

# JOINT DECLARATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL LEADING GROUP ON SOCIAL AND SOLIDARITY ECONOMY

## Towards Public Policies Supporting the Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) for Sustainable Development

High Level Event - September 28, 2015, New York

We, the Member States of the International Leading Group of the Social and Solidarity Economy,

In the presence of representatives of the members of the UN Inter-agency Task Force on Social and Solidarity Economy (UNTFSSSE)<sup>1</sup> and international civil society organizations members of the International Leading Group on SSE<sup>2</sup>,

Meeting in New York on 28 September 2015, on the occasion of the 70th session of UN General Assembly, which has just adopted the final declaration "Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development",

Referring to this Declaration, we are convinced that social and solidarity economy (SSE), in the multiplicity of its forms around the world, is one of the **strategic transformative approaches needed for the integrated implementation of the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** in all their dimensions, including through its role in promoting the creation of decent jobs, notably for youth and women, the expansion of social protection, in its alternative entrepreneurship model -which has been able to not only to develop and create jobs, but has also proven more resilient than other economic models - and its contribution to reducing the ecological footprint of economic activity,<sup>3</sup>

Are also convinced that **coping with the impacts of climate change and economic crises** requires increased resilience of households and communities to develop their adaptation skills and create alternatives, with risk reduction solutions, opportunities for mobility and the creation of new forms of wealth,

**Affirm that SSE is a strategic means of implementation for achieving the SDGs and must be therefore supported by appropriate policies, which we ask UN member states to implement and UN agencies to support, including:**

- **Legal and policy frameworks that are conducive** to the development of the SSE (framework laws, SSE-orientated legislation) emphasizing the recognition of SSE as a distinct sector within a plurality of economic models, including through specific fiscal measures, access by SSE enterprises to public aid and public procurement, the inclusion of SSE in national education systems,

---

<sup>1</sup> Members of the UNTFSSSE currently include: ECLAC, ESCWA, FAO, ILO, TDR, UNAIDS, UNCTAD, UNDESA, UNDP, UNECE, UNEP, UNESCO, UNIDO, UN-NGLS, UNRISD, UN Women, WHO and WFP. The OECD is also a member.

<sup>2</sup> The Mont-Blanc Meetings (MBM) – International Forum of the Social and Solidarity Economy Entrepreneurs as permanent secretariat of the Leading Group, the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA), the International Association of Mutual Benefit Societies (AIM), the International Association of French speaking Mayors (IAMF), the Global Fund of Cities' Development (FMDV) and the Intercontinental Network for the Promotion of the Social Solidarity Economy (RIPESS).

<sup>3</sup> The UNTFSSSE has defined SSE as referring to "the production of goods and services by a broad range of organizations and enterprises that have explicit social and often environmental objectives, and are guided by principles and practices of cooperation, solidarity, ethics and democratic self-management;" and that the field of SSE includes cooperatives and other forms of social enterprise, self-help groups, community-based organizations, associations of informal economy workers, service-provisioning NGOs, solidarity finance schemes, amongst others"

- **Sustainable "public/social and solidarity economy partnerships"**, designed in a spirit of reinvestment of surpluses for social or environmental goals,
- **Strengthening of appropriate financing**, including the creation or strengthening of platforms for the deployment of long-term affordable capital from public and private sources (such as green climate funds), for the promotion of sustainable collective and social enterprises through public/SSE partnerships worldwide,
- **Strengthening of knowledge on SSE** through research and analysis, collection of best practice on enabling legal frameworks and supportive public policies, as well as innovative initiatives by SSE actors, in particular with a view to evaluate its potential for achieving the SDGs. The critical mass of knowledge will help to identify the necessary conditions for the growth and scaling-up of SSE, as well as the collection of relevant statistical data on SSE, notably to assess its economic weight in countries,
- **Fostering the implementation of training programs** to ensure that the public/SSE partnerships respect the fundamental principles of the SSE, generate quality products and services that meet local needs at affordable prices, are financially sustainable in the medium- and long-term and that local authorities and other stakeholders have the capacity and tools to develop and implement SSE strategies and partnerships,

**Call for the consideration of SSE in the various processes of monitoring and review of implementation of the SDGs, and the mobilization of additional resources to enable UN agencies and their partners** to facilitate the scaling-up of SSE,

Consequently:

Support the project of **the creation of an international legal guide on laws for the social and solidarity economy.**

Call for the **holding of an international conference on the financing of the SSE** (in contribution to the implementation of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda) to broaden the scope of funding from various financing for development institutions<sup>4</sup>, as well as innovative sources of financing, connected with those of cooperative banks, micro-finance institutions and other platforms to strengthen the financing for SSE enterprises and organizations around the world, compare experiences and projects, consider cooperation among each other and facilitate networking among the key players,

We also intend to contribute to **the implementation of new wealth indicators** or improve existing ones that complement GDP, quantitatively and qualitatively, that would enable tools to measure the impact of this sector on the national and local economy and on the human and sustainable development of our countries, with a focus also on non-market exchanges.

---

<sup>4</sup> Such as : World Bank, African Development Bank, Asian Development Bank, Inter American Development Bank, Central American Bank for Economic Integration, European Investment Bank, New Development Bank and various national public development banks.