



**Trade union response to the EC Communication on
'The roots of democracy and sustainable development: Europe's engagement
with Civil Society in external relations' COM (2012) 492 final**

The Trade Union Development Cooperation Network (TUDCN), bringing together national trade union confederations from South and North, Solidarity Support Organisations and Global Unions as well representation from International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) regional organisations, the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) and the Trade Union Advisory Committee to the OECD (TUAC), took note of the above mentioned Communication:

1. We welcome the explicit reference to trade union organisations as actors with a specific role in promoting democratic ownership and social and sustainable development, based on our long-standing engagement and active work building international solidarity and development partnerships;
2. We welcome the support to Regional and Global networks and alliances as spelled out in the text. The TUDCN network, including organisations from the global north and south, represents an example of how to strengthen coherence and coordination among trade union actors enhancing their advocacy capacity and effectiveness in development in their respective national contexts (Trade Union Principles and Guidelines on Development Effectiveness);
3. We also welcome the importance given to the Development Education component. For trade unions this represents a means of contributing to strengthening public accountability on national and European development commitments, as well as, to raising awareness within public opinion in the EU. This is particularly important in the current economic context of fiscal consolidation;
4. We widely appreciate the words of the Communication when describing the role of CSOs in promoting participatory democracy, democratic ownership of development policies, and finally accountability of development results. For this reason we call the EU Institutions to always refer to the Human Rights Based Approach to development, which should be one of the funding principles of the new DCI;
5. We concur with the view of the Commission that it is primarily the responsibility of public authorities to provide basic social services and social protection to their citizens. However, we strongly call for social partner engagement in the development and management of social protection systems, based on effective labour markets and employment centred social and economic policies. We stress the need to support the specific types of services that trade unions and social partners can provide also in MICs, such as in the field of social protection, employment, labour market, migration etc.
6. For this reason we regret the lack of specific mention to the role of social partners and social dialogue in the Council Conclusions of October 15, when referring to the promotion of inclusive growth, decent work, and corporate social responsibility (par. 10);

7. While we recognise the importance of partnerships between Local Authorities and Civil Society organisations, these should be built around the objectives of individual development initiatives and therefore should be contextualised;
8. We welcome the objective of supporting timely and effective policy dialogues with civil society. The dialogues should also be meaningful in terms of strategic involvement of relevant development actors and of shared agenda setting (social partners in economic, social and labour related policies);
9. Sustainable development should be mainstreamed through all components, in line with Rio+20 conclusions, and the Decent Work Agenda and its pillars should be prominent in the Commission's proposals on inclusive and sustainable growth;
10. We reiterate our support to multi-stakeholders policy dialogues on development strategies also at European level. The current 'Policy Forum on Development' could represent an excellent opportunity to address this need and therefore we call on EU institutions concerned to provide full political support and participation to this initiative;
11. We finally recall the importance of including the support to trade unions into the future EU external relations' financial instruments (especially in the thematic programs of the future DCI), both at country, regional and global level according to actor-based financing modalities, as spelled out in the Communication.

Brussels, October 2012