**Global Charter for Universal Social Protection Rights**

**by all, for all**

We, **progressive social movements**, concerned with the growing social distress of people all over the world and faced with multiple problems of war, environmental degradation and climate change, rising inequalities and persistent poverty, economic crises, austerity policies and growing authoritarianism, erosion of all human rights, discrimination and intolerance, hereby plead for universal social protection to be taken as a tool for peace and social justice:

*Recalling* the old truth that **peace is not possible without social justice**, as was stated already in the Constitution of the ILO in 1919.

*Recalling* that the community of nations has developed a major set of rights, more particularly a Universal Declaration on **Human Rights**, two international Covenants on political and civil rights, on the one hand, and economic, social and cultural rights on the other hand, including a right to an adequate standard of living. Other legal instruments include more specific rights of children, women and indigenous people, as well as a right to development. These rights are universal, indivisible and inalienable.

*Recalling,* furthermore, that many of these rights have been adopted by regional charters, conventions and declarations and that the ILO has adopted a series of conventions, recommendations and declarations on specific economic and social rights, more particularly a Convention on the minimum standards for social security in 1952, a programme on decent work, a set of Core Labour Standards, a Declaration on Social Justice and a recommendation on national social protection floors in 2012.

*Recalling,* finally, that the United Nations, in its many global conferences and more recently in its 2015 programme for Sustainable Development Goals has recognized the need for social protection and the reduction of inequalities, people’s social rights as well as their link with environmental policies and rights.

*Considering* that social protection is justified by a social justice imperative, by aiming at **sustainable human development and security**, providing all people with an opportunity for a life in dignity.

*Considering* that social protection consists of measures aimed at reconciling civil and political citizenship, based on equality, with economic and social citizenship rights and the equal worth of all individuals.

*Considering* that social protection is intrinsically linked to a social process of **structural social solidarity** and is not a concept of charity.

*Considering* that social protection is a very broad concept, going **beyond poverty reduction**, social security and social assistance, and is aimed at eradicating and preventing poverty, reducing inequalities and ensuring decent livelihoods for all.

*Considering* that social protection is part of a reproduction process that cannot be de-linked from a production process while both should be aimed at **the sustainability of life**. This means that the components of social protection cannot be conceived of separately from the economic activities in their broadest sense.

*Considering*, therefore, that social protection must consist of material and immaterial elements, monetary allowances and additional in-kind support where appropriate, social services, environmental resources and factors of production.

*Considering* that major parts of social protection can and are to be realized immediately, though other parts will necessarily be realized in a progressive way, depending on available resources.

*Considering* that social protection is a primary responsibility of States, with important responsibilities to be taken by subnational authorities and social organisations, a substantial contribution is to be provided by **international solidarity**. International financial organisations must therefore duly take into account the need for resources for social policies and be accountable to all borrowing governments.

*Considering* that social protection can only fulfil the needs of people if it comes about in a participatory and democratic way, involving citizens and reflecting the diversity of their means and needs as a precondition for **human development**.

*Deploring* that as of today, globally, only 29 % of people have access to comprehensive social security systems.

*Deploring* that the neoliberal globalisation has pushed countries into a race to the bottom, displacing people and causing environmental damage, diminishing fiscal means, deregulating labour markets, reducing taxes and cutting social expenditures.

*Deploring* that the current economic and debt crisis, followed and deepened by austerity policies and growing authoritarianism have seriously eroded economic and social rights the world over, whereas populist regimes undermine social protection’s emancipatory dimension.

*Deploring* that labour markets are faced with negative developments of growing informalisation, precariousness and vulnerability.

*Deploring* that the welfare states in a certain number of countries have not adapted to the fundamental changes of economies and societies of the past decades, more particularly to past and future technological changes.

*Stating* that the current and future technological developments will have major consequences for labour markets that need to be tackled, amongst others, with measures of social protection, so as to turn them in positive assets, more particularly for access to social protection.

*Welcoming* the most recent international initiatives on social protection, such as the ILO Recommendation on social protection floors and the Sustainable Development Goals, stressing the need for their effective implementation.

***We therefore agree to state that the right of all people, all over the world, to universal and comprehensive social protection systems must be based on the following principles:***

1. Social protection systems should be **rights- and solidarity-based**, embedded in national laws, and defined as a primary responsibility of public authorities.
2. Social protection mechanisms should be organized on a **non-profit basis**.
3. States are to guarantee comprehensive social protection systems through sustainable and **solidarity-based financing**, fair social contribution systems, fair and progressive tax policies and international solidarity mechanisms.
4. Social protection mechanisms, as homogeneous as possible, should be made available for all citizens and residents, throughout the life cycle, independent of labour market status, even if benefits, rights and obligations can differ according to national contexts, agreements and sectors.
5. Social protection mechanisms should at least respect the norms of ILO convention 102 of 1952, that is including health insurance, medical care and sickness benefits, unemployment benefits, labour accident insurance and benefits, pensions, family and maternity benefits, invalidity allowances, survivor’s benefits.
6. Social protection mechanisms should also consist of a series of **social services**, to be agreed on at the national level, but at least comprehend a right to water, to education (up to tertiary level), public transport, energy and communication, housing and vocational training.
7. States should adopt the **decent work** programme of the ILO, as well as the core labour standards comprising more particularly the right to organize and the right to collective bargaining, social dialogue, banning of the worst forms of child labour, forced and bonded labour.
8. States should ensure the implementation of existing minimum wages and, if lacking, adopt, with the involvement of social partners, **living minimum wages** that guarantee decent livelihoods for, all workers.
9. States should adopt adequate **social assistance** mechanisms so as to avoid that people fall into poverty.
10. States should take the necessary measures so as to **eliminate the gender gap** in labour participation, status and pay.
11. States are to ensure non-contributory pensions and other allowances for people who are unable to participate in the labour market.
12. States should take the necessary measures so as to **eliminate all discrimination** based on gender, race, ethnicity, nationality, religion or sexual orientation.
13. States should take the necessary measures so as to avoid social dumping and reduce informality and precariousness, in line with ILO Recommendation 204, adopting clear rules for the emerging ´collaborative´ economy and the dependent self-employed, redefining and appropriately measuring ´labour´, ’employment’, ‘self-employment’ and domestic work, and introduce adequate systems of labour inspection. Emerging new technologies should duly be taken into account.
14. States should take the necessary measures as to guarantee everyone’s livelihood, including the **protection of the common goods** and a right to land for peasants.
15. States should take the necessary measures to provide social protection an,d guarantee labour rights for all migrants. During **humanitarian crises**, States should assist displaced people, internally and refugees, as well as to provide safe ways to travel for both refugees and labour migrants, guaranteeing basic human rights at all times.
16. In the development of their social protection mechanisms States are to **fully involve representative social partners and civil society**, so that the agreed arrangements can be considered their own; social partners and citizens should be fully, structurally and effectively involved in the design, implementation and monitoring of the systems. Social protection mechanisms established by social organisations should be supported and as much as possible be integrated into universal systems and not be undermined by a formalisation process.
17. So as to make democratic citizen’s participation possible, States and social movements should organize **political education** and training sessions at the national and the local level, so as to make people aware of their rights, the mechanisms to demand the full realization of their rights and the way social protection is organized and financed.
18. States should organize the financing of their social protection systems in such a way that all income categories contribute in a fair and equitable way, the strongest shoulders bearing the largest burden.
19. In their international trade, investment and other agreements, States should include binding rules concerning human rights, environmental and labour rights, as well as fair and progressive tax systems. A binding treaty at the global level should ensure that IFI’s and TNCs respect human rights.
20. States should organize their social protection mechanisms in such a way that they lead to social and economic transformation, leading to just, fair and sustainable societies, preserving human and natural life.

*We call on civil society organisations to refer to these principles when campaigning for universal social protection systems, by all and for all.*

*We call on parliamentarians globally to advocate for and legislate universal, comprehensive and effective social protection systems. We also call on them to monitor States’ implementation of their social protection programs and systems in particular, effective oversight on resources and budgets.*

*We call on governments to take this Charter as a guideline for social policies and to support all initiatives, politically and financially, aimed at achieving the principles of this Charter.*

***Having read this draft Global Charter for Social Protection Rights, I/we want to endorse this initiative. This support does not concern all the different and detailed points of the twenty principles, which have to be adopted in a national or local context according to the needs of people, but the process to work on social commons in a democratic and participatory way, aimed at contributing to social justice and social transformation.***

**Name: Organisation: e-mail:**

**www.globalsocialprotectioncharter.eu**