Commission for Social Development
Sixty-first session
5–14 February 2024
Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly: Priority Theme: “Fostering social development and social justice through social policies to accelerate progress on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to achieve the overarching goal of poverty eradication”

Statement submitted by UNISC International, 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

UNISC International has its objectives to agree with the concept of the United Nations, contribute to international cooperation by students around the world, and achieve peace and development as an international institution of student chambers in the world. In order to achieve these purposes, this organization supports students and cooperates with the United Nations. In recent years, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) became one of the most important issues in the world, therefore, this organization sets it as one of the primary purposes to contribute to the achievements of SDGs.

UNISC International cooperates with the United Nations through several activities. The Japan Students SDGs Award, one of the main activities of this organization, was supported by the United Nations Information Center to show and give their agreement with the purpose of this award. This support gave us integral value to encourage students who applied for this award to move their actions forward to achieve SDGs.

The Women’s Leadership Summit in 2019 was authorized as an official side event of the 6th World Assembly for Women (WAW!), which is held by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan and cooperated with the United Nations. Ms. Michelle Bachelet, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, also placed her statement there.

UNISC International Annual Conference (UNIAC) invites students and knowledgeable persons from around the world to discuss global themes, such as “Sustainable Development Goals for Human Security”. In 2018, students from 11 countries participated in this conference and share their achievements and measures for each country’s different SDGs. In addition, some virtual conferences were held in which students learned about the social impact of COVID-19 and other issues in 2020.

UNISC International has also built relationships of trust with many countries, especially SIDS in the Pacific Ocean through the International Organization Internship. Therefore, this organization is able to gather reliable and practical information regarding the effect of global matters such as climate change on those countries and make proposals for more effective actions for the United Nations.

Thus, UNISC International has continued to provide opportunities for dialogue to overcome inequalities by age, social status, gender, and region.

Hereby, UNISC International writes the proposal regarding the agenda of the 62nd Session Of The Commission For Social Development as approved by the Economic and Social Council, “Fostering social development and social justice through social policies to accelerate progress on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to achieve the overarching goal of poverty eradication”.

It will be a positive and effective action to encourage learning about poverty and inequality for the young generation through conversations between students of industrial countries and the Small Island Developing States.

The young generation including students have strong concern for inequality and poverty. This is why they argue to learn about correctly this matter, act against it, and what this organization supports for them. Furthermore, the United Nations also encourages them to learn about this issue and express their opinions. However, the limited resources for students make it difficult for them to get enough knowledge, information, and political power to manage those issues. Then it can be an effective way for achievements of the Sustainable Development Goals to connect students with
the governments or institutes which are acting against inequality and poverty. Actions by governments or institutes for inequality and poverty should be explained and reviewed fairly by also the young generation because positive actions for the future need reliable information.

In addition, the Small Island Developing States are especially facing the economic inequality and poverty, which are caused by their small and isolated economy with high import and export costs for goods. Their economic isolation caused by these geographic and demographic factors needs international cooperation which includes both developed countries and developing countries because this matter cannot be solved alone. However, the Small Island Developing States have only limited political and economic influence on other industrial countries because of their small population and geographical distance, then the market principle hardly works in this matter. Then it is important to connect international cooperation schemes with the Small Island Developing States.

As seen above, each of them has a similar situation. Although both of them need enough knowledge, reliable data, and actual methods to manage their problem regarding SDGs, they are in difficult situations to reach such resources and opportunities to discuss with their counterparts.

Therefore, it is exceptionally important to connect the consciousness of industrial countries with the reality of the Small Island Developing States. In addition, governments and global institutions should share their problem awareness and attempts to inequality and poverty with the young generation. Actually, we have a lot of choices to realize this purpose.

One proposal for this matter is to hold the conference tentatively named “World Students Conference for Sustainable Development Goals in the Small Island Developing States” for students in both industrial countries and the Small Island Developing States, make them discuss inequality and poverty, and visit each other countries. Students in industrial countries learn about the attempt to overcome inequality and poverty in their countries from their governments or public institutions before the conference in order to explain it fairly and correctly. On the other hand, students in the Small Island Developing States share the critical problems regarding inequality and poverty in their countries, such as poor medical accessibility, inadequate drinking water supplies, or, low food self-sufficiency rate. They may also learn about the real opinions and problems from their governments or public institutions. In addition, both of them may require official support, then governments, NGOs, and the United Nations also attend this conference to discuss and improve their actions. Through such dialogue, students will know the fact of inequality and poverty, recognize the relationship between inequality and poverty and the Sustainable Development Goals, consider what they will be able to do in the future, and how they can reach necessary resources and realize effective policies in their countries. Since remote communication technology has been rapidly improved during the COVID-19 pandemic, this conference can be held in a hybrid style, both in-person and remote.

This conference aims achievements of SDGs goals of below.

Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere
Goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries
Goal 17: Revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

Only the global partnership across generations, regions, and economic scales can solve inequality and poverty matters.
In conclusion, giving students the opportunity to have conversations and dialogues regarding inequality and poverty with the people and governments of the Small Island Developing States is a very effective policy. Our organization hopes that the United Nations and other related institutions will support the young generation to create their own futures by encouraging their learning of the Sustainable Development Goals.