

**Tunisia statement on “Employment and decent work for all, social protection, youth, education and culture”, during the fourth meeting of the UN Working Group on SDGs (New York, 17-19 June 2013)**

Co-Chairs,

At the outset, I would like to align my delegation with the statements made by Fiji on behalf of G77 and China and Djibouti on behalf of the African Group.

Co-Chairs,

Education, social protection and culture are very important issues that impact sustainable development at the national and the global level and should be therefore appropriately addressed by the OWG on SDGs through goals and targets to be achieved both nationally by Governments and relevant stakeholders and internationally by the International Community and particularly donor countries, through measurable and predictable means of implementation. We fully endorse the related elements that have been presented, in this regard, in the G77 and China and the African group statements.

Co-Chairs,

My declaration will be focused on additional elements related to the employment and decent work for all and youth issues and particularly the actions that should be undertaken at the global levels in the context of SDGs.

Co-Chairs,

Employment is a lead determinant of growth and development. The employment-generating capacity of growth strategies is essential for achieving sustainable, sustained, and inclusive economic growth. Therefore, the SDG framework should include specific goals and targets on global supportive actions and policies related to job creation and decent work for all.

Regrettably, what began as a crisis on the financial markets has become a global jobs crisis. The depth and nature of this crisis differs either across ages and regions and within countries but the most affected generation globally continue to be the youth. The findings of the ILO Global Employment Trends for Youth 2013 **estimated that the youth unemployment crisis is affecting** about 73 million young people in 2013. This number doesn't take into consideration the quality of jobs.

The economic and social costs of this **alarming** situation for young people continue to rise and could **undermine** economies' growth and political stability.

Therefore, we believe that an urgent action is needed to address this crisis both nationally and at the global level. **The commitment of HoS during Rio+20 conference, listed in para 24 of Rio+20 outcome document and related to the development of a global strategy on youth and employment should be fully**

**fulfilled within the context of SDGs in order to** address youth unemployment crisis at all levels. This global strategy on youth and employment needs to be conceptualized within the broader objective of full employment, decent work, and dignified livelihoods, and should address either the quantity and the quality of jobs.

Co-Chairs,

To be effective, the employment focused policies require national as well as global enabling factors and necessitate addressing the following issues, within the context of SDGs and the Global Strategy on Employment:

**1- Securing policy space for national governments to design and manage various policy tools at their hand**, including macroeconomic policies, trade, investment, finance, technology, tax, and social protection to prioritize decent employment generation. There should be a target related to policy space issue in the context of SDGs.

**2- Trade and investment policies should be designed to prioritize support of productive policies and employment generation. The ability of countries to pursue and achieve their quest towards sustained, sustainable, and employment-generating growth strategies depends in large part on how effectively and appropriately they integrate into the global economic system.**

Furthermore, the capacity behind employment generation is fundamentally linked to reviving and enhancing productive capacities, through adequate finance, investment, transfer of technology and trade policies, that should be part of the targets associated to the goal related to job creation and decent work for all.

Yet, the international trade and investment relations, as currently designed, pose several critical impediments to the ability of states to carry out national development strategies and macroeconomic policies that support eliminating socioeconomic inequities. It also impedes boosting employment levels and supporting the diversification and dynamism of local economies.

A global trade system that works for employment generation will require the strengthening and operationalization of the principle of special and differential treatment for developing countries. This includes addressing the implementation challenges facing developing countries, respecting the principle of less than full reciprocity for developing countries, and securing development-oriented rules.

Moreover, arriving at development-focused investment policies necessitates revision of many of the current national and international investment legal frameworks. It involves establishing and strengthening the right to regulate for the public interest, including the need for prioritising employment-generating policies. Accordingly, it requires rethinking and reforming the models of international investment treaties that underpin the global movement of foreign investments.

**3- Global Macroeconomic policies** must prioritize employment creation and support economic growth through boosting output in the real economy, not just focusing on price stability, inflation management, and redress of macroeconomic imbalances.

Accordingly, the global employment strategy requires a review in the current global macroeconomic policy framework. This is especially important in view of the global economic slowdown, which is now affecting the developing countries adversely. The global economy should follow an expansionary macroeconomic path based on productive employment generation and shifting labour to higher value-added activities in developing countries.

**4- International financial liberalisation** has underpinned the global economic crisis, which led to millions of job losses and reverse of development trends achieved in recent past. The crisis also led to an increase in poverty and negative effect on growth prospects in developing countries. **Finance** needs to be more focused on providing security for people's savings and mobilising resources for productive investments. This necessitates restoring the capacity of national authorities to better control capital inflows and outflows.

Building a development-supportive international financial and economic system should be a cross cutting Goal which necessitates new multilateral mechanisms that prevent the adverse spillovers and shocks to developing countries from policies undertaken in some developed countries or destabilizing impulses from the international financial markets.

**5- Reforming international economic governance and institutions;**

A structural constraint to development-oriented economic policies are the contractionary loan conditions and policy advice attached to financing and assessment reports from the BWIs, and to the financing of aid donors and multilateral development organizations. The role, governance, and accountability of these institutions should be supportive of decent work and job creation growth for all. Their work programs should reflect and work towards operationalizing the right to work and the global strategy on employment.

**6-** The human desire to seek decent employment and livelihoods is at the core of the migration development nexus. Therefore the **SDG process should Recognize and promote the key role of labour migration to the development agenda** which should be part of the policy packages of the global strategy on employment.

Thank you.