

## 55th Session of the Commission for Social Development

1-10 February 2017, United Nations Headquarters, New York.

This year's priority theme was « **Strategies for eradicating poverty to achieve sustainable development for all** ». As one of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the Commission is the advisory body responsible for the social development pillar.

In the advance of the 55th Session a **Civil Society Forum** was organized on 30-31 January 2017. The theme of the forum was « **Social Protection, including floors** ». An important element of this gathering was to take recommendations and experiences from participants which would inform our contribution to the Commission and next year's Civil Society Declaration.

« **Inclusive dialogue preceding implementation of social policies fosters cooperation between institutions and empowers all to contribute to the well being of citizens** » .

Three high level panel discussions took place :

- 1) Priority theme : »Strategies for Eradicating Poverty to Achieve Sustainable Development for All ». This discussion provided an opportunity for members of the Commission and other key stakeholders, including civil society organizations, to engage in a substantive dialogue on policy options to make further progress on the eradication of poverty, building on the experience in implementing the Copenhagen Programme of Action adopted at the World Summit for Social Development.

The specific objectives of the high-level panel discussion were :

- share concrete policies, strategies and measures that have been effective at eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, and preventing people from falling into poverty in various national contexts.
- explore/identify, based on evidence, innovative approaches to eradicate poverty that can leverage the interlinkages between the social, economic, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development
- propose policy recommendations as substantive contributions to the 2017 ECOSOC annual theme and the 2017 high-level political forum whose 2017 theme is « Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world »

A Secretary-General's report on the priority theme submitted to the Commission provided a review of progress so far made to eradicate poverty as well as various strategies that have been implemented by countries, ranging from integrated social and economic policy for inclusive and pro-poor growth, investing in agriculture and rural development, investing in social services, in particular, education, healthcare, safe drinking water and sanitation and social protection, to promoting structural economic transformation and generating decent work opportunities.

- 2) « Emerging Issues : « Promoting integrated policies for Poverty Eradication : Youth Development in the 2030 Agenda » There were **1,2 billion youth aged 15-24 years globally in 2015, accounting for one out of every 6 people worldwide**. By 2030, the target date for the

sustainable development goals, **the number of youth is projected to have grown by 7%, to nearly 1,3 billion**. In most regions youth populations have stabilized. In contrast, in Asia, home to most youth than any other region, the number of young people is expected to decline in the coming years. **In Africa, the number of youth was 226 million in 2015 and is growing rapidly. By 2030, it is projected that the number of youth in Africa will have increased by 42%. Africa's youth population is expected to continue to grow throughout the remainder of the 21st century, more than doubling from current levels by 2025.**

The panel discussion provided a forum for an open exchange of ideas that are strategically important for youth development and the Commission. The overall objectives of the panel was to discuss the World Programme of Action for Youth and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, examining how existing and newly adopted frameworks for development could contribute to and enhance development efforts and outcomes for youth.

- 3) »Leaving No One Behind : Poverty and Disability « : this high-level panel was organized to discuss challenges and opportunities for disability-inclusion in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the new global development agenda, particularly for SDG 1 which aims to eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere, reducing at least by half the proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty, implementing nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all .

Available data indicates that persons with disabilities are at greater risk of poverty than persons without disabilities in both developed and developing countries.

In developed countries, the income of persons with disabilities has been 12% lower than the national average and as much as 30% lower than those without disabilities.

A draft resolution was submitted by the Chair of the Commission, Philipp Charwath (Austria), on the basis of informal consultations.

The Commission for Social Development recommends to the Economic and Social Council the adoption of the following resolution :

**Promoting the rights of persons with disabilities and strengthening the mainstreaming of disability in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development :** the Commission urges Member States , the UN agencies and bodies, development agencies and international organizations, and encourages the private sector, to regard accessibility ad both a means and a goal of inclusive and sustainable development, and therefore an essential investment that benefits all members of society, and , hence, to ensure that accessibility is an integral part of programmes and projects relating to the built environment, transportation and information and communications technologies.

A second resolution was submitted by Ecuador regarding « **Social dimensions of the New Partnership for Africa's Development** ».

The Economic and Social Council urges African Governments, within the framework of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme, to expand investment financing to agriculture to at least 10% of the annual budget of the national public sector while at the same time ensuring necessary action in policy and institutional reforms for enhanced performances of the agriculture industry and systems.

It also urges African countries and development partners to meet the needs of young people and empower them, in partucular by tackling the high levels of youth unemployment through the development of quality education, skills training and entrepreneurship

programmes that address illiteracy, enhance the employability and capabilities of young people, facilitate school-to-work transitions and expand guaranteed employment schemes, where appropriate, with particular attention to disadvantaged young people in both rural and urban areas.

A third resolution was submitted by Germany, Hungary, Portugal, Moldova, Senegal and Spain : « **Policies and programmes involving youth** »

The Commission urges Member States to ensure that youth issues are adequately addressed in the implementation, follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and underlines the importance of closely consulting with and actively involving youth, youth-led and youth-focused organizations in its implementation.

It also urges member States to ensure the realization and full enjoyment by all young people of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and other international human rights instruments, in the implementation of the World Programme of Action for Youth.