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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 Federation for Family Development, Doha International Family Institute, European Large Families Confederation, Fédération Européenne des Femmes Actives en Famille, Haro Riksorg. Valfrihet Jämställdhet Föräld. Skap, non-governmental organizations 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

Joint Civil Society Statement in preparation of the 30th Anniversary of the International Year of the Family in 2024.

Since 2018, a group of transnational and regional organizations have been fully involved with the Preparations of the 30th Anniversary of the International Year of the Family. The commitment aims to turn the 30th Anniversary into a substantial and enriching discussion to bring the role of the family unit and policies towards social development into reality.

In order to make every effort count, the alliance of non-governmental organizations has been working on a Civil Society Declaration. The Civil Society Declaration tries to integrate family needs into the various Megatrends proposed by the United Nations' Secretary General (E/2019/66). At the same time, the Declaration will help with the European Child Guarantee adopted in June 2021, to design and implement services and interventions that reduce the effects of poverty and social exclusion on children in need of support and protection.

The Civil Society Declaration will be an effective instrument to foster all the support possible among a broad spectrum of partners (A/RES/76/139). The voices of the families that integrate the Declaration, together with the substantial contributions from experts, are key to addressing the challenges of many families. Thanks to the continuous efforts of the various organizations involved up until now, the Civil Society Declaration will be launched in the framework of the Observance of the International Day of the Family 2022. From now on, it will spur support to best prepare for the 30th Anniversary of the International Year of the Family in 2024.

As the 30th Anniversary of the International Year of the Family in 2024 (IYF+30) is approaching, the civil society organizations signing below declare their resolution to contribute and work together with the UN-System, Member States, other stakeholders and in particular with the Division for Inclusive Social Development of United Nations DESA (DISD) in the preparations and celebrations, according to the following statement:

Civil Society Declaration – 30th Anniversary of the International Year of the Family

We welcome the proposal to focus the preparations and celebrations on the major trends identified by the United Nations Secretariat, namely the (new technologies, climate change, urbanization & international migration and demographic change) and their impact on families.

We also welcome the consultations made by UN DESA DISD and are thankful for the opportunity to participate in them and other initiatives related to IYF+30, such as the Expert Group Meetings organized in June 2020 and September, 2022

We consider the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, signed by all Member States, as the clearest roadmap for the future. Eradicating poverty (SDG1), consolidating health habits, promote wellbeing for all ages and pursuing the wellbeing of people (SDG3), reaching inclusive equitable quality education (SDG4), achieving gender equality (SDG5) and make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable (SDG11) should also be highlighted in these preparations, to underline the indispensable role of the family as a catalyst in the achievement of the SDGs, and to overcome the unprecedented health, economic, and social global crisis produced by the COVID-19 pandemic.

We reaffirm the role of the family unit, as one of the main agents for recovery, governance, cohesion, protection, education, care, and development within societies. Families are crucial development agents, and as such, an adequate environment is needed to facilitate their role and IYF+30 constitutes an adequate occasion to promote and consolidate it. It is therefore vital to develop an advocacy and communication strategy for IYF+30 and engage the various stakeholders, especially policymakers.

We reaffirm that the family, as the fundamental unit of society and the natural environment for the growth and well-being of all its members, particularly children, should be afforded the necessary protection and assistance so that it can fully assume its responsibilities within the community.

We recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies, and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate.

We promote a better consideration of well-being and mental health issues of caregivers and care recipients through research, good practices, interventions, and protection strategies, with a focus on the social consequences of the pandemic on families (rather than economic concerns only).

We recognize that the child, for the full and harmonious development of his or her personality, should grow up in a family environment, in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding.

As a consequence, *we acknowledge* the key role that is played by family-oriented networks and organizations in advancing the mainstreaming of family policies within local, national and international policies, the most meaningful vehicle for governments to influence the living standards of all generations.

To this end, we propose the following recommendations on four megatrends:

New Technologies

Address the intergenerational digital gap among all family members in order to design and implement policies and programs to strengthen solidarity, recognize interdependence, ensure equal educational access, build mentorship schemes among generations and promote positive interactions and intra-family relations.

Promote the use of new technologies in flexible work arrangements such as teleworking, through the provision of public and private services, infrastructure, and social protection policies to enable families to fulfill their care responsibilities. Efforts should be made to help families to strike a work-family balance and make the best possible use of new technology to fulfill their roles in the family and workplace.

Ensure accessible technology to all family members, considering it as an investment to develop educational programmes, new services, jobs, and forms of cooperation. In an effort to achieve equity and reduce the digital divide, work towards a universal access to proper underlying infrastructure, devices, skills and protection from abuse and harmful practices.

Encourage and assist open communication between parents and children, fostering resilience and good use of technology, including awareness about online risks.

Climate Change

Develop strategies to face the impact of climate change on families by assessing challenges regarding food security, housing, energy poverty and health through family strengthening, family networks and parenting programs.

Support a better understanding of the active role of families regarding circular economy and promote adequate legislation and education for it.

Emphasize the role of the younger generation addressing causes and consequences of climate change.

Involve the private sector through their efforts in environmental, social and governance strategies.

Urbanization and International Migration

Recognize the benefits of the right to family reunification and establish safe remittances for migrants and their families, while addressing context-specific needs and requirements for mothers, fathers and caregivers.

Plan and implement family-responsive urban spaces that are inclusive, safe, resilient, healthy, affordable and sustainable in order for families to thrive.

Support positive economic, social and environmental links in urban settlements and rural areas by strengthening family engagement in national and regional development planning with the creation of family councils integrated by all members of the family.

Demographic Shifts

Provide assistance, care and protection for all family members taking into account longer life expectancy, growing numbers of dual-worker households, declining fertility, higher rates of family breakdown and changing family patterns, particularly through the evaluation and development of the healthcare, pension systems and care policies.

Develop, promote and implement policies aimed at ending child poverty through the eradication of family poverty, while encouraging social, economic and educational policies to prevent intergenerational transmission of poverty; strengthen job security, promote the provision of integrated services for families and family-friendly fiscal policies and practices, including reduced taxes on goods and services for early childhood products and services.

Promote initiatives on early childhood development through allowing parents and primary caregivers to spend more time with their children to bond and to secure attachment in the first years, as well as to provide better access to health and child development services, affordable childcare, parental leaves; and other effective ways to cultivate children's potential and improve their wellbeing.

Develop, invest in and implement programs for family strengthening and parenting education, to emphasize positive parenting and prevent corporal punishment and domestic violence.

Support the role of the family during the social inclusion process of young people transitioning into the labor market, in order to prevent the intergenerational cycle of poverty, with practical initiatives such as housing programs, professional experience, basic skills, training, social protection coverage, access to financial resources and adequate working conditions.

Recognize, protect and value the socio-economic contribution of unpaid care and domestic work, considering its financial, societal and cultural aspects and ensuring transfer of cultural and ethical values between generations.

Foster healthy and active aging, promote intergenerational solidarity and meet the needs of elderly in vulnerable situations. Put in place quality and affordable community-based and institutional care services when the family cannot supply it.

Raise-awareness of the role of grandparents in the family and the value of older persons for the whole society.

This Civil Society Declaration has been prepared and signed by the International Federation for Family Development, Doha International Family Institute, the European Large Family Confederation, the European Federation of Parents and Carers at Home, Haro's Platform on Family Policies from Sweden, the Large Family Association of Hungary.

It has also been signed by CIFA Consortium of Institutes on Family in the Asian Region, HJEM HJEM – Hjemmeforældrenes Landsorganisation, AFR Asociația Femeilor din Romania ÎMPREUNA.
