



**United Nations General Assembly: High-level meeting on the occasion of
the twentieth anniversary of the World Summit for Social Development
11 December 2015**

Summary of Statements

JEREMIAH NYAMANE KINGSLEY MAMABOLO (South Africa), speaking on behalf of the “Group of 77” developing countries and China, said that governments should strengthen their efforts to create policies that would promote and protect marginalized people’s needs. The adoption of the 2030 Agenda, he said offers a unique opportunity to end poverty and **empower women and youth, older persons and those with disabilities**, among others. The Group reaffirmed, in accordance with the United Nations Charter, the need to respect the territorial integrity and political independence of States. It also noted the importance of strengthening the implementation of current arrangements at all levels to protect the human rights of older persons, and encouraged States to continue discussions to explore alternative measures towards that end. In that regard, it welcomed regional developments regarding the strengthening of the legal framework for the protection and promotion of older persons’ rights.

EMMANUEL POTHWEI BENJAMIN (South Sudan) speaking on behalf of the African Group and aligning himself with the Group of 77, said the successful conclusion of the post-2015 development agenda was a clear demonstration of the international community’s commitment to realize the future it wanted. Reaffirming the centrality and indispensability of the **institution of the family** in Africa and its critical role in the continent’s political, cultural and socioeconomic development, he noted that the African family was facing many challenges, including poverty and the work-family balance.

While Africa was experiencing positive economic growth, progress was **slow in creating productive employment and decent work**, with **youth** facing **both unemployment and underemployment**, he said. He called on Member States and the international community to work together for disability-inclusive development and to **intensify efforts aimed at promoting and protecting the rights of persons with disabilities** in the post-2015 development agenda.

DIEGO ALONSO TITUAÑA MATANGO (Ecuador), speaking on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), said that hunger and poverty were among the worst forms of violation of human rights and that the task of eradicating them was an ethical, political, social and economic challenge for all. Additional broad measures are needed for the promotion of **inclusive development strategies** designed to achieve a more equitable distribution of the benefits of economic growth and to improve access to basic universal services. In that regard, the **social inclusion and integration of poor, marginalized people** should include the study and coverage of basic human needs. Good nutrition; universal access to healthcare; access to potable drinking water and sanitation, housing, quality and inclusive education, **full employment, decent work**; and **gender equality** must be part of development strategies, he said. Providing basic social services in those areas, based on the principles of equity, equality and accessibility had to be considered as a way to fight poverty and exclusion and **promote social integration**. It was essential to work for the promotion and participation of **young people** in education programmes and actively promote the full social, political, economic and cultural inclusion and integration of **women and girls, indigenous peoples, children, persons with disabilities and older persons**.

CHARLES WHITELEY (a representative of the **European Union**) called the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action among the most comprehensive social development plans. Its twentieth anniversary came at a critical time, when the world stood on the cusp of transformation and the 2030 Agenda outlined a new universal paradigm for poverty eradication and sustainable development. Investment in social protections was strategically important for enabling those participating in the labour market, protecting those were excluded from it and preparing others for risks.

Social development and social justice could not be attained in the absence of peace and security, or without full respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms.

OSAMA ABDELKHALEK MAHMOUD (Egypt) aligned his statement with the Group of 77 and the African Group, and said he was speaking on behalf of the “Group of Friends of the Family”. Egypt, he claimed would always be committed to promoting **family** values in the United Nations system, emphasizing that issues concerning the family should be given special attention by all Member States, in accordance with their own national laws, traditions and religious background, he added that all cultures and traditions respected the family as the main unit of society and the guardian of the rights of the child.

ABDALLAH Y. AL-MOUALLIMI (Saudi Arabia), speaking on behalf of the Gulf Cooperation Council, said the social development achievements realized over the past two decades following the adoption of the Copenhagen Programme of Work deserved commendation. He called on the international community to stand up to the challenges that

obstructed development. Since the 1995 adoption, the Gulf Council had worked on creating policies and plans to **help realize social development, especially placing importance on improving education** and providing equal opportunity to all. He went on to say that the Gulf Council had launched many initiatives to invest in the education and training of **youth**, encouraging **civil society** to play an important role in development through supporting youth education projects and literacy projects for **women**, among others. It attached special importance to promoting and respecting the **family** as the main unit of any healthy society, and as such, provided every type of support towards creating an enabling environment for the family. The Gulf Council had also taken special interest in the **elderly** and had enacted national legislation to ensure their social care, housing and health care, as well as undertaking programmes to educate those who provided care to the elderly.

INIGO LAMBERTINI (Italy), associating himself with the European Union, stressed the importance of a people-centred approach, which shed light on the individuality of people, rather than mere numbers. Only with such an approach, the needs of people, especially of those belonging to the most disadvantaged or vulnerable groups would be better understood. The forthcoming session of the Commission for Social Development would pay special attention to the needs of disabled people. He also stressed the importance of inter-generational responsibility to find durable and sustainable solutions so that future generations would enjoy a better world. That was stated in louder terms by the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, which joined the principles and goals of the World Summit.

MUHAMMAD ANSHOR (Indonesia) said that in reaffirming its commitment to the Copenhagen Declaration and its Plan of Action, particularly its goal of eradicating poverty, Indonesia is committed to pro-poor, **pro-job**, pro-growth and pro-environment policies. Since 2007, the Government has launched programmes aimed at empowering the **most marginalized at the grassroots level** by restoring their dignity and confidence, improving health and quality of education, developing their skills, improving their livelihoods, and facilitating greater access to economic opportunities and basic services. Indonesia had also redirected and reallocated fuel subsidies into productive activities and the 2014 Village Law entitled villages to become stronger and democratic; both moves represented major breakthrough programmes **promoting social inclusion**.

MAJDA MOUTCHOU (Morocco) articulated that while record of the Millennium targets showed tangible progress between 1990 -2015, poverty still besets too many people and meeting those challenges was the collective duty of the international community. He announced that Morocco was focusing its **social development** efforts on the region and strongly encouraged the participation of the private sector.

MASUD BIN MOMEN (Bangladesh) said that the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action represented a unique consensus on three objectives of social development, **namely eradication of poverty, promoting full and productive employment, and fostering social integration**. He stressed the importance on effective enforcement of labour laws with regard to migrant workers, inter alia, those related to their

remuneration, their working conditions and condition of their health, safety of work and right to freedom of their associations. He championed for the **education of girls and women empowerment**, stating that as half of the total population, women should be integrated in the mainstream economic activities.

MACHARIA KAMAU (Kenya), associating himself with the Group of 77 and the African Group, highlighted that the Government has allocated resources to implement social programmes that targeted the most vulnerable sectors of the population in order to tackle inequality and unemployment. It has also initiated zero-interest credit programmes, such as the **Youth Enterprise Development Fund** and the Micro and Small Enterprises Fund, targeting **youth, women and persons with disabilities**. The rights of persons with disabilities have been given constitutional safeguards to minimize their barriers to opportunity. The Government also upholds the rights and welfare of **older persons** through a social protection fund and it provided them with essential health services. On a global level, implementation of the 2030 Goals would require more partnerships, voluntary contribution and domestic resource mobilization.

ANTONIO DE AGUIAR PATRIOTA (Brazil), associating himself with CELAC and the Group of 77, said an important element of the Copenhagen Summit and the 2030 Agenda was the idea of “leaving no one behind”, with particular attention to **youth, older persons, and persons with disabilities**. He noted that Brazil recognizes the work of the Secretary-General’s Special Envoy on Youth and other initiatives, but the legal framework to promote and protect youth’s human rights was insufficient. At present, young Brazilians accounts for more than 25 per cent of his country’s population and in October 2014, Brazil signed the Ibero-American Convention on the Rights of the Youth, the only legally binding instrument specifically focused on the rights of youth.

Additionally, he noted that explicit references to ageing and the rights of **older persons** in core international human rights treaties remained scarce. Therefore consolidating the human rights of older persons into a specific, legally binding document would address the “regulatory dispersion” of those rights, thereby strengthening their monitoring and realization and fostering national policies to better define the responsibilities of States.

He clarified that Brazil’s social protection measures such as minimum wage adjustments and the government’s inclusive definition of **families** has allowed Brazil to lift 36 million people out of poverty.

WANG MIN (China), associating himself with the Group of 77, said that countries must implement the core tasks in social development in a balanced manner and based on their national priorities. He added that countries should focus on building sound social security systems to effectively safeguard the rights and interests of vulnerable groups. That meant embracing the principle of people-centred development perspective, building sound social security systems **and promoting social integration**. On the international level, the global community must do its part to **strengthen cooperation in social development** and increase support to developing countries, especially African countries and least developed nations.

BHAGWANT SINGH BISHNOI (India) said India's approach is to promote sustainable and inclusive growth for the welfare and well-being of its people, without leaving anybody behind. The government, he mentioned has accorded the highest importance to education for all, **gender equality & women empowerment, skill development** and **Digital India**. There is also a focus on rural women, **older persons** and **people with disabilities**. He said that **globalization and technology** had brought considerable benefits to society, but the lack of equity in global processes, among them the widening digital divide, continued to enhance inequality among and between countries.

EVGENY ZAGAYNOV (Russian Federation), associating himself with the Group of Friends of the Family, said the Copenhagen decisions were still as relevant as ever, cross-cutting the 2030 Goals. He supported the view of the Secretary-General that no one should be left behind during their implementation. Specific attention should be placed on programmes providing equal opportunities to **people with disabilities**. Another major challenge was the **ageing** population, requiring expanded support. A benchmark for that work was the Madrid Plan of Action on Ageing. Strengthening the family was another important goal which would contribute to maintaining moral values and solidarity between generations. **The well-being of the family was one of the main prerequisites of a society's development** and guaranteeing the family's stability in the long term was crucial. His country would continue to contribute to multilateral dialogue on the whole raft of issues.

CRISTIÁN BARROS MELET (Chile), associating himself with the Group of 77 and CELAC, said that, in recent years, Chile had sought to build a system combining democracy and **social justice**. In the 1990s, it was just beginning to reengage with the world and consolidate its democracy. Participating in the Copenhagen Summit had been a way of repaying the world's solidarity during its years of dictatorship. The Copenhagen Summit was a milestone event during which Heads of State realized that, to overcome social difficulties, it was important to prioritize **social spending** in the public expenditure of each State. Chile understood that, to overcome **poverty**, the first test of political will was to focus on cooperation and equity. Building an equitable State with **social investment** and opportunity was only possible if it was based on a new style of cooperation, characterized by a willingness to understand and set aside the idea of confrontation between rich and poor countries.

MIGUEL CAMILO RUIZ BLANCO (Colombia) aligned himself with CELAC and the Group of 77, and said that while the Assembly today highlighted significant progress since the Copenhagen Summit, the international community needed to recognize that there was still a long way to go in implementing everything that was envisaged back then. **Since poverty was due to many factors, its eradication was the biggest challenge facing the world**, and a prerequisite for sustainable development. **Full employment** was a goal that required the promotion of labour formalization, and developing focused **policies that addressed women, young, the elderly, and persons with disabilities, among other groups**. Strengthening national and local capacities was needed to achieve equitable social development.

FEDERICO ALBERTO GONZÁLEZ FRANCO (Paraguay) said that his country endorsed the statements made by the Group of 77 and by CELAC. The international community was taking a step in the right direction by adopting the 2030 Agenda. Today, Paraguay welcomed its implementation, which would put **an end to poverty**. Despite significant progress, reality showed that there was a gap created by **social inequality** which continued to grow. The main challenge facing his Government was making sure growth was inclusive. The international community needed to **address social exclusion**. Paraguay had made progress by developing special policies that were rights-based, and over the past decade, had made progress in reducing poverty and extreme poverty. **International cooperation** was important, a tool which would help support national strategies and programmes.

GHOLAMALI KHOSHROO (Iran) aligned himself with the Group of 77 and with the Group of Friends of the Family articulated that rising inequalities within and between countries; persistently high **unemployment** rates, particularly among **youth**; social tensions and conflicts; environmental degradation and the negative impact of climate change were among the complex and interrelated challenges across economic, social and environmental fields. And the challenges then called for a more holistic, coherent and integrated policy response. He clarified further that his government is fully committed to the protection and promotion of the institution of the **family**.

KAIRAT ABDRAKHMANOV (Kazakhstan) said that his country was determined to join international efforts to promote peace and stability, **eliminate global poverty** and inequalities, solve severe diseases and mitigate the impact of climate change. He emphasized that despite the country's current challenges, the government intends to improve education and health care systems and **increase salaries of public healthcare and social protection workers**, and **civil servants** between 30 and 40% of existing salaries. Moreover, the **most vulnerable groups** will have **upgraded minimum subsistence norms**, with intensive investments in human capital.

PHAM THI KIM ANH (Viet Nam) said more concrete actions are needed to address social development challenges. **The severity of vulnerabilities chiefly caused by violence and climate change is causing women, children, the poor, the elderly and people with disabilities to suffer the most**. The country's new poverty reduction programme is not only focused on income, but also living conditions, healthcare, education, housing, water and sanitation, and **access to information**. All efforts to achieve social development, she said should be people-centred. For people are both beneficiaries and the driving force of development. **It is then crucial to listen to the voices of the people, including at the grassroots, in the design of major development policies and programmes**. Social policies must be part of overall development policies, rather than tools to address the negative effects of social-economic development and crises. On an international level, she noted that **partnerships are indispensable to achieve social development**. The international

community should continue to strengthen cooperation in **capacity-building and technology transfer**.

IB PETERSEN (Denmark) aligned his statement with that delivered by the European Union. At the 1995 World Summit in Copenhagen, which at the time was the most significant conference ever to take place in Denmark, he had as a somewhat younger diplomat participated in planning and implementation. Denmark was extremely proud to have hosted the event. **Solidarity** has been crucial to Danish society as the world knew it today. As part of the 2030 Agenda, the social dimension was solidly reflected. That was of course significant, as social development was recognized as an integral part of sustainable development. If the ambitious 2030 Agenda was to be realized, the international community needed to leave no one behind. In many societies, people were at risk of marginalization. The international community must ensure that they were included and that their human rights were protected and respected. He cited an example from Denmark, where a company called “Specialisterne”, meaning The Specialists, employed consultants to do software testing, data entry, and other work for public and private clients. The company was a leader in the global movement to create jobs for **people with autism** who would otherwise be outside the labour market. The international community had come a long way in implementing the 1995 Programme of Action, but had to continue the **fight poverty**.

LOURDES YPARRAGUIRRE (Philippines) said that, once known as the “sick man of Asia”, her country was now one of the fastest growing economies on the continent. But progress achieved would be meaningful only if the benefits were felt by all, especially the poor. Towards that end, the Government had developed a conditional cash transfer programme, the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Programme, which targeted **families** most vulnerable to poverty. As of August, approximately 4.4 million households were benefiting from the flagship social development initiative, of which almost 600,000 were **indigenous**, and 220,000 of which had at least one **person with a disability**. The World Bank had recently hailed it as one of the largest and best-targeted social safety net programmes in the world. Regarding **the elderly**, the Department of Social Welfare and Development was set to implement the provisions of a **senior citizens’ law, mandating a monthly pension for all indigent senior citizens**.

FRANCISCO TENYA HASEGAWA (Peru) aligned himself with the statements made on behalf of CELAC and the Group of 77 and said that the international community was obliged to reaffirm its commitment towards implementing the Copenhagen programme. The international community had to take measures to address challenges and work towards an ambitious future. **There was a need to empower people** around the world, to focus on the development of **social inclusion** programme, and to **build more participatory societies**. A major task was to transform economic growth into substantive improvement for the world’s populations, a task for which the state was the institution responsible. Peru had a national strategy for inclusion, which was a reflection of the country’s social inclusion policy at national, regional and local levels.

HIROSHI MINAMI (Japan) said his country supported the human-centred approach of the 2030 Agenda, as it aligned itself with the notion of human security. Japan has reformed its Official Development Assistance Charter for the first time in 12 years to insert language on the importance of the promotion of **women's participation** and the consideration of **children, persons with disabilities, the elderly** and other **socially vulnerable people and stakeholders** in implementing development cooperation. Over the next three years, Japan will distribute more than 350 million dollars to ensure quality education in particular toward the empowerment of **women** and **girls**. On persons with disabilities, he mentioned that the country has **dispatched persons with disabilities overseas as specialist for vocational training programmes**. As the world's most aged society, the nation is engaged in efforts to **improve the access of older person to employment**, refining their work environment and combatting discriminatory dismissal.

RUBÉN IGNACIO ZAMORA RIVAS (El Salvador), associating himself with the Group of 77 and CELAC, said that the goals established in Copenhagen 20 years ago remained valid, but their fulfilment had been unequal. The international community must address the gaps with regards to **poverty** and opportunity while respecting the sovereignty, vulnerabilities and particular problems of various countries. El Salvador recognized the multiple dimensions of poverty and the need to address its structural causes. The scope of poverty had often been underestimated because it was measured using a basic food basket as an estimate, which did not reflect its complexity. His country had begun using a methodology this year which reflected the multidimensional aspects of poverty. That tool would improve **public policy formulation**, coordination and evaluation and give the country an opportunity to address the various dimensions of poverty and move forward towards more inclusive and sustainable development.

ANATOLIO NDONG MBA (Equatorial Guinea), associating himself with the Group of 77 and the African Group, said the anniversary of the Summit was a great opportunity to review the work since 1995 and gave new impetus to achieving the Summit's goals, many of which had not been achieved. The least advantaged countries continued to be disenfranchised from the world economy and affected by poverty. Their work towards the objectives from the Summit has been affected by a whole series of issues, including the decrease in aid and structural impediments such as **violent conflict and natural disasters**, in addition to global factors such as climate change.

ELISENDA VIVES BALMAÑA (Andorra) said that to achieve the 2030 Agenda, in addition to the political will of the public sector, it was also vital to include the **private sector and civil society** in the implementation process. From the Secretary-General's report, it was clear that the vulnerabilities were universal in nature, and poverty and precarious employment were particularly acute among the young and elderly. The master plan of Andorran Cooperation for Development prioritized the **protection of vulnerable persons** and those disenfranchised. Reducing infant mortality, improving maternal healthcare and strengthening women's involvement in achieving equal rights in society and at work were some of the goals promoted by the Government and civil society organizations as part of that

plan. With the adoption of the 2030 Goals, Andorra would revise and adapt its master plan to participate in international efforts **to eradicate hunger and poverty** in the world.

AMINA SMAILA (Nigeria), associating herself with the Group of 77, the African Group, and the **Group of Friends of the Family**, said that promoting social justice and the advancement of all was a major objective of her Government. Nigeria supports the notion that **family** is society's basic and fundamental instrument that united all the dimensions of the 2030 Agenda, she emphasized, urging greater attention to the core contribution of the family and its members to social development. **Young people**, she noted are to be viewed as asset to any society. Nigeria clarified that Nigeria has incorporated the interests of **persons with disabilities** into its national development plan. An all-inclusive national social welfare policy that heeds to developmental needs of persons with disabilities, orphans and vulnerable children, as well as the elderly within the society, remained the country's top priority.

ANCA JURCAN (Romania) said her country's chairmanship of the Commission for Social Development this year was a reflection of its commitment to the development of **an inclusive social system**, based on **equality, efficiency, equity and accessibility**, underpinned by respect for human rights, values and the principles of democracy, rule of law and dignity for all. The pursuit of sustainable development should be the "silver lining" of a better future. The forthcoming session of the **Commission for Social Development in February 2016**, she mentioned is an opportunity to further discuss how it could help implement and monitor the 2030 Agenda in a meaningful way.

OSCAR LEÓN GONZÁLEZ (Cuba) endorsed the statements made on behalf of the Group of 77 and also CELAC, and highlighted the validity of the Copenhagen Programme of Action. In those documents, the international community had agreed that **eradicating poverty** was the means to achieving development. There had been progress, but much inequality remained. The commemoration of the twentieth anniversary of the Programme of Action called on the international community to reflect on how it could act more effectively to implement the objectives it had set itself two decades ago, yet not achieved.

MARY FLORES FLAKE (Honduras) associated herself with CELAC and the Group of 77. Two decades ago, the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action had provided a way to put people at the centre of development. The international community had agreed to promote a vision of **inclusive policies** and to create an environment which respected human rights and worked towards **eradicating poverty**. At that meeting, Honduras had spoken on behalf of the Central American family. The report of the Secretary-General shed light on the path to follow in order to achieve the new sustainable development agenda. The present moment was a historic opportunity to interact and work towards an agenda which would build new synergies. Honduras prioritized **inclusive social development**.