



ILO Statement on Strengthening Efforts to Eradicate Poverty and Hunger, including through the global partnership for development

High-Level Segment of the UN Economic and Social Council

July 2007, Geneva

Thank you Mr Chairman,

On behalf of our Director-General Mr Juan Somavia, I would like to welcome the two papers submitted by the Secretary-General to this session. They highlight continued progress in presenting an integrated analysis of development challenges drawing on the expertise of specialized agencies, funds and programmes as well as various departments of the Secretariat.

The ILO fully supports the conclusion on applying macroeconomic policies that lead to broad-based and sustained growth, which is essential for employment creation, poverty reduction and the achievement of the internationally agreed goals for sustainable development. This entails an inclusive strategy in which the incomes of the poorest grow steadily through decent and productive employment, and effective social protection. This generates increased consumption which is central to sustaining overall growth.

Macroeconomic, social and structural policies, including environmental policies, thus need to move in close harness to maximize the opportunities for increased decent work opportunities for all, especially the working poor. Policies to promote social inclusion and combat discrimination underpin sound macroeconomic strategies which in turn generate increased resources for equitable social development. Minimum wages and basic social protection for health care, minimum pensions and child benefits linked to school attendance are part of such a macroeconomic and social package.

The ILO therefore welcomes the emphasis placed in the Secretary General's report on strengthening partnerships to eradicate poverty and hunger, and on the need to mainstream full and productive employment and decent work into development strategies. The ILO is working hard to deepen its collaboration with agencies of the UN and multilateral system to ensure that coherent policy advice is offered to countries, alongside a substantial and predictable flow of international development assistance.

Dialogue between governments and key actors such as employers' organizations and trade unions, and between countries and their international partners is key to sustained growth. Such dialogue is also vital for improvement in productivity which enable an increase in living standards of the poorest, and for investing in the sustainability of growth, through education, health, essential infrastructure and productive enterprises.

The ILO's Decent Work Agenda is built on four interconnected pillars: employment and enterprise development, social protection including in the informal economy and rural areas, sound employment relations developed through social dialogue, and the international framework of labour standards, especially fundamental principles and rights at work. Through these pillars the ILO offers a coherent policy portfolio for discussion with countries in the design of Decent Work Country Programmes, which we see as the ILO contribution to the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF).

In conclusion, since the adoption of the Ministerial Declaration at the 2006 High-Level Segment the ILO has developed with partner agencies in the UN system a Toolkit for Mainstreaming Productive Employment and Decent Work. The objective is to develop a reflex in the system that ensures that the goal of Decent Work is reflected across the spectrum of development policies. This approach is reflected in the background papers for the High-Level Segment and will thus help ECOSOC to maintain and further enhance its coordinating role in the pursuit of the Internationally Agreed Development Goals.