

Joint Oral Statement: “The relevance of social protection floors”

Mr President,

APG23 and the co-signing NGOs welcome the Secretary General’s Report¹ on the question of the realization in all countries of economic, social and cultural rights.

Seventy three per cent² of the global population are either not covered, or only partially covered, by comprehensive social security systems. In the current economic crises, the number of people that live without social security is increasing also in developed countries and economic inequalities create new disadvantaged and marginalized groups.

Social protection floor initiative could be instrumental in achieving the minimum core content of the economic, social rights. It can prevent people from falling into extreme poverty by helping them to cope with different risks, shocks and crises beyond their control³.

It is a matter of safeguarding dignified existence for all; the CESCR General Comment n.19 states, “It is important that social security schemes cover disadvantaged and marginalized groups, even where there is limited capacity to finance social security.”⁴

This limited capacity could be removed by redistributing government’s expenditures. An example may be reducing the military costs and redirect the saving towards development, health and education.

To invest in health and education are ways to reduce the inequality between the poor and the rich, to create a world that can develop harmoniously and respects human dignity.

People need to be empowered. States could realise social protection floor that can be a relevant operational sub-criterion⁵ for the implementation of Right to Development following the principles of transparency, participation and accountability.

Global rules that enhance inequalities or constrain government’s action to reduce them, should be removed and international solidarity co-operation implemented at international level.

We invite the Member States to make use of the UN Guiding Principles on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights, to ensure that public policies reach the poorest members of society and respect and uphold their rights.

Thank You!

1 A/HRC/28/35

2 ILO World Social Protection Report 2014/2015

3 A/HRC/15/41 Report of the Independent Expert on the question of human rights and extreme poverty,

Magdalena Sepúlveda Carmona, on the draft guiding principles on extreme poverty and human rights.

4 Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. General Comment No.19. The right to social security (art.9)5 A/HRC/15/WG.2/TF/2/Add.2: The right to development criteria and operational sub-criteria

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