The challenges of précis-writing and implications for training

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What is Précis-writing?

- **Meaning**: précis = “a concise or abridged statement”
- **Product**: the official “summary record” of a meeting, in a single language
- **Content**: summary of statements made and decisions taken at a meeting
- **Process**: note-taking in meeting room, writing up from notes and recording
SKILLS

• Languages
• Analysis
• Writing
Last year, the member states adopted the historic 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement, the Addis Ababa Agenda. The momentum for progress in those areas, must be matched by progress in achieving the objectives of the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action on Social Development.

Poverty eradication through people’s empowerment has always been the top development priority of my government. Our people-centric model with its seven elements; poverty eradication, education, skill development, elimination of discrimination and extremism, inclusion, participation and employment generation is guiding the government to realize its vision for a poverty-free prosperous country.

My country has made commendable progress in respect of most of the social indicators. It has touched the landmark growth rate of 7 percent in 2015-16 that has played a positive role in eradicating poverty. The robust growth has been accompanied by corresponding improvement in several social indicators such as increase in the life expectancy, despite having one of the world’s highest population densities. The population living below poverty line is 12.9 per cent in 2015-16 which was 56.7 per cent in 1991.

Significant progress has been made in increasing equitable access to education. The net enrolment ratio in the primary school is 97.7 per cent. In addition, gender parity in primary and secondary enrolment has already been achieved. The proportion of population using safe drinking water and improved sanitation is 98 per cent and 56 per cent respectively.

[The speaker said that] the adoption of landmark agreements over the past year should inspire progress towards achieving the objectives of the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and the Programme of Action. Eradicating poverty by empowering people had long been a priority of the speaker’s Government. To that end, its development model emphasized education, skills development, elimination of discrimination and extremism, inclusion, participation and employment generation.

The country’s robust growth rate had led to a steep decline in the population living below the poverty line as well as increased life expectancy. Nearly everyone had access to safe drinking water. Net primary school enrolment stood at 97.7 per cent; gender parity in primary and secondary enrolment had already been achieved; …
Reported speech

“The United Nations is…” → “[The speaker] said that the United Nations was…”

Verb tenses: was conducting → had been conducting

Pronouns: I → he/she

Possessives: our → their

Demonstratives: this, these → that, those

Adverbs: yesterday → the previous day
Training

- Analysis
- Writing
Resources

• Editorial Manual

• Dag Hammarskjöld Library
  http://research.un.org/en/docs/find/meetings

• United Nations Language Careers
  https://languagecareers.un.org/content/documents

#UnivUN17
Gracias | Спасибо | Merci | Thank you | 谢谢 | شكرا

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Questions? Comments?

Running out of time?
Please follow up with the main speaker by email: durnin@un.org