



**68th Session of the United Nations General Assembly
Special Event of the President of the General Assembly to follow up on efforts made
towards achieving the MDGs**

**Statement delivered by Mr. Guy Ryder
Director-General, International Labour Organization
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President, Excellencies,

This review of the progress in reaching the Millennium Development Goals presents a tremendous opportunity for the UN to connect to the concerns of the peoples of the United Nations. I commend the Secretary General for his report which shows progress has indeed been made. But we have no grounds for complacency. We must draw on our experience and improve our collective action to build a framework for sustainable development that meets the aspirations of the peoples of the United Nations.

We need to place the priorities that people and their nations face at the heart of that agenda. Very high on that list is jobs.

We face a global challenge of generating around 600 million new decent jobs between 2015 and 2030 if we are to:

- Find jobs for the 475 million young women and men who will join the global labour force – 9 out of 10 in the developing world;
- Reduce unemployment which increased by 30 million after the financial crisis and is still rising;
- Increase female employment participation; and
- End working poverty which still blights the lives of one third of the developing world's workforce.

Being able to earn a decent living is everybody's aspiration and the most effective strategy for escaping poverty and for making a meaningful contribution to the community. Social protection floors that prevent people becoming trapped in poverty when unable to work are vital.

We need to get onto a development path that is environmentally, socially, economically, and I would add, politically sustainable.

One of the lessons from the drive to implement the MDGs is that full and productive employment and decent work for all is both an objective and a means of achieving sustainable development with social inclusion and greater equity.

With the right policy mix, this is possible. Social protection floors that prevent people becoming trapped in poverty when unable to work, for example, are a powerful policy instrument.

The community of the world of work represented by the ILO is playing its part in reaching our existing goals and is looking forward to participating fully in the new sustainable development agenda post 2015.
