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International Trade Union Confederation  
Confédération syndicale internationale  
Confederación Sindical Internacional  
Internationaler Gewerkschaftsbund

**João Antonio Felicio**

President  
Président  
Präsident  
Presidente

**In reply please quote:**

[ILO General Survey on Social Protection](#)

**To all affiliated organisations**  
**To all Global Union Federations and TUAC**

**Sharan Burrow**

General Secretary  
Secrétaire générale  
Generalsekretärin  
Secretaria General

**For information:**

**To all General Council Members**  
**To all Women's Committee Members**  
**To all Youth Committee Members**

12 June 2018

**ITUC reply to ILO Article 19 questionnaire on Social Protection Floors**

Dear colleagues,

We would like to inform you that the ITUC has prepared and submitted an official reply to the [ILO questionnaire on Social Protection Floors](#). Please find it attached. This reply follows the ITUC guidelines disseminated to affiliates in February on completing the questionnaire (see attachment).

As the reply is very extensive, we would like to draw to your attention to some particular considerations.

While some important achievements have been made to extend social protection in recent years, in line with ILO Recommendation 202 on Social Protection Floors, social protection coverage remains unacceptably low internationally, with less than 30% of the world's population having access to comprehensive social protection systems. Substantial coverage gaps in social protection exist in particular for women, informal workers, people on atypical/irregular contracts and vulnerable social groups such as ethnic minorities and people with disabilities. The ITUC is moreover very concerned by significant retrenchments to social protection that have taken place in other countries in recent years – in particular reductions in benefit levels as well as reductions in coverage – often with pressure from international organisations and international financial institutions. Such reforms are not only contributing to greater poverty and inequality in some countries, but are a threat to sustainable, inclusive economic growth.

Moreover, as indicated in the letter, the ITUC finds Recommendation 202, together with existing international labour standards in the area of social security, to set out a good framework for adequate, comprehensive social protection systems. Overall, these different instruments are complementary and mutually reinforcing, and the ITUC would be opposed to any consolidation of existing instruments.

The ITUC has indicated to the ILO the need to work more closely with governments to achieve the full ratification and application of the existing Conventions as well as implementation of Recommendation 202. In this regard, the ITUC has indicated that ratification of C102 should be more systematically included in Decent Work Country Programmes with the necessary ILO technical assistance to member states to help them ratify. Ratification should also be an important feature of the ILO Flagship Programme on social protection, where the ILO is providing technical support to governments for planning social protection reforms. The ITUC would also request that the ILO to undertake more awareness-raising activities to promote its standards in the field of social protection. Finally, we would like the ILO to provide targeted policy advisory support to governments in order to counter ill-founded advice given by some international financial institutions to retrench social protection and to promote greater coherence between international organisations on social protection.

As a reminder, all constituents of the ILO are invited to report on their national laws and practices in relation

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to this standard. The Committee of Experts will review all responses in order to prepare and present a General Survey at the 2019 International Labour Conference (ILC) on the effects given to this instrument, along with associated social security standards, especially ILO Convention 102 on social security, as well as difficulties that prevent or delay implementation. It is therefore very important that trade unions, either through their governments or directly to the ILO, send their own analysis and considerations regarding their government's laws and practices.

Unions may send their replies before 30 June 2018 at the following address:

The International Labour Standards Department

International Labour Office

CH – 1211 Genève 22

Switzerland

Facsimile: + 41 22 799 6771

E-mail: [normes@ilo.org](mailto:normes@ilo.org)

If your trade union sends a response to the General Survey, please send an electronic copy to the ITUC Geneva Office ([genevaoffice@ituc-csi.org](mailto:genevaoffice@ituc-csi.org)), ITUC Brussels ([esp@ituc-csi.org](mailto:esp@ituc-csi.org)) and ILO-ACTRAV ([actrav@ilo.org](mailto:actrav@ilo.org)).

Yours sincerely,



General Secretary