



**European Union  
Statement**

**ILO**

**316<sup>th</sup> Session of the Governing Body**

**(1 – 16 November 2012)**

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**Follow-up to the adoption of the resolution concerning efforts to make social  
protection floors a national reality worldwide**

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**Geneva, 13 November 2012**

**- CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY -**

**ILO Governing Body  
316th Session  
(Geneva, 1-16 November 2012)**

**EU Statement on**

**"Follow-up to the adoption of the resolution concerning efforts to make social protection floors a national reality worldwide"  
(GB.316/INS/5/1)**

Thank you Chair,

I am speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

We recognize that social protection is a human right and is essential for the eradication of poverty. But social protection should also be seen as an investment, as an infrastructure for human development without which sustainable and inclusive economic growth would not be possible, when social protection systems successfully promote higher labour market participation. There is clear link between economic development and the development of social protection systems (and vice versa). Social protection systems have proved to be, in an economic crisis, effective social and economic stabilizers.

Social protection lies at the heart of the European social model, which, according to our Treaties, is based on a highly competitive social market economy, aiming at full employment and social progress. The Recommendation adopted at the 2012 ILC is in line with fundamental EU values such as combating social exclusion, poverty and discrimination and promoting social justice and social protection. The principle of providing universal access to social protection against the major lifecycle risks is respected by all EU Member States.

We believe that social protection floors should be designed and implemented according to national-specific institutional structures, economic constraints, and social aspirations. This is applicable to our policies, including in development cooperation. In this context, the EU supports the development of inclusive, nationally-owned social protection policies and programmes, including social protection floors; protecting against protracted crises and building resilience; addressing gender-related concerns; focussing on measures for capacity building and integrating civil society,

social partners and high quality public services; and ensuring that those beneficiaries who can be enabled to participate in productive economic activity and employment.

We welcome the framework for follow-up and strategy for action presented in paragraphs 11-31 of the document, as they further concretize the areas for ILO action identified in the Social Security Plan of Action adopted in November 2011 by the Governing Body.

We can support the decision points in paragraph 32, and offer the following perspectives on the proposed plan of action:

- We welcome recognition of the need for Office capability to deliver credible advice on financial affordability and long-term fiscal space, and to accurately estimate the costs of policy reforms. Accurate monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of social security systems is also an invaluable service for constituents. The Office should continue to combine efforts in these areas with other relevant organisations. Effective systems support good governance in open societies and economies. We welcome Office encouragement of high governance standards in its relations with constituents.
- Effective social protection should always include measures that encourage participation in productive economic activity and employment. The Office should support national governments to develop employment programmes (which also include effective measures of professional training plan and accompanying measures for the most vulnerable groups), job creation schemes, and support for entrepreneurship as an integral part of social protection floor design and implementation. It should particularly encourage governments to improve employment opportunities of vulnerable and marginalized groups.
- The Office should aim at further promoting the participation of Civil Society Organizations, social partners and public bodies in the programming of its technical cooperation and assistance policies, at all stages. Civil Society Organizations and social partners can play an important role in service delivery, supplementing local and national government provision of services and leading innovative projects, with the longer-term objective of ensuring more accountable, effective and sustainable systems.
- The Office should integrate civil society, social partners, private sector as well as other initiatives in its action in the field of social protection.

- The Office should undertake a holistic approach, recognize and promote *synergies* between social protection and other areas (non-discrimination, education, skills development, employer engagement, social integration and mobility, health, gender equality and employment), in order to address the cross-cutting issues that come up when designing policy approaches regarding social protection.
- The Office should examine ways to integrate the concept of social protection floors in discussions on the post-2015 development agenda, as an important element in assessing the relevance of policies and reforms to the overall objectives of poverty reduction.

We believe that the challenge for social protection is now both in designing social protection systems that have better coverage and ensuring their affordability, efficiency and sustainability. Emphasis should also be given to the adaptability of the systems to changing circumstances and new challenges.

We expect the ILO to take advantage of the renewed impetus to reinforce the international community's commitment to promoting social protection. We welcome the Office's commitment to close collaboration and combined delivery with other relevant international organisations in this respect.

Thank you, Chair.