaller NGOs is stronger in the communities, particularly the rural areas.

For the eradication of poverty to occur, consequently it will take the effort of all involved in the humanitarian initiative, including the distribution of resources designed to accomplish a mission of such magnitude.

Despite the challenges, we forge ahead determined. It is this approach that we must embrace if we are to achieve our theme and goal. There are great and significant strides that can be made towards achieving sustainable development for all through poverty eradication providing that we are committed to making the sacrifices necessary to achieve that goal. Recognizing that the word “all” includes every human being, then we must necessarily be careful to keep that in mind as we work together for the benefit of all concerned.