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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: “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 International Youth Council Yemen (IYCY) 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

International Youth Council Yemen (IYCY) is a nonprofit, non-governmental and Youth-led organization that is targeting Youth, Women and community in general and working nationwide at different levels to promote equitable and sustainable development, deliver humanitarian assistance, and other relevant interventions for a better life and wellbeing of communities and individuals. IYCY doubled its efforts to build and implement science-based, comprehensive, integrated Projects in several sectors at Yemen level that addresses the most critical needs of the most vulnerable people towards attaining the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Yemen has been in a civil conflict since 2015 with peace hindered by continued violence. The conflict has impact humanitarian priorities and shape development needs and there are significant challenges facing the Government of Yemen. The conflict has also exacerbated poverty and inequality, which has fuelled significant wealth disparities. This operating environment – with split and warring parties, separate governance structures, and no single agenda for building the resilience of the people of Yemen, or setting a people-focused agenda for recovery, poses significant challenges to the UN operation in the country and to the overall conflict sensitivity of any intervention.

Based on the UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION FRAMEWORK (UNSDCF) 2022 – 2024 and due to the conflict in Yemen, political and economic inequities have deepened. The conflict has a devastating impact on civilian life, public institutions, and infrastructure. Food insecurity in Yemen remains extremely high with a staggering 16.2 million people likely to experience high acute food insecurity, and acute malnutrition. Low food access is due to a combination of high household dependence on food imports, high food prices and significantly reduced household income.

Poverty in Yemen is worsening. Approximately 63 percent of Yemenis live in rural areas. Before the crisis poverty affected almost half Yemen’s total population. It now affects an estimated 71-78 percent of Yemenis. Women and girls are more severely affected than men and boys. Women headed households and girls are at higher risk of food insecurity, many to most having no steady source of income, exposing these families to risks of exploitation, harassment and abuse.

If the conflict in Yemen persists through to 2030 it has been assessed that development will be set back by nearly four decades. The population will be overwhelmingly malnourished, with many of those who survive facing lifelong stunting, thereby impacting their health, development, education, and productivity. All these elements have multiple dimensions that exacerbate the slowdown of SDG attainment, for example education is already affected with more than two million students out of school, affected by infrastructure damage and malnutrition, which can significantly impact an individual’s ability to learn.

In a context in which any efforts to attain the SDGs will be further slowed or reversed, the economy will be fundamentally altered, with GDP per capita ranking among the worst globally. Multidimensional poverty in children based on data from Yemen’s 2013 Demographic Health Survey (DHS) indicates that 76.4 percent of children experience moderate poverty and 48.8 percent experience acute poverty, indicating a lack of access to essential basic services. If conflict continues through 2030 any efforts to meet the SDGs will continue to face substantial setbacks, and those most at risk of being left behind will become increasingly vulnerable.

Leaving No One Behind (LNOB) is the central, transformative principle of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. The Common Country Analysis utilised the LNOB
framework has outlined how different population groups in Yemen are lagging behind or are at risk of being left furthest behind, because they are economically, socially, geographically and/or politically excluded, marginalised or impacted by conflict.

Since 2012, IYCY has been implementing several programs in different sectors reaching the most vulnerable people with lifesaving and economical projects through Yemeni governorates such as Alleviate poverty; suffering and injustice, the majority of vulnerable communities we serve face dire situations in the areas of health and nutrition. IYCY works to ensure inclusive access to the most basic life-saving services for all people. From 2014 to now, IYCY reached more than 1.9 million people in around Yemeni governorates, with provision the most lifesaving services for Youth, Women Empowerment, Health Care, Wash (Water sanitation and Hygiene Promotion), Food Security Livelihoods, Agriculture, Fisheries, Shelter NFIs, CCCM, Protection, Environment, Energy, pollution, Land governance, biodiversity conservation, Climate Change, Gender, Peace, Education services, capacity building and environmental protection awareness. In addition, almost 2.56 million people benefited from our work through implemented several projects in different sectors and scaling up our innovations. But that is not enough in a country that remains one of the world’s largest humanitarian crises.

Ending poverty is a challenge that requires a multifaceted approach,” says Luis-Felipe Lopez-Calva, World Bank Global Director for Poverty & Equity. “Countries cannot adequately address poverty and inequality without also improving people’s well-being, including through more equitable access to health, education and basic infrastructure. Empowering women, girls and youth will maximize impact across communities and generations. Policy makers must intensify efforts to grow their economies while protecting the most vulnerable people and families. This includes strengthening investments in social protection systems.”

We are calling UN Member states, UN Agencies, International Donors to support local civil society organisations (CSO) – including women and youth-led CSOs through implementing recovery and resilience response projects as well as in peacebuilding efforts and in the provision of protection services and establish a successful partnership to advance Yemen’s SDG goals and to Foster social development and social justice.