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Social development: social development, including questions relating to the world social situation and to youth, ageing, persons with disabilities and the family

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 19 December 2023

[on the report of the Third Committee ([A/78/472](#), para. 57)]

78/178. Promoting social integration through social inclusion

The General Assembly,

Recalling the World Summit for Social Development, held in Copenhagen from 6 to 12 March 1995, and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly, entitled “World Summit for Social Development and beyond: achieving social development for all in a globalizing world”, held in Geneva from 26 June to 1 July 2000, and noting the role of the Commission for Social Development,

Recalling also Economic and Social Council resolution 2010/12 of 22 July 2010 on promoting social integration and General Assembly resolution [76/136](#) of 16 December 2021 and its previous resolutions on promoting social integration through social inclusion,

Reaffirming its resolution [70/1](#) of 25 September 2015, entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, in which it adopted a comprehensive, far-reaching and people-centred set of universal and transformative Sustainable Development Goals and targets, its commitment to working tirelessly for the full implementation of the Agenda by 2030, its recognition that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development, and its commitment to achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions – economic, social and environmental – in a balanced and integrated manner, and to building upon the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals and seeking to address their unfinished business,

Recalling its resolution [74/4](#) of 15 October 2019, in which it endorsed the political declaration in the annex thereto entitled “Gearing up for a decade of action and delivery for sustainable development: political declaration of the Sustainable Development Goals Summit”,



Welcoming the fact that the 2030 Agenda reflects the cross-cutting nature and importance of social inclusion, through the relevant Sustainable Development Goals and associated targets, and acknowledging that its promotion is required to achieve sustainable development in all its dimensions,

Reiterating the pledge that no one will be left behind, reaffirming the recognition that the dignity of the human person is fundamental, and the wish to see the Goals and targets met for all nations and peoples and for all segments of society, and recommitting to focusing our effort where the challenges are greatest, including by ensuring the inclusion and participation of those who are furthest behind,

Recalling that the 2030 Agenda includes, among the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, which are integrated and indivisible, a goal to promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels,

Reaffirming its resolution [69/313](#) of 27 July 2015 on the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, which is an integral part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, supports and complements it, helps to contextualize its means of implementation targets with concrete policies and actions, and reaffirms the strong political commitment to address the challenge of financing and creating an enabling environment at all levels for sustainable development in the spirit of global partnership and solidarity,

Deeply concerned that the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, multiple climate-related disasters, political and economic instability and other crises have eroded the ability of Member States to successfully implement the 2030 Agenda and to fulfil its promise that no one will be left behind and that the world's poorest and those who face any form of social exclusion have been among the hardest hit, thus exacerbating existing inequalities,

Deeply concerned also that a slowdown in the reduction of poverty rates since 2015, despite some signs of early progress around the time that the 2030 Agenda was adopted, was aggravated by the devastating economic and social consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, leading to an increase in the number of people living in extreme poverty for the first time in a generation, reversing three decades of steady progress,

Deeply concerned further, in this regard, that poverty persists in all countries of the world, regardless of their economic, social and cultural situation, and is particularly severe in developing countries, and that it extends to and manifests itself in, among other things, social exclusion, hunger, discrimination, the feminization of poverty, vulnerability to trafficking in persons and disease, lack of adequate shelter, lack of access to basic services, illiteracy and hopelessness,

Acknowledging the need to develop a multidimensional perspective of poverty that is not limited to economic deprivation but also takes into account social inequities and the fact that a person's disadvantages in one or more areas can exacerbate the detrimental and cumulative impacts of other disadvantages, and recognizing that measures of multidimensional poverty account not only for insufficient income, but also for deprivation in areas such as health, education and living standards,

Noting with deep concern that many people live in multidimensional poverty across the world, including 1.1 billion in acute multidimensional poverty,

Recalling that the political declaration adopted by the high-level political forum on sustainable development convened under the auspices of the General Assembly (Sustainable Development Goals Summit), held in New York on 18 and 19 September 2023,¹ inter alia, emphasizes that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions,

¹ Resolution [78/1](#), annex.

including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development,

Reaffirming that empowerment, participation and social protection are essential for social development, as well as for social inclusion, and that sustainable development requires the meaningful, full and equal participation of all,

Recognizing the great importance of promoting comprehensive systems of social protection that provide universal access to essential social services, consistent with national priorities and circumstances, in order to help to meet the internationally agreed development goals, including the Sustainable Development Goals,

Taking note with appreciation of the commitment of several United Nations entities to mainstream social inclusion into their work, and encouraging others to do the same,

Reaffirming the commitment of the international community to promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for everyone, as necessary, to eradicate poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, which should be complemented, as appropriate, by effective social protection policies, including social inclusion policies,

Reaffirming also the importance of reducing inequalities within and among countries through the empowerment of all and the promotion of social, economic and political inclusion, especially for those in vulnerable or marginalized groups or situations,

Recognizing that the gains of economic growth should also benefit those in vulnerable or marginalized groups or situations,

Affirming its strong support for fair globalization and the need to translate growth into the reduction of inequalities, eradication of poverty and strategies and policies that promote full, freely chosen and productive employment and decent work for all and that these strategies and policies should constitute fundamental components of relevant national and international policies and national development strategies, including inequality and poverty reduction strategies, and reaffirming that employment creation and decent work for all should be incorporated into macroeconomic policies, taking fully into account the impact and social dimension of globalization, the benefits and costs of which are often unevenly shared and distributed,

Recognizing that the three core themes of social development, namely, poverty eradication, full and productive employment and decent work for all and social integration, are interrelated and mutually reinforcing, and that an enabling environment therefore needs to be created so that all three objectives can be pursued simultaneously,

Reaffirming its resolution [73/342](#) of 16 September 2019 on the International Labour Organization Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work, in which it reaffirmed that full and productive employment and decent work for all are key elements of sustainable development,

Taking note of the International Labour Organization global call to action for a human-centred recovery from the COVID-19 crisis that is inclusive, sustainable and resilient,

Recognizing that social inclusion and equality are intrinsically linked and that focusing on and investing in the most disadvantaged and excluded populations, which may include children, women, youth, persons with disabilities, older persons, migrants and Indigenous Peoples, is critically important for the effective achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals,

Recognizing also that social inclusion policies and systems play a critical role in promoting an inclusive society and are also crucial for fostering stable, safe,

harmonious, peaceful and just societies and for improving social cohesion and inclusion so as to create an environment for development and progress,

Reaffirming the important role of corporate social responsibility and accountability in contributing to an enabling environment to promote inclusive economic growth and social integration,

Recognizing that social inclusion policies also strengthen the democratic process and play a critical role in progressively realizing economic, social and cultural rights for all,

Stressing that social inclusion policies should promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls and equal access to opportunities and social protection for all, in particular for those in vulnerable or marginalized groups or situations, including women and girls who experience multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and violence, considering that the empowerment of women and girls will make a crucial contribution to progress across all the Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda,

Recognizing that women often make up a large portion of the workforce in self-employment and part-time or temporary work and continue to bear most of the responsibility for unpaid care work, having, as a result, lower rates of labour force participation and shorter formal working careers, which limits their ability to contribute to social security entitlements, and noting in this regard that mechanisms to build social protection over their life course, including care and support systems, can help to address this situation,

Reaffirming the importance of ensuring the social integration of older persons and the promotion and protection of their rights, as an integral part of development policies at all levels, and recognizing that older persons can make a significant contribution to sustainable development in its three dimensions – economic, social and environmental,

Recognizing persons with disabilities as both agents and beneficiaries of development, stressing the need to promote the rights of persons with disabilities and their participation, including through their representative organizations, in implementing the 2030 Agenda, and in that regard noting with appreciation the 2018 *Disability and Development Report: Realizing the Sustainable Development Goals by, for and with Persons with Disabilities*,² the first progress report on disability inclusion in the context of the 2030 Agenda, which is aimed at advancing efforts to remove barriers and empower persons with disabilities,

Reaffirming that youth participation is important for development, and encouraging Member States to explore and promote the participation of young people in relevant decision-making processes and monitoring, including in designing and implementing policies and programmes involving them, while implementing the 2030 Agenda,

Recognizing the important role played by civil society, including non-governmental organizations, in promoting social integration, *inter alia*, through social programmes and support for the development of socially inclusive policies,

Acknowledging that the participation of persons in vulnerable or marginalized groups or situations is crucial to formulating and implementing social inclusion policies that effectively achieve social integration, as appropriate,

Reaffirming the important role of cooperatives, especially in developing countries, in reducing inequality within and among countries and ensuring social

² United Nations publication, Sales No. 19.IV.4.

inclusion while promoting more inclusive and equitable growth in order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals with the aim of leaving no one behind,

Recognizing that each country has primary responsibility for its own economic and social development, and reaffirming the essential role of national policies and strategies in promoting sustainable development in all its forms, particularly the promotion of social inclusion,

Recognizing also the importance of an enabling international environment, and stressing the importance of enhanced international cooperation to support national efforts towards promoting social integration through social inclusion in every country, including the fulfilment of all commitments on official development assistance, debt relief, market access, financial and technical support and capacity-building,

Expressing concern that, in times of economic and financial crisis and ongoing concern about energy and food insecurity, social exclusion can be exacerbated, and stressing in this regard that sustainable and reliable social inclusion policies and programmes can play a positive role,

Recalling its resolution [76/195](#) of 17 December 2021 on financial inclusion for sustainable development, in which it recognized the importance of financial inclusion for achieving sustainable development,

Recognizing that digital technologies have profoundly transformed society, promote innovation and offer unprecedented opportunities and that they have the potential to accelerate the realization of the 2030 Agenda, advancing social development and promoting social inclusion, by ensuring access to lifelong quality education and training, health and related social services, decent work, affordable housing, social protection, especially for those who are vulnerable or in vulnerable situations, as well as fostering gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, and in this regard considering that bridging the digital divide is essential for all and necessary for achieving social integration through social inclusion, while also acknowledging the risk that digitalization may contribute to rising inequalities and that it also poses new challenges regarding data protection and privacy,

Recalling its resolution [77/150](#) of 14 December 2022 on information and communications technologies for sustainable development,

Recognizing that, in order to leave no one behind and bring everyone forward, actions are needed for the promotion of equality of opportunity so that no person is denied basic economic and social opportunities, and recognizing also that the promotion of equality of opportunity contributes significantly to the enjoyment of all human rights,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;³

2. *Stresses* that Member States, which bear the main responsibility for social integration and social inclusion, should prioritize the creation of a “society for all” based on respect for all human rights and the principles of equality among individuals, non-discrimination, access to basic social services and promotion of the active participation of every member of society, in particular those in vulnerable or marginalized groups or situations, in all aspects of life, including civic, social, economic, cultural and political activities, as well as participation in decision-making processes;

3. *Reaffirms* that social integration policies should seek to reduce inequalities and that equity and social inclusion are important for achieving sustainable

³ [A/78/188](#).

development, ensuring that individuals can participate without discrimination and contribute to its social, economic and environmental dimensions;

4. *Recognizes* that a framework for social development that is people-centred, gender-sensitive, respects human rights and has a particular focus on the poorest, most vulnerable and those furthest behind can promote social integration through social inclusion, and that the integrated nature of the Sustainable Development Goals requires a global response and can benefit from international cooperation;

5. *Calls upon* Member States and other relevant stakeholders to advance, with determination, bold and concerted actions to address the social, economic and health impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, while striving to get back on track to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by designing and implementing age-, disability- and gender-sensitive recovery strategies to accelerate progress towards the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,⁴ as well as helping to enhance resilience to future shocks, as one of the measures to ensure social integration through the social inclusion of all;

6. *Recognizes* that the social integration of people living in poverty should encompass addressing and meeting their basic human needs, including safe, nutritious and sufficient food, health, safe drinking water and sanitation, housing and access to quality education and employment, through integrated development strategies, and reaffirms that the provision of basic social services in these areas should be seen as a means of fighting poverty, exclusion and promoting social integration, and in that regard encourages Member States to provide universal age-, disability- and gender-sensitive social protection systems, which are key to ensuring poverty reduction and eradicating extreme poverty, including, as appropriate, targeted cash transfers for people and families in vulnerable situations, which are most effective in reducing poverty when accompanied by other measures, such as providing access to essential services, high-quality education and health and related social services;

7. *Acknowledges* that investment in human capital and social protection has been proven to be effective in reducing poverty and inequality, and invites Member States to mobilize additional innovative sources of financing, as appropriate, including through public-private partnerships, to secure adequate levels of social expenditure necessary for expanding coverage towards universal access to health, education, innovation, new technologies and basic social protection, and to address the issues of illicit financial flows and corruption;

8. *Stresses* the importance of promoting inclusive and equitable quality education that is age-, disability- and gender-sensitive, as well as lifelong learning opportunities for all, especially for children, women, youth, persons with disabilities, older persons, migrants, Indigenous Peoples and persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, and of skills development and quality training as essential means for inclusive participation and integration in society;

9. *Calls upon* Member States to promote a more equitable participation in and access to economic growth gains, through, *inter alia*, policies that ensure inclusive labour markets and by implementing socially responsive macroeconomic policies, in which employment has a key role, and social inclusion strategies that promote social integration, implementing nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, particularly for those who are in vulnerable or marginalized groups or situations, as defined by each country in accordance with its individual circumstances, including on a demand-driven basis, and the promotion and protection of their social and economic rights;

⁴ Resolution 70/1.

10. *Encourages* Member States to consider, when appropriate, the creation or the strengthening of national institutions or agencies for promoting, implementing and evaluating social inclusion programmes and mechanisms, at the national and local levels, in order to help to ensure that no one is left behind;

11. *Also encourages* Member States to consider promoting the increased civil, political and economic participation of women, young people, older persons, persons with disabilities, Indigenous Peoples and persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, including through promoting their involvement in political processes and their access to social protection, credit, vocational training and employment support services;

12. *Further encourages* Member States to ensure inclusive participatory and representative decision-making processes, at all levels, and to review existing legal frameworks, as appropriate, with a view to removing discriminatory provisions so as to reduce inequalities;

13. *Encourages* Member States to promote social inclusion as a matter of social justice in order to build the resilience of vulnerable populations and to help them to adapt to the negative impact of economic crises, humanitarian emergencies, natural disasters and climate change, and in this regard invites relevant United Nations entities and international institutions to support such efforts;

14. *Invites* Member States, and encourages regional organizations, to support national efforts to achieve inclusive societies, in particular in developing countries, upon their request, by providing, *inter alia*, financial and technical cooperation for the design and implementation of sound social inclusion policies;

15. *Encourages* Member States to mainstream social integration objectives into social inclusion policies, promoting the participation of persons in vulnerable or marginalized groups or situations in planning, implementing and monitoring processes, in collaboration, as appropriate, with relevant organizations of the United Nations development system, regional organizations, international and regional financial institutions, development and social partners, the private sector and civil society organizations;

16. *Also encourages* Member States, recognizing that all legal, social and economic barriers to the empowerment of all women and girls have to be removed, to promote the systematic mainstreaming and inclusion of a gender perspective in all social inclusion strategies or initiatives, while giving special consideration to the promotion of a gender-responsive policy environment in the workplace for the empowerment of women in the workplace;

17. *Further encourages* Member States to consider adopting and pursuing national financial inclusion strategies or initiatives that take into account a gender perspective and comprise, *inter alia*, measures for promoting full and equal access to formal financial services and financial literacy, as a way to increase the capacity of young people, women, persons with disabilities, older persons and Indigenous Peoples to leverage various types of opportunities for their full participation in society, such as entrepreneurs;

18. *Recognizes* that information and communications technologies have the potential to provide new solutions to development challenges, particularly in the context of globalization and the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, and can foster sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth and sustainable development, competitiveness, access to information and knowledge, trade and development, poverty eradication and social inclusion, accordingly reaffirms its commitment to bridging the digital divide, and calls upon Member States to implement policies and to accelerate their efforts to close the digital divide, as a measure to attain the social inclusion of all,

with a focus on children, youth, women, persons with disabilities, older persons, migrants and Indigenous Peoples, without any discrimination;

19. *Urges Member States, in collaboration with other stakeholders, to close the digital divide, both between and within countries and including rural-urban, youth-older persons and gender digital divides, and to promote digital inclusion, by taking into account national and regional contexts and addressing the lack of efficient, affordable and accessible digital technology infrastructure, access to the Internet and communication devices, especially in rural and remote areas, and the challenges associated with digital literacy, digital skills, training and awareness, by ensuring that the benefits of new technologies are available to all, taking into account the needs of those who are vulnerable or in vulnerable situations;*

20. *Reaffirms the commitment of the New Urban Agenda, adopted at the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III), held in Quito from 17 to 20 October 2016,⁵ to embracing diversity in cities and human settlements, to strengthening social cohesion, intercultural dialogue and understanding, tolerance, mutual respect, gender equality, innovation, entrepreneurship, inclusion, identity and safety, and the dignity of all people, as well as to fostering liveability and a vibrant urban economy and to taking steps to ensure that local institutions promote pluralism and peaceful coexistence within increasingly heterogeneous and multicultural societies;*

21. *Invites Member States, relevant organizations of the United Nations system, regional organizations, international and regional financial institutions, development and social partners, the private sector and civil society organizations to continue to share their experience in respect of practical initiatives to promote economic, civil and political participation and non-discrimination measures and other measures for advancing social integration;*

22. *Invites Member States to consider a systematic exchange of good practices in social integration at the regional and international levels so that policymakers and other stakeholders can apply them to their national circumstances and step up progress towards achieving a “society for all”;*

23. *Encourages Member States to improve the collection and use of high-quality, accessible, timely, reliable, disaggregated data and statistics, including, as appropriate, additional metrics of, *inter alia*, basic well-being and deprivation of basic human needs, to capture the prevalence of multidimensional poverty, for the formulation of policies and programmes aimed at achieving social inclusion, especially among those who face any form of social exclusion, and stresses the importance of international cooperation in this regard;*

24. *Requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly, at its eightieth session, a report on the implementation of the present resolution, taking into account the information provided by Member States and relevant actors of the United Nations system, with a particular focus on the role of social inclusion for addressing multidimensional poverty and promoting social integration;*

25. *Decides to consider the question further at its eightieth session under the item entitled “Social development”.*

*50th plenary meeting
19 December 2023*

⁵ Resolution 71/256, annex.