



## Trade Union contribution to CSO position at UNECE's Regional Forum on Sustainable Development, Geneva, 10 May 2016

### *On 2030 Agenda*

- SDGs are undeniably a step forward compared to MDGs both in terms of the process to develop them and in their universality, scope and ambition, and in particular the focus on tackling major omissions of the MDGs like inequality and environmental sustainability
- Trade Unions are particularly committed to realising goals and targets to end poverty, **foster decent work**, ensure quality education, provide public services, infrastructure and social protection policies, reduce inequalities, champion women's participation in the work force and improve fiscal, wage and social protection policies
- Realisation of SDG8 (Promote **sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all**) is at the core of trade union priorities vis-à-vis the 2030 Agenda. Trade unions also prioritise the realisation SDG1, particularly the implementation of "nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors".
- The **Decent Work Agenda**, with its 4 pillars (workers' rights, social protection, employment and social dialogue), is a tool to fight both poverty and inequality. Trade unions advocate for the implementation of indicators on decent work, specifically on collective bargaining, wages and social dialogue).
- The labour movement is mobilising internationally towards the same objectives as we mobilise nationally: ensuring workers and their families have access to a decent life and a decent job in a healthy environment, while securing the needs and ensuring opportunity for future generations. This means demanding commitments to Full and Productive Employment and Decent Work for all and Ensuring Universal Social Protection.

### *On 2030 Agenda follow-up and review*

- The 2030 Agenda Follow-Up and Review Process remains fundamentally voluntary. Trade Unions regret the lack of ambition, in particular in the follow-up, review and accountability through binding commitments based on existing international standards.
- The accountability mechanisms of the 2030 Agenda must be based on clear principles, such as **mutual accountability, democratic ownership and social dialogue**. Global accountability is key to effect change at national level. In this light we need commitments that go beyond voluntary in nature, and should be based on existing agreements as a minimum, for example the ILO Labour Standards.
- The review process at national level, in all countries, should be genuinely participatory, with **social dialogue as a pillar to ensure ownership of policy processes**. Civil society participation at national level to define national indicators must be ensured, through multi-stakeholder dialogue and partnerships.
- **Decent Work, Social Protection and Social Dialogue are integral means and ends to achieving the 2030 Agenda**. Social dialogue, which brings together social partners, employers' and workers'



organizations, is an excellent example of ownership of policy processes at the national level. Freedom of association and right to collective bargaining are key for this partnership to work.

- The labour movement endorses the priorities enshrined in the proposal by the Prime Minister of Sweden for a '**Global Deal for decent work and inclusive growth**' and will promote them. This is a framework for ensuring implementation of the 2030 Agenda with action on employment, decent work, social dialogue and social protection.

#### *On Financing for Development*

- Trade unions reaffirm the importance to materialise commitments on crosscutting areas relevant to the financing for development agenda: 1) generating full and productive employment and decent work for all, and 2) delivering social protection and essential public services for all
- **Domestic Resource Mobilization** is a powerful tool to redistribute wealth and promote equality. This has to be done through: progressive fiscal policies and tax justice, including effective taxation of MNE activities, and fighting tax evasion/havens and avoidance. Equally important are universal social protection, freedom of association, collective bargaining, and decent wages.
- Trade unions also raise concerns around different clauses within trade agreements, which instead of promoting the development of countries can undermine state sovereignty and violate labour rights.
- Trade unions are wary of the **privatisation of the development agenda**. The private sector is not a viable alternative to the state to provide quality public services. Unconditional criteria are needed to ensure that private sector intervention is in line with the public interest, especially this is supported by public resources. Efforts for more inclusion should also include more accountability of the private sector.
- Trade unions reaffirm its doubts on the **accountability and responsibility of the private sector** in the wake of innovative financing instruments such as “blending” and “public private partnerships” (PPPs). There is little evidence which suggests that PPPs contribute to sustainable development. Trade unions insist on a more balanced approach in terms of the provision of public services that are managed publicly.

#### Trade union positions:

- Trade Union reaction to Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: [http://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/tudcn\\_reaction\\_to\\_un\\_2030\\_agenda\\_final\\_en.pdf](http://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/tudcn_reaction_to_un_2030_agenda_final_en.pdf)
- Trade Union reaction to the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA): [http://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/trade\\_unions\\_reaction\\_to\\_ffd3\\_action\\_agenda\\_final.pdf](http://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/trade_unions_reaction_to_ffd3_action_agenda_final.pdf)

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