

4th Session of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals, 17 June 2013, Opening Statement

**Major Group - workers and trade unions,
(International Trade Union Confederation)**

Employment and Decent Work, Social Protection

The Rio+20 outcome document recognized that decent work and social protection floors are indispensable components in achieving internationally agreed development goals. It also recognized that national governments are responsible for achieving poverty eradication, gender equality and social protection.

Issues briefs - commend, cover many key points, sets context and opportunities for action. Opportunity for the OWG - New policy framework, new and more ambitious policy wisdom.

1) We want **2 stand alone global goals:**
- full employment and decent work for all;
- universal social protection floors.

Needed to drive the structural transformation that is required for a genuinely inclusive, sustainable development - relevant in developing, transitional and developed economies.

Decent work, with all of its 4 elements, can help develop a more socially inclusive and economically dynamic development model and is required to achieve poverty eradication, combat inequality, including income inequality.

a rights based framework

core enabler for healthy and dignified lives, fair and productive livelihoods, environmental sustainability and good governance.

is at the heart of any social contract between the state and its citizens;

to comprehensively address the interlinkages, coordination - across Ministries/agencies, the foundation to meet other fundamental goals and commitments.

To be recognised for its contribution to the broader sustainable development agenda, given the profile and coordinated effort to be realized, integrated, coherent effort (international and national levels).

Over the last decades, the ultra flexibilisation of labour markets combined with wages stuck at low levels (in many cases far below productivity levels) produced a surge in the number of working poor, growing informality and income inequality. Work is becoming more precarious and informal across all countries, no matter their development status.

2) What is Decent Work?

- Productive Employment
- Rights (core labour standards: - freedom from forced labour; child labour; right to organise, collectively bargain; discrimination in employment)
- Social protection
- Social dialogue/tripartism - contribution and participation

Need to be kept together, not pick and choose some elements, or as we have learned, to the detrimental economic and social cost of many countries, we lose impact. All are needed in addressing the interlinkages of the economic/social/environmental policies and impacts.

What type of jobs?

Distinction between "Good" jobs, (World Bank, HLP Report) which undermines decent work. Targets should not just be for economic growth, experience of jobless growth. Provision of skills/training is insufficient to ensure generation of productive employment. Green and decent

jobs - drive investment, managed well, transitions to environmentally and socially sustainable economies can become a strong driver for job creation, job upgrading, social justice and poverty eradication.

3) What is social protection?

Rights based framework.

Foundation for a "Just transition" to lower carbon, sustainable development. Address inequality and the needs of those living in extreme poverty.

Support national level policy making, local ownership, participation and accountability.

- Income security for unemployed (unemployment benefits)
- Income security for elderly (pensions)
- Income security for people with disabilities
- Income security for children (child benefits)
- Income security for pregnant women (maternity benefits, maternity leave)
- Access to quality education
- Access to affordable healthcare
- Access to affordable housing
- Access to sanitation
- Access to water

Based on ILO Recommendation 202, Bachelet Report. Recognized and endorsed in 2011 by the entire UN system and the G20. Financial feasible- IMF-ILO country specific SPF financing mechanisms.

4) Means of implementation:

Link between the 2, interlinking of contribution of worker's income and capacity to access services. Financing: government revenues - eg reallocation of public expenditure; taxation reform including a global transactions tax; illicit financial flows, tax havens; restructuring debt; new macroeconomic framework.

- A) Decent work: governance, labour market institutions, combat inequality (wages, collective bargaining, redistribution). Generate productive employment.
- B) Social protection: funding sources: public financing, domestic revenues - international mechanism for social protection - technical assistance (ILO), and funding and resourcing. International solidarity. Harmonizing coordination. Feasibility, measurability, nationally designed and defined.

5) Targets and indicators:

HLPReport: doesn't sufficiently encompass the full meaning of Decent work or social protection. We have published positions. Websites. We can provide inputs. Opportunity for OWG to come up with more coherent, meaningful indicators, in a forward looking way.

Question for member states:

Is there the international solidarity to ensure progress and the realization of SDGs?

How can we ensure the willingness to make the commitments for a transformative framework on SDGs?