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**Written Statement by Organization of Mutual Entities of the Americas (ODEMA)
(Organización de Entidades Mutuales de las Américas)**

Agenda item 3: Ensuring effective implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals through leadership, action and means, 3 (e): Strategies for integrated action to achieve poverty eradication: implications for public institutions.

MUTUALISM IN SOCIAL AND SOLIDARY ECONOMY AND HITS LINKING TO THE DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

The report on the fifty-third session of the Commission for Social Development emphasized the importance of decent employment, comprehensive and well-designed social policies and social protection for the achievement of genuine sustainable development. Social protection was identified as key element for reducing poverty, inequality and exclusion, and that a right-based approach was an essential factor of a people-centered development, which should be reflected in the objectives and goals of social development.

It was also pointed out that providing better support to families, improving the well-being of children, ensuring a balance between work and family, were crucial elements for the achievement of a better quality of life and good for economic and social development in general. And that there should be an increased commitment to strengthen the participation of young people at the national and international levels and for protecting the rights of older people by doing so complementing existing national and regional frameworks.

In this sense, the social and solidarity economy is strengthened as an expression strongly directed to the alleviation of poverty and by providing a better quality of life for the people, based on the mutual collaborative effort of his inhabitants.

In particular, Mutualism, is a stronghold of solidarity economy, is one of the most genuine entities, which successfully apply the methodology of associativism (association, to associate), subject to principles such as voluntary adherence, democratic organization, institutional neutrality (political, religious, racial and free association), Contribution according to the services being received, social capitalization of surpluses, social and mutual empowerment and Integration for development.

These seven basic values of the mutual doctrine, where practiced throughout time in a natural way by mankind, and fully retain their validity in today's society and make up a modern system of help and reciprocity.

Mutualism and the principles discussed so far can ensure a path to sustainable development by 2030 and can serve as a common framework for action and cooperation for sustainable development.

In order to support the efforts of the international community and taking into account the lines of work of the post 2015, new agenda, American mutualism has adopted initiatives that seek to achieve the objectives of sustainable development. These actions have as a priority ensuring the dignity of the human being and include promoting the establishment of a minimum social protection floor of universal scope for achievement of a more inclusive and equitable economy.

This floor seeks to reduce social and economic inequities, promotes equal opportunities, seeks to empower women, secures access to primary and secondary education, improves health through primary health care and ensures food security and nutrition. This integrated policy approach seeks to ensure the social protection of the population, based on inclusive economic growth that promotes sustainable development.

In its report entitled "The role of mutual societies in the 21st century", the European Parliament proposes the following definition: "Mutual societies are voluntary groups of people who, rather than making a return on their investments, seek above all to meet the needs of its members. They operate in accordance with the principle of solidarity between members, who are involved in the management of society. In addition to cooperatives, foundations and associations, mutual societies are one of the main components of the social economy. "

Current mutuals, which operate in the field of health and insurance, are the heirs of the "mutual aid societies", which appear from the Middle Ages in Europe. These are societies made up of people who want to join together to protect themselves against risk. They differ fundamentally from commercial insurance corporations in which they are non-profit organizations, which are based on principles of solidarity and democracy. In addition, they share risk among members, while commercial insurance accepts a portion of the risks of their clients in exchange for a premium.

Thus then the principles of mutualism , which have their origins in the 9th-century labor movement and which value solidarity and access to medical care for all, are very similar to the principles on which public security systems are based on.

Never the less, a system of social protection cannot be developed and acceptable without the State establishing, or contributing to its establishment. It is essential that the State, or social protection agents, apply or participate in policies aimed at improving the quality of life for the people.

The objective of mutual societies is not their growth, but the widest possible development of social protection. Therefore, its function is complementary and interdependent of the public social protection system. The mutual societies adapt well to the new contexts and redefine their benefits in function of the evolution of the public system.

At present, the mutualism of the region integrated in the Organization of Mutual Entities of the Americas makes available to more than 20,000,000 people protection systems that guarantee favorable economic, physical, social and environmental environments. As real agents of change, mutual entities of the continent and the world in general constitute the basis for a sustainable human development and are fundamental generators of strategies aimed at achieving higher levels of inclusion, through the development of actions, programs and

practices that seek to improve the conditions of human welfare, thus presenting Social Protection as a guarantee of equity in Urban Development.

“No nation or organization can advance alone in solving development problems”, as United Nations Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson said in 2015. Local, national, regional and global alliances are crucial to achieving the goals in the arena of development, adding that such partnerships can become an engine of progress if they operate in a transparent, inclusive and accountable manner.

In conclusion, mutual societies provide answers to the challenges faced by social protection systems, whatever their level of development.

They respond even better, since the values on which mutualism is based are present in the founding principles of universal social protection: mutual societies act in accordance with the principle of solidarity to build a long-term protection for all without excluding the risks they represent, or on the basis of their income. In this sense they always act in line with the public function and respect their principles of universality and solidarity. They are not limited to the charitable sector or the vulnerable, but operate through the principles of solidarity and reciprocal responsibility.