

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION
OFFICE FOR THE UNITED NATIONS
220E 42nd street, New York, NY, 10017 Phone +1/212/6970150

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Statement by
Mr Gilbert Hounbgo
ILO Deputy Director General for Country Operations and Partnerships

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Mr. Chairs, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

The Addis Agenda recognizes that decent work is both a means for and an outcome of sustainable development. In the first paragraph of the outcome document, Member States committed to “(...) *advance fully towards an equitable global economic system in which no country or person is left behind, enabling decent work and productive livelihoods for all, while preserving the planet for our children and future generations*” (AAAA, Paragraph 1).

To deliver on this commitment, member states agreed on various cross-cutting initiatives to generate full and productive employment and decent work for all. Addis also gave agency to a new social compact to protect poor and vulnerable groups by delivering on social protection floors. It is now time to work together to implement these initiatives and to effectively monitor and review the outcomes and results.

The Addis Agenda states that full and productive employment and decent work for all must be recognized as central objectives in national sustainable development strategies. Employment creation targets are as important as inflation and economic growth targets and they should be a core objective of macroeconomic policies.

It is fundamental to encourage the full and equal participation of women and men, including persons with disabilities, in the formal labour market. Formalization will enhance domestic resources mobilization and protects the rights of workers and entrepreneurs at the same time. Special attention should be given to Small and Micro Enterprises which are the real job creation machine.

ILO research shows that an estimated 73.4 million youth were unemployed in 2015 and millions of others have work that is not decent. *In 2013, 37.8 per cent of employed youth (aged 15–24) in the developing world were poor and another 26.3 percent of employed youth were estimated to be in the near poor group. This means that in 2013 as many as 169 million youth are working but living on less than US\$2 per day.*

To respond to the youth employment challenge, the ILO Director General launched the Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth at the ECOSOC Partnership Forum on 1 February. The initiative is a unique partnership with governments, the UN system, businesses, academic institutions, youth organizations and other groups, including 20 international organizations aiming at expanding country-level action to create decent job opportunities for youth through joint activities and use of common tools, the dissemination of evidence-based policies, knowledge sharing and the scaling up of effective and innovative interventions.

On Social Protection, we are pleased to announce that the ILO has designated the “Global Flagship Programme on Social Protection Floors (SPFs) for All” as one of its five critical programmes to give coherence to key issues of international development cooperation. The programme will support the implementation of floors of social protection in countries whose social protection systems are fragmented or do not cover the entire population. We are working together with the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) to make the access to social protection a reality. However, as reminded by the Addis Agenda, alternative funding mechanisms should be explored to support in particular least developed countries.

To conclude, let me reiterate the ILO’s readiness to continuing supporting member states and social partners in the implementation of the Addis commitments.

I thank you!