



**INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION  
OFFICE FOR THE UNITED NATIONS**

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**Statement delivered by Ms. Telma Viale,  
Special Representative to the United Nations and Director, ILO New York**

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**Mr. Chair,**

On behalf of the ILO, I would like to join in expressing congratulations to you and the other members of the Bureau on your election and wish you every success in facilitating the important work of this Committee.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Committee is commencing amid continued disruptions in global markets that are creating a number of acute labour market and social challenges. Unfortunately, the global employment outlook remains bleak. Growth remains slow in developing and emerging economies, many of which are under pressure to maintain a consistent pace of expansion in order to meet the demand for decent jobs from a growing working age population. On the other hand, many of the largest advanced economies face a legacy wrought by the financial crisis which includes high levels of unemployment and inequality not seen since the Great Depression.

Since the 2008 financial crisis, 30 million people have been added to the list of unemployed and nearly 40 million more have stopped looking for employment altogether. Today, global unemployment stands around 200 million, including 75 million young people between the ages of 15 and 24. Roughly 40 million people are estimated to enter the labour force every year into economies that cannot accommodate them. These figures combined, indicate that the world is facing a 600 million jobs challenge in the next decade. In addition, we cannot forget about the roughly 910 million workers that earn wages less than US\$2 per day, referred to as working poor or the vast majority of the global population who have no adequate social protection.<sup>1</sup>

**Mr. Chair,**

As we embark on a new session of the second committee, we must ensure that the global concerns faced by the real economy are placed at the center of our policy decisions. The ILO's tripartite constituency has been striving to ensure comprehensive and coordinated decisions are

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<sup>1</sup> See Global Employment Trends 2012, ILO

taken to minimize the duration and the depth of the downturn in the global economy as well as to combat possible negative social consequences and accelerate recovery. In this regard, I wish to draw the Committee's attention to two recent decisions adopted by the International Labour Conference in June 2012, which can serve to supplement the work of this Committee.

First, a resolution on a *Call for Action* was adopted in recognition of the urgent need to tackle the youth employment crisis. The *Call for Action* highlights the need for a balanced approach between supply and demand policy measures, recognizing the need of integrating the role of macroeconomic policies that promote a return to growth, that spur job creation to make full employment a central target, that encourage productive investments and access to finance as indispensable measures for addressing the youth employment crisis.

Second, in recognition of the more than five billion people lacking adequate social security, a new international labour standard on National Floors for Social Protection was adopted. The Recommendation calls for providing people with essential health care and benefits, as well as basic income security. The Recommendation requests countries to implement Social Protection Floors as early as possible in national development processes. Social protection floors have proven to be highly effective instruments during the global economic crisis to help boost household incomes as well as aggregate demand, thus giving many countries more room to maneuver and withstand the crisis. The Rio outcome document recognized the importance of Recommendation 202 in providing a framework for extending social protection to all members of society. The time is now ripe to address implementation.

**Mr. Chair,**

Countries have been affected differently by the crisis and continue to face differing priorities in building a recovery. However, as the new Director General of the ILO, Mr. Guy Ryder, underscored, "this crisis needs to be treated on the scale that it exists, the global level. We have to construct global solutions. There will at the end be no sustainable national solutions to a world crisis."

People and their livelihoods have to be at the core of policy-making. At the ILO we believe that the Decent Work Agenda offers a coherent policy framework that can integrate the macroeconomic, employment, social and environmental dimensions of an effective development model. The ILO looks forward to further discussions on the many important topics before this Committee in the weeks ahead and wish to extend the our readiness to assist you and all of our constituents in achieving a productive and successful outcome.

I thank you.