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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 Europe Business Assembly Limited, 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

Specific pathways for the eradication of poverty: adult training and smart cities

Eradicating poverty is a task that concerns everyone, big global organizations and small NGOs. Combatting poverty is not, anymore, the monopoly of governments. Recently, citizens, businesses and NGOs became active entities in building nets of intervention to achieve the goal of eliminating poverty.

This statement purposes specific pathways to eradicate poverty that could be developed by small and flexible organizations with success.

It is important to note that beyond general and worldwide programmes to fight poverty, small, but consolidated results could be achieved by focused organizations applying concrete measures. In the case of EBA such measures are centred in two activities: adult training and smart cities.

Our philosophy is simple: “Whether trying to solve a major scientific mystery or simply produce a high-quality product or service, everyday progress — even a small win — can make all the difference” (Teresa Amabile and Steven J. Kramer).

In our organization, we care about the power of small wins.

As the UN secretary-general, António Guterres, wrote in his foreword to “The Sustainable Development Goals report — 2017”, to free humanity from poverty is a collective journey and involves, inter-alia, the need to bring quality education within reach of all and to deal with the existence of more than 2 billion people who are living in countries with excess water stress. Nine out of 10 city dwellers are living in cities where air pollution is a health hazard.

Thus, providing education to everybody, of course to children, but also to adults to facilitate their integration at the work market and contributing to personal and national development is a fundamental task within the range of NGOs related to concrete developing countries.

As Ian Goldin emphasizes, literacy and education are accelerators of development that could rapidly transform the situation of a family, that being true specially from a gender perspective of empowering women through education. The participation of person in the workplace obtaining better pay, promotion and business leadership has an eradication of poverty effect, mostly if education is promoted as a qualitative asset and not quantitative.

But adult training has another important feature, apart from being an accelerator of development, it allows a better adaptation to the globalization process as it equips people with the necessary skills not be overwhelmed by it.

In sum, adult training is fundamental to eradicate poverty, in two senses: it accelerates growth and it allows a good adaptation to globalization.

On the other hand, the urban development is a constant nowadays. As the OECD wrote some years ago, urban expansion is a result of globalization, and that has created new challenges when fighting poverty, as cities easily attract people, but let them live in absolute poverty and destitution. In fact, there is an acute contradiction between the “modernizing” globalization, presented as a passport to the developed world, and the miserable social bases from the past, on which this modernization is based even more strongly on the urbanized metropolises of the developing world.

The phenomenon of urbanization observed in much of the developing countries is largely due to the late industrialization matrix of the periphery. The attractiveness exerted by the industrial poles on the mass of the labour force expelled from the countryside (especially in the countries that received multinational enterprises that have leapt the transition from agro-export economies to “semi-industrialized” economies, such as Brazil or India) led to the explosion of large urban centres in the developing world since the 1960s, which did not receive the provision of housing, infrastructure and urban equipment to guarantee the quality of life for the newly arrived population. In most of cases, authorities were not able to respond adequately to this. The result of this process, which we will call “uneven urbanization”, is the gigantic underdeveloped Fordist industrial metropolis, which concentrates industrial production and the mass of labour available and marked by the social division of urban space which Lipietz termed “paternalistic agglomerations,” typical of “peripheral Fordism.”

In consequence it is fundamental to engage in a constructive process of changing the cities and creating the adequate environment for human life, making this a step to eradicate poverty.

These two aspects are the ones in which EBA is deeply involved, be it in adult training for developing countries, be it in creating a framework of development of smart and healthy cities.

Adult training is held at the EBA Expert Centre, Oxford. There was established a world centre for educational programmes resulting of the international association of over 150 university leaders, scientists and researchers. The EBA pursues the ideals of Academic Excellence, Innovation and Accessibility and is committed to disseminating these core values through its worldwide community, reaching mostly the developing world or creating platforms of knowledge exchange between everyone in the world. The primary aim of the Union is to consolidate the efforts on science, education, business integration and development in the 21st century through learning, sharing and training.

In the year of 2017, the EBA Expert Centre, at Oxford trained people from several developing countries giving them the skills to operate better in their countries and guarantee better jobs and pay. More than half of the persons were women, contributing thus to their feminine empowerment and abandonment from any cycle of poverty: Ghana, Nigeria, Angola, Laos, Pakistan, Mongolia, Kazakhstan, Guinea Equatorial, are some of the examples of countries with whom the Academic Union worked.

At the same time, concerning the creation of smart and healthy cities our programme “Prime Business Destinations” which aims to produce investment and promotion tools for attractive territories and businesses in a sustainable and smart way, has advance a series of initiatives. This a specialized programme of the EBA which supports the most active business areas and increases the investment attractiveness, as well as the popularization of the city brand in a business world. Under this programme, urban governance and management receive effective tools to search for potential partners and investors in order to develop sustainable solutions to urban development.

In 2017, the programme “Prime Business Destinations” paid special attention to Cambodia, Laos, Armenia, Kazakhstan.

The challenge EBA faces is to enlarge such programmes to more countries and persons and creating a system to reach them that has quality, but is cheap.

The social aims and responsibility of our organization oblige to develop a sense of harmony with the necessities and capacities of the recipients of our work.

Therefore, it is needed to engage in innovative forms of establishing contact and empowerment.

The way forward is to accelerate development and cope with globalization thru expansion of education that create new skills and empower people. Also, it is important to pay attention to create sustainable and attractive cities for everybody.

EBA's specific recommendation is that the eradication of poverty is a work to everyone accomplish, and it is important for each NGO to focus on their core activities, although small they are, because from several small steps a giant step is obtained.

Produce quality and excellence in your own work and your contribution to eradicate poverty will be essential.
