

# 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the Group of Friends of Decent Work for Sustainable Development

2 February 2015, 1.15 – 2.30 pm

Permanent Mission of Romania to the UN

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## **Introductory remarks by Mr Gilbert Hougbo, Deputy Director-General for Field Operations & Partnerships**

Excellences, distinguished colleagues and Friends of Decent Work,

First of all, my heartfelt thanks to Her Excellency Simona Mirela Miculescu, Ambassador of Romania and chair of the Commission of Social Development, for hosting all of us at your house in such a busy period preceding the work of the Commission.

I would like also to express my gratitude to Ambassadors Ismael Abraao Gaspar Martins of Angola and Benedicte Frankinet of Belgium for convening this meeting and to all of you for joining us.

My message today is very clear: **you have done a great job in the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals negotiating the decent work targets and we, in the ILO, are ready support you in implementing them.**

We think that the targets in the areas of employment and social protection are technically sound, transformative, measurable, action-oriented, ambitious, but just as importantly, they are doable and consistent with the related international agreements.

**As the focus shifts to implementation**, let me highlight how the ILO can help you in designing effective measurement, monitoring and accountability mechanisms, means of implementation and partnerships.

We are aware that the new development agenda will affect all of us, the way we operate within the UN system, the relationship with our constituents and donors. And we are very optimistic and confident that the change is for the better.

First, a crucial step ahead is the **definition of indicators** to frame the targets. The ILO Chief Statistician is working full time with the UN Statistics Commission to propose a global set of indicators to monitor progress on the implementation of the targets.

Our comparative advantage in this area is that **all definitions in terms of employment and labour statistics are taken by member states at the International Conferences of Labour Statisticians and the agreed concepts apply to all countries.** For many decades, the ILO has been collecting, compiling and regularly publishing core employment, labour and social protection indicators for

most countries in direct contact with the primary sources. The **ILO datasets and flagship publications such as the World Social Protection Report and the World Employment and Social Outlook can be the basis for building monitoring frameworks for the targets in the area of employment and social protection.**

Second, **on reporting and accountability**, member states already prepare regular reports to be submitted to the ILO supervisory structure on compliance with respect to international labour standards. **In implementing the targets and designing appropriate accountability mechanisms, it is fundamental to link the operational and the normative and bring the internationally agreed labour standards in as a core reference.** These instruments and respective reporting and monitoring mechanisms can be enhanced to serve the Post 2015 Development Agenda accountability framework without creating extra burden for member states.

Third, **on means of implementation and partnerships**, the ILO is, in its essence, an institution grounded in the partnership between workers, businesses and governments. Its unique tripartite composition and social dialogue can serve as inspiration for building the partnerships we need to implement the agenda. In fact, ambitious targets proposed in the area of youth employment, decent work for all and social protection floors won't be achievable without the direct involvement of the social partners.

Fourth, we have a good tradition in **promoting policy coherence** across the dimensions of sustainable development by working together with other UN agencies and international financial institutions in **issues-based coalitions** in various areas such as social protection floors, youth employment, skills for employment, and decent jobs in the transition to a sustainable economy, among others.

To conclude, let me say that the key challenge now is how to translate the political achievements into a truly operational agenda anchored in meaningful indicators and with appropriate means of implementation, financing, partnerships, monitoring and accountability mechanisms.

I thank you.