



## Economic and Social Council

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### **Statement submitted by the Mali Youth Association for Agriculture, 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 30 and 31 of resolution 1996/31 of the Economic and Social Council.



## Statement

The issue of scientific and technological development and innovation will never cease to be of concern to humankind, as we are imbued with those values and are seeking modernity and peace. Those disciplines, which have proven to be the most effective tools for the eradication of extreme poverty and famine, and the best guarantee of universal primary education in the northern hemisphere, are not, despite those clear benefits, properly used in the poorest and least developed countries. How can we account for that sad reality? The reasons are no doubt many, but would it not be logical to suppose that the fault lies in ourselves, as we are unable to grasp, appreciate and strive for our peoples' growth and development, notwithstanding the assistance of the international community? The latter, however, should not stint its efforts to significantly reduce child mortality and improve maternal health worldwide through scientific and technological progress.

The education ministries of the poorest and least developed countries do require support, but they should, a priori, find scientific and technological development and innovation to be in their own interest if that support, combined with their willing efforts, is to bear fruit. Only in that way can the teaching of science subjects, which in the poorest and least developed countries is purely theory-based, change and become more practical; and only in that way can the ministries find the means to create and equip new laboratories and encourage critical research for sustainable development in their countries.

Considering how great the impact of new technologies can be on access to knowledge and its dissemination, greater efforts should be made to further facilitate access to knowledge for the peoples that need it. Young people may drive knowledge dissemination, but they must stay one step ahead of economic growth, industrialization and productivity policies. They must be at the heart of technological progress, the drivers of innovation, but that is not the result of their majority status relative to other age groups; rather, it is because they have witnessed the failure of good governance in their countries and are currently in no position to play a role in globalization;

Hence the importance of placing youth in the forefront of these policies, supporting them and putting them in charge of innovation and scientific and technological progress, so that in the near future, food security and primary education for all can be achieved in poor countries. Young people are well aware of the realities of the future; we must trust them to develop and to innovate in science and technology in the poorest and least developed countries.