



INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION
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Item 24: Eradication of poverty and other development issues:
(a) Implementation of the Second United Nations Decade for the Eradication of
Poverty (2008-2017)
5 November 2012

Statement delivered by Mr. Vinicius Pinheiro,
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Mr. Chair,

The ILO fully concurs with the policy recommendations proposed in the report of the Secretary General on Implementation of the Second UN Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2008-2017) (A/67/180), under the theme “Full Employment and Decent Work for All”.

The ILO reiterates the need for enhanced policy coherence and continuing collaboration with Member States, UN system agencies, civil society and other partners in support of efforts to eradicate poverty through the promotion of the Decent Work Agenda.

In previous statements before this committee, the ILO has highlighted the dismal global employment trends that have been exacerbated by the financial and economic crises.

The weak jobs market continues to adversely affect the real economy through overall unemployment, under-employment, suppressed wages and incomes, and a decline in domestic consumption, all of which are key drivers of growth and essential pre-conditions for poverty eradication. Attention to the quality of jobs is equally important as the quantity of jobs. The Decent Work Agenda continues to provide an efficient framework for achieving the overarching poverty eradication goal.

Particular attention should be given to the 75 million young jobless people on the planet and for 200 million young workers who are current under-employed, earning less than two dollars a day. Unless bold action is taken, the world risks losing an entire generation. Last June governments, employers and workers adopted a Call for Action on the Youth Employment Crisis.¹ The document provides a series of guiding principles and a detailed policy portfolio of concrete measures to tackle the crisis, including by addressing skills mismatches, improving apprenticeship systems and promoting youth entrepreneurship. It emphasizes the key role of

¹ The text of the resolution and conclusions can be found on the ILO website at: www.ilo.org/uouth. Also available is the background report *The Youth Employment Crisis: Time for Action*, Geneva, 2012.

partnerships and calls on all stakeholders to jointly tackle the issue. This outcome provides a useful supplement to the efforts undertaken during this Second UN Decade.

Effective social protection must also become a key component of policies to eradicate poverty and build sustainable livelihoods. In June 2012, the International Labour Conference also adopted the Recommendation No. 202 on Social Protection Floors. This new international labour standard calls for providing people with essential health care and social services, as well as basic income security constituting national social protection floors. This landmark recommendation should assist in providing a basis for the Committee's work towards devising policies for the eradication of poverty and in fulfilling the aim of the Second United Nations Decade.

Particular attention must be given to the issue of rural employment. Agriculture continues to be the mainstay of most rural economies, with more than 1 billion workers engaged in the agriculture sector in 2009. More productive employment in the agriculture and related sectors can provide an engine of sustainable development and poverty reduction by not only increasing food availability; but it will also improve access to food through better incomes and social protection, while improving food utilization.

Mr. Chair,

The message from the ILO Director-General, Guy Ryder, on the occasion of the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty says that "The primary asset of women and men living in poverty is their labour (...). Work that is freely chosen, productive, fairly-remunerated and backed by appropriate social protection – decent work – can lift whole communities out of poverty and underpin human security and social peace."

On the basis of this Decent Work approach, the ILO has been actively contributing to national development strategies and plans, and UN activities, aimed at eliminating root causes of poverty and hunger, and promoting pro-poor and job-centred economic development.

The UN System-wide plan of action for the 2nd UN Decade for the Eradication of Poverty provides a concrete step towards promoting policy coherence and collaboration and mainstreaming decent work within the various activities of UN funds, programmes, specialized agencies, and regional commissions.

We look forward to continuing our engagement with Member States, the UN system as well as the NGO Sub-Committee on Poverty Eradication to ensure that this 2nd UN Decade for the Eradication of Poverty will achieve its goal.

I thank you.