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**Statement to the forty-seventh session
of the Human Rights Council**

[H.E. Mr. Vaqif Sadiqov]

[H.E. Mr. Purevsuren Lundeg]

Chairperson-Rapporteur of the 2020 Social Forum

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Madam President,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am pleased to present to you the report of the 2020 Social Forum of the Human Rights Council which I had the honour to co-chair with H.E. Mr. [Vaqif Sadiqov] [H.E. Mr. Purevsuren Lundeg] as appointed by the President of the Council.

As you all recall, the Social Forum is a unique space for interactive dialogue between the United Nations human rights machinery and multiple stakeholders to address issues linked with the national and international environment needed for the promotion of the enjoyment of all human rights by all.

The Social Forum took place on 8 and 9 October. The report is contained in document [A/HRC/46/59](#). As decided by the Council, the Forum focused on good practices, success stories, lessons learned and current challenges in combating poverty and inequalities.

Despite the many challenges of organizing the Forum during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020 edition had almost 400 registered participants, including representatives of 53 Member States and thousands watched the Forum online. The first day of the Forum had 1,209 live views, and the second day counted live viewers from 107 countries. During the month following the event there were over 1,600 views of its archived videos.

The Forum included excellent contributions from almost 40 speakers representing governments, international organizations, civil society and academia. They participated in discussions on various subjects relating to a range of factors perpetuating inequalities, obstacles to public services reaching the poor, public policies and budget, and how to build an international enabling environment to fight poverty and inequality grounded in human rights.

The programme also included side events, a musical presentation by the UN music club, and a short documentary about capoeira as a path to the dignity of refugees.

The 2020 Social Forum built on themes considered at previous sessions which related to combating poverty and inequalities and considered new challenges, including those arising from the pandemic. The Forum was guided by a “poverty matrix” prepared by the Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty, the core human rights treaties, the Declaration on the Right to Development and other human rights instruments.

Madam President,

I would like to take this opportunity to elaborate upon some of the conclusions from the discussions.

Participants agreed that poverty and inequalities derived from multiple, complex and interrelated causes at the local, national and global levels, including macroeconomic policies that undermine human rights and sustainable development.

COVID-19 had exacerbated poverty and inequalities, disproportionately affecting the poor, women, girls, children, youth, older persons, persons with disabilities, informal workers, racial, ethnic and religious minorities, people of African descent, Dalits, peasants, indigenous peoples, migrants and refugees.

Factors that perpetuate poverty and inequalities include structural and systemic discrimination against the poor and marginalized. Inadequate access to food, education, health services and digital technologies for children and youth perpetuated intergenerational poverty. Unpaid or undervalued care work and women’s overrepresentation in the informal sector increased the feminization of poverty.

Neoliberal policies, structural adjustment and privatization had undermined States' capacity to deliver public services, which violated minimum core standards, commitment to the principle of non-retrogression and the progressive realization of socioeconomic rights.

Madam President,

Several forward-looking recommendations emerged from the 2020 Social Forum. Allow me to report some of them.

Urgent and bold response packages to recover from COVID-19 and its consequences should aim at a more resilient, equal and sustainable world with justice in all dimensions, including economic, social, gender, racial, fiscal, redistributive, climate and environmental.

All human rights must be placed at the forefront in building better, fairer and greener societies for present and future generations and provide the basis of a new social contract.

States should have the necessary fiscal and policy space to invest in health systems, education, care work, housing, water, sanitation, electricity, infrastructure and digital resources, supported by targeted public policies and a strong multilateral system.

Measures on debt suspension, debt cancellation, including by private creditors, and liquidity expansion should be extended to allow developing countries to deliver on human rights, sustainable development and climate targets.

Policies to eliminate poverty should include data collection to identify those most in need of assistance and areas to be prioritized, while also considering advantages of universal schemes.

Active, free and meaningful participation of poor and marginalized communities should be ensured in the formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of national and international policies combating poverty.

States should consider linking child protection benefits to wage growth to reduce intergenerational transmission of poverty.

States should promote local, peasant and indigenous food systems and agroecology, and address land concentration through land reform.

States should promote a just transition to green and decent jobs, while safeguarding labor rights and standards. They should provide universal social protection floors.

States should adopt a human rights-based approach to taxation to raise the necessary resources for public investments in basic social services and should cooperate to curb illicit financial flows.

All stakeholders should increase engagement in the United Nations process of financing for development, which provides a forum to advance a more equitable multilateral system. They must also cooperate to revitalize the agenda on technology transfer and overcome obstacles to transfers that can contribute to the realization of the right to development in developing and least developed countries.

States should ensure universal access to COVID-19 vaccines and treatments as global public goods including by supporting the waiver of certain provisions of the WTO TRIPs agreement.

States should remove or refrain from imposing unilateral coercive measures, especially those that aggravated poverty and inequality in targeted countries.

Madam President,

In conclusion, allow me to express my gratitude to all stakeholders for their active participation and valuable contributions to the outcome of the 2020 Social Forum. I would also like to thank the Secretariat for their excellent work in ensuring the organization and success of the Social Forum.

I hope that the Council will take due note of the conclusions and recommendations of the Social Forum in its action during this and future sessions.

Finally, I would like to inform that the 2021 Human Rights Council Social Forum will be held in October and will focus on good practices, success stories, lessons learned and challenges in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, with a special focus on international cooperation and solidarity, and from a human rights perspective. I thank you for your attention.