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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: Inclusive and resilient recovery from
COVID-19 for sustainable livelihoods, well-being, and dignity
for all: eradicating poverty and hunger in all its forms and
dimensions to achieve the 2030 Agenda**

**Statement submitted by International Council of Women,
International Council of Psychologists and Kolping International,
non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the
Economic and Social Council and member organizations of the
Vienna NGO Committee on the Family***

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

We the undersigned international non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council, recognize that several current events require both short and long-term reactions and actions to improve, in particular, the situation on poverty, malnutrition, and human rights in several communities worldwide. We are further aware, that a sustainable strategy is necessary to enable progress for social development, and in particular, to mitigate the consequences of climate change. The SDGs of the United Nations offer several possibilities to eradicate on-going inequalities and offer well-being and dignity for all.

The COVID-19 pandemic has additionally aggravated the situation of inequality. We are also aware from research of United Nations Agencies, that in particular, poorer families were especially affected from some governmental measures and economic impacts, which in turn, in some cases have led, to further and heightened social inequality. Wide-ranging international impacts of the pandemic are also visible.

The onset of the virus has accelerated the widespread digitalization of some societies, uncovering and exacerbating the so-called digital divide, in particular, in developing countries. Coupled with a so-called educational divide, this has resulted in the prevention of poorer populations and communities gaining necessary digital competencies and skills. Exacerbated inequality is further noticeable with regard to medical care, as families living in poverty, have often less options of receiving information and opportunities, particularly with regard to the Coronavirus and necessary vaccinations.

To ensure true Sustainable Social Development, a holistic and strategic approach is required, enabling developing countries to escape from poverty and build a social system enriched by equality for every single human being, regardless of their social status or gender.

We further recognize the impacts of climate change on society. Heat waves, drought, wildfires, and floods are affecting several countries worldwide, making it evident that immediate, as well as long term and sustainable action, is required, to prevent some species extinction, leading also, in some cases, to increasing numbers of famines.

We are acutely aware that ecologic, economic and societal changes are further necessary to enable stability and well-being for all. This includes the eradication of gender inequality and discrimination of women, people of colour and people of the LGBTQ+ society. True social development should lead to the growth of all individuals, and their experience of freedom. This would additionally support the acquirement of capabilities, containing knowledge, skills, and competencies, to build up sustainable societies, and enable economic and environmental changes, leading to better living standards and environments, for all individuals.

We therefore strongly support the demand to revise the 20th century social contract, which focused on the relationship between a growth economy, society, and governments, and instead, to focus, inter-alia, on current developments of inequalities affecting the well-being of humanity worldwide, calling out for systematical change in several areas. Sustainable actions are necessary to adequately protect human rights and gender equality, while mindful of historical injustices. An improved contract would also consider the importance of nature and climate protection. Additionally, a readjustment of our economic systems are also required. The inter-dependency of economic, societal and ecosystems, needs to be considered.

Sustainable ways of livelihood could also be facilitated, through the inclusion of systematical and holistic changes in our societies. A tighter inclusion of economic and climatic considerations are necessary to eradicate poverty and inequality in all aspects. Regardless of origin or social status, every individual should have universal access, to basic social services such as education, health care, safe water supply, and sanitation measures.

Current situations are often affecting, in particular, people living in poverty, especially in families. Therefore, new approaches of sustainable social development and well-being should also focus on social inequalities and their impacts on underprivileged families.
