

**CSocD 2018 Opening Address  
on behalf of the NGO Committee for Social Development  
Daniel Perell**

*“Strategies for eradicating poverty to achieve sustainable development for all”*

- Thank you very much
  - Mr. Chair of the Commission for Social Development
  - Madam President of ECOSOC
  - Madam Deputy Secretary General
  - Mr. Under Secretary General of DESA
  - Excellencies, ladies and gentleman:
- It is my honor to share, on behalf of the NGO Committee for Social Development...
  - ...a few thoughts on the concept of shared prosperity, and the means by which it can be advanced.
- The global agendas adopted in recent years - Agenda 2030 preeminent among them - are explicitly universal in nature.
  - In them can be seen the international community's recognition that humanity's collective life suffers when any one group thinks of its own well-being in isolation from that of its neighbors.
  - Rejection of this foundational truth leads to ills that are all too familiar:
    - Self-interest prevails at the expense of the common good
    - Unconscionable quantities of wealth are amassed, mirrored by reprehensible depths of destitution
    - These extremes are then perpetuated as opportunity gaps - in education, healthcare, employment - are exacerbated both between and within nations.
    - In this respect we would humbly propose that this Commission become the home for Goal 10, to reduce inequalities within and among countries.
- To eradicate poverty to achieve sustainable development for all, requires more than mere policy modifications at the margins.
- Coherent strategies for the establishment of shared prosperity can only be implemented concurrent with an objective assessment of both a program's merit, as well as its values and incentives.
  - One place to start would be to build on consensus about human dignity.
  - According to the NGO Committee for Social Development a clear line can be drawn from human dignity to social protection inasmuch as social protection can foster the broadest and deepest possible participation in the economic and social life of society
- In recent years, social protection has emerged as a unifying concept - at the UN, among Member States, and civil society - for an array of measures aimed at building fairer and more inclusive societies.
- The concept of social protection expresses basic precepts about which broad and strong consensus can be found around the world. Among these:

- That all humans have dignity and worth, by virtue of being human.
  - That governments have a role to play in ensuring dignity is maintained.
  - That there are thresholds which a community – whether local, national, regional, or international – will refuse to let any of its members fall below.
- Convictions such as these - founded on the most basic and universal conceptions of human worth - lie at the heart of social protection...
  - ...as articulated in the SDGs, ILO recommendation 202, and Civil Society's declaration to this Commission to be finalized after the Civil Society Forum on Friday, to which you are all warmly invited.
- Steps undertaken at the national level to provide those aspirational conditions for all citizens is but the logical conclusion of this consensus.
- Of course the particular implementation of any particular social protection scheme must be the subject of rigorous research and thoughtful deliberation.
  - The precise details must vary from context to context.
  - To be effective, they must continually take into account not only the needs and challenges of local populations, but also their capacities, resources, and aspirations.
    - in this, the meaningful participation of affected populations is a prerequisite to success.
- For this reason, it is important to recognize that any given social protection scheme...
  - ...be it floors, pensions, cash transfers or any other...
  - ...are not ends in themselves, but *means* to bring about social conditions that allow for the flourishing of communities.
  - The ends that social protection schemes might be directed towards are many,
  - But a few can be identified for initial consideration:
    - Social protection is a means of nurturing a societal ethic of reciprocity and a sense of responsibility to one another.
    - It is, by nature, a shared endeavor involving a wide and continually growing array of stakeholders, protagonists of their own lives.
    - Social protection broadens and deepens the social contract, promoting a greater understanding that the well-being of the individual is ultimately dependent upon, and contributes to, the well-being of the whole.
- Few would disagree that we live in a fraught political period, with questions arising around the world about...
  - ...the functioning of political systems, the direction of society, the path toward collective well-being.
  - In such an environment, it will be useful to emphasize, that social protection is not a partisan issue.
    - It belongs neither to the north nor the south, the right nor the left.
    - This consensus should be the starting point for its implementation. In fact, it is key to its success.

- Ultimately, the protections of individuals, communities, and societies hinges on questions of values at the deepest levels.
  - Social protection speaks to the sort of society in which all fair-minded people wish to live –
    - ... one in which fears of being unable to survive, thrive, and pass on a better world to one's children would no longer darken any person's horizons.
- Regardless of the challenges we all face,
  - ...the NGO Committee for Social Development has the utmost confidence that every single Member State wishes such prosperity and well-being for their people.
  - And in this, Civil Society stands ready to offer any assistance it can in ensuring that every citizen of the world is provided those conditions by which they can make their fullest contribution to the progress of all. Thank you.