



## **INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION**

**Statement By: Ms. Jane Stewart, Special Representative and Director,**

**ILO Office to the United Nations**

### **“Addressing new and Emerging Challenges”**

Mr. Chair,

The shift towards a green economy and the creation of green jobs is essential to achieving the commitments pledged at major conferences and summits on sustainable development. This shift also constitutes an effective response to emerging challenges such as the current economic and financial crisis. To date, however, the labour dimension of sustainable development, including green jobs and essential social protection floors needed in the transition to green jobs, has not received sufficient attention given the impact it can have on the willingness of citizens to embrace the drive to a low carbon economy.

As many have already pointed out, economic growth does not automatically lead to sustainable environmental and social improvements. This is particularly true in the case of labour. In some areas of the world, for example, employment and incomes have been created but as a result of unsustainable use of natural resources. These jobs provide benefits only in the short term, making it impossible to achieve sustainable development. A further note in this regard, the report of the Secretary General affirms, “income levels of the poorest nations will need to increase by a factor of 20 or more in order to achieve adequate human development, while those of the broad range of countries in between may need to increase five or ten fold.” Ensuring that this new employment and subsequently additional income is generated in a sustainable way will be a great challenge for communities and countries as well as regional and global interests. It should necessarily, place labour institutions and labour actors, meaning workers and employers, in the middle of the decision making and implementation processes.

By more clearly acknowledging labour markets and labour institutions, in both developing and developed countries, as key drivers of sustainable development, the UNCSO will put important focus on an essential but to date, under-emphasized element of the sustainable development model. The ILO would recommend that the labour dimension of the green economy be included as a topic for discussion of the UNCSO, with the objective of developing recommendations on how to achieve sustainable development through labour policies and institutions. The ILO stands ready to assist in this endeavor. Thank you.