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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: promoting empowerment of people in achieving
poverty eradication, social integration and full employment and
decent work for all**

Statement submitted by the Young People's Association for Human Development and Environmental Protection, 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.



Statement

Poverty alleviation

The assessment of governance and democracy in the context of current anti-poverty strategies against poverty is a major challenge; the more so since in sub-Saharan Africa there is virtually no information available on the views and attitudes of the people.

As the democratization process that has begun in many African countries is being consolidated, with greater emphasis being placed on citizen participation, there is a need to take stock of governance, democracy and poverty alleviation based on the people's perceptions.

Similarly, the Congo's vulnerable populations (men, women and children) need support throughout the plan's implementation.

That support will enable non-governmental organizations working in social sectors such as health, primary and secondary education and literacy, social affairs, advancement of women, and water resources to build their capacity, so as to prioritize their actions, provide guidance in resource use and increase their bargaining power.

According to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Congo is making progress towards achieving most of the Millennium Development Goals, but serious disparities remain. The poorest of the poor are overwhelmingly countryfolk, and in rural areas mortality among children and women is higher, girls are less likely to receive secondary education, and malnutrition affects mainly young children under 5.

Moreover, the report of the Congo's second Enquête Démographique et de Santé [demographic and health survey] (2011-2012), published on 15 October 2013, confirms that the Congo's progress has not benefited all segments of the population equally. Disparities are observed between departments; they vary, too, with several other factors, such as place of residence, gender, income level, and demographic characteristics such as age.

To achieve sustainable and inclusive development in the Congo, therefore, it is essential to strive for equity and the reduction of disparities in national policies, in the development of priority action programmes and medium-term spending frameworks.

International institutions have shown that a concern for equity in national policies, programmes and budgets will help spur economic growth. Since 2009, UNICEF has been supporting the Government of the Congo in its strategy of developing policies that are sensitive to the political rights of vulnerable and disadvantaged persons, including children.

We hope that these activities will enjoy the support of non-governmental organizations as well and will lead to awareness-raising.