



“Social Protection and Sustainable Development Goals: A Joint Agenda”

Report on meeting discussion, results and recommendations

Buenos Aires, November 2-4, 2016

CIPPEC 

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- **Executive Summary**

This document outlines the main results derived from the event that brought together Core Group members of the Global Coalition for Social Protection Floors and Latin American social protection experts for three days in Buenos Aires. The exchange with the experts over the first two days resulted in technical and methodological recommendations as to how best to link Social Protection Floors and Social Development Goals, as well as a thorough analysis of the social protection challenges and opportunities in each world region. The third and last session dealt with future planning for the Coalition and resulted in several concrete decisions. It was agreed that the GCSPF ought to focus on helping build national coalitions in four selected countries (Zambia, Myanmar, India, El Salvador), as well as supporting one regional coalition, that of the Southern Cone in South America. Significant progress was also made with regard to future plans for the drafting of a resolution to be presented at ECOSOC and in connection with updating the Coalition Terms of Reference. It was also agreed that Coalition members will write shadow reports on the countries that the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights will be monitoring. Finally, a new administrative arrangement was set up, with FES securing the necessary funds to support one person from Social Watch to take over all Coalition-related administrative duties.

- **Wednesday, November 2nd**

(1) Acknowledgements & Overview

The Year in Social Protection: Gala Diaz Langou, Social Protection Program Director, CIPPEC (slides attached).

Díaz Langou outlined the international landscape in which this debate is happening and presented some introductory data highlighting the global context of rising inequality.

With this in mind, Díaz Langou outlined the Global Coalition for Social Protection Floors (GCSPF) mission and its main social protection pillars: universality based on human rights, inclusiveness, progressivity and leaving no one behind.

She also underlined the importance of remembering that the ultimate goal of the meeting was getting to change people's lives. In this regard, working together as a group is the core advantage of the Coalition and that is where its power resides.

(2) Meeting Context

General landscape: SDGs and Social Protection.

Assessment of ILO's role in Latin America and the World: Wouter van Ginneken, Rachel Moussié, Daniel Horn, Fernando Filgueira.

Social Protection Floors (SPFs) came up as a concept as from the 2008 financial crisis and was always closely linked with the International Labor Organization (ILO). The great upheaval came in 2009, when the representatives from employers finally understood that SPFs are necessary and social protection cannot be left to the markets. The Coalition was formed in that context and the Global South quickly gained great protagonism. This is essential, and that is why we are having meetings in India, Argentina and hopefully Africa. ILO has recently been working on setting up SPFs for everyone and there is great enthusiasm about this.

Other preliminary comments about the relationship with the ILO included highlighting the importance of ILO Recommendation 202, which deals with the extension of social protection to include informal workers. Generating meaningful dialogues between the ILO and national actors and NGOs was also seen as essential by several participants so that international recommendations can have positive downstream effects. In Latin America in particular, two recent developments have been related to the ILO. These are the expansion of old-age pensions and care policies, especially with regard to replacing families with the state.

Perspective from ILO: Christina Behrendt (slides attached)

In her presentation, Christina Behrendt outlined the way in which several SDGs are intimately linked with broader social protection endeavours. She noted that this link was not just limited to SDG 1 but also included particular targets in SDGs 3, 5, 8 and 10.

She also made special emphasis on how we can move forward with the measurement of progress on each relevant SDG, expanding on several indicators.

Furthermore, her analysis also revolved around how Social Protection Floors (Recommendation 202 in particular) and SDGs could feed back into one another.

Finally, she expanded on ILO's flagship programme on SPFs for everyone, detailing what was being done in several countries. She concluded her presentation with an introduction to the ways in which One-UN activities were being useful in coordinating the national, regional and global levels of UN social protection actions in a comprehensive manner.

Revision of discussions around linkage between Coalition and SDGs: Priti Darooka. Comments from Fernando Filgueira, Daniel Horn and Sergei Zelenev.

Priti Darooka started by saying India had no excuse not to be up to international standards. However, she also remarked it was important to know that countries such as India have to discuss how they can collect the necessary data to actually monitor the SDGs. Priti Darooka said this was a very bureaucratic process at the national level. Therefore, she highlighted the importance of the Coalition and its meetings. Still, she mentioned that it was vital that the Coalition not only monitored our governments but also assessed the effectiveness of what we do. She suggested four core tenets that ought to guide this process of lobbying for SPFs in an SDG context:

1. Country ownership: involving many stakeholders
2. Inclusiveness: big role for civil society here
3. Research-oriented: Priti Darooka emphasised it is essential to move past a mere analysis of quantitative data and take the qualitative side into account as well. What she argued was that the landscape had changed but that the Coalition should go on building on top of what they had accomplished over the previous meetings. So-called "merging economies" should be able to achieve the same standards enacted in the North.
4. Accountability and monitoring: contact with multiple stakeholders is also needed here.

Fernando Filgueira also had his say about the linkage between SDGs and SPFs in the Latin American region. He felt that some progress had been made in the region with ECLAC but it is still paramount to discuss that SDGs and SPFs are not the same and think about the differences between them. The second point he mentioned was an old debate in the ILO and other organisations: that of universality. Fernando felt that SDGs are not universally-oriented enough, because they always over-emphasize focalisation and policies that target those with lower incomes. Fernando wanted to highlight that the end goal has to be "going universal" in social protection. And there exists a need to discuss how we can finance that. Fernando thinks that the way forward is to discuss global taxation schemes. It is imperative to reform national taxation systems because of ageing populations. Fernando underlined we need to incorporate the funding element. He also mentioned the need for gender-based indicators in the SDGs, especially with regard to analysing participation in the labour market. Care policies and care systems should also be a priority in this regard.

As to Daniel Horn, he agreed with Priti Darooka and Fernando Filgueira. It is imperative that we talk about the resource issue, and as a global coalition we should help get everyone on the same page in that area. He highlighted that the Coalition also has a role with regard to monitoring not

just governments but also economic actors who do not comply with legal standards. Maybe ILO cannot always face these actors but the Coalition can do so.

Regarding Sergei Zelenev, he felt that the Coalition ought to articulate with the political sphere. The Coalition is much freer and can be bolder than the ILO or the World Bank. It supports universal social protection. This means SPFs must be an entitlement and we should indicate that. Finally, as a global coalition, Sergei thinks we have the potential to make social protection a political priority at the national level.

National & Regional landscapes. Challenges and opportunities for achieving local impact

In this next session, participants were divided into small groups in order to assess the social protection scenario in the region they work the most in.

Each group presented challenges and opportunities present in their region with regard to working with national governments towards the enactment of SPFs using the SDG approach and its tools. The groups then went on to devise concrete strategies for each regional setting. They presented several points that should guide efforts in each region bearing in the mind local particularities and factors.

Middle East and Africa

- Challenges:
 - Migration and displacement crisis
 - Lack of coordination between the institutions inside each government. There is no cooperation in-between them. They are usually always dealing with emergencies and short-term goals.
 - Lots of corruption and gaps between commitments and concrete practice. No accountability mechanisms to counteract that.
 - Regressive tax policies and international financial institutions that do not help.
 - Informal sector is very big, migrants are those who face the greatest hardship, they also face discrimination and bad treatment, sometimes even human rights violations.
 - In low-income African countries the implementation of SDGs is even more complex. The main question here is how to create public demand for social protection where it does not exist. It is important for the debate to shift towards a social protection approach.

- Opportunities:
 - In Lebanon: informal workers are getting together with the ultimate goal of forming a trade union that can channel their interests. Some more coordination between national institutions is starting to show up.
 - The World Bank is having a positive role here, getting involved with regional governments.
 - There are campaigns for fairer tax systems and justice systems. There is a growing awareness about this.

- Ratification of more conventions, but they are not yet being implemented in practice, so governments need to act in that direction.
- In Africa, a new campaign has surfaced around the goal of getting citizens more involved in the way governments spend their resources.
- Strategy:
 - Use African particularities to bring the concept of social protection into the public debate and stimulate its use. These particularities or conditions that can be used to drive the debate in that regard could be climate change, size of the informal economy, youth impoverishment and inequality. More systematic data and thorough investigation is needed in order for civil society actors to understand how far SPFs are being guaranteed or not. This is a precondition for any comprehensive action plan.
 - A successive strategy involves building ties with regional organisations and use SDGs as an opportunity. The Coalition has the potential to broker the engagement with national governments. Communication from the GCSPF should not only be top-down; on the contrary, local initiatives must also get to the international level and the Coalition itself.
 - The strategy also ought to convey the dangers that the absence of state-led social protection policies entails, particularly in the Middle East. When the state reneges on its social development obligations, other conservative or even fundamentalist religious organisations or terrorist groups fill in and create their own schemes. This is particularly dangerous for the region.

Latin America I (Andean countries & the Caribbean)

- Challenges:
 - Countries such as Honduras, Nicaragua and Paraguay in particular lack a legal framework for SPFs to be effective
 - Corruption
 - Unstable and deficient social policy initiatives given that they are usually set up through executive decrees and last only as long as one particular government remains in power or only insofar as international funding is available. They do not persist in time.
 - Government capacities are usually insufficient for a thorough implementation of public policy initiatives in general. There usually is a fixed structure but they lack the means for implementation.
 - Isolated NGO initiatives
 - Lack of funding for projects. Programmes seldom only target urban areas and do not reach vulnerable rural communities which are most in need of help
 - Weak civil society sector and lack of coherent articulation
 - Tax evasion on behalf of large corporations and exemptions for the private sector. Need of cultural change so as to guarantee better tax collection.
- Opportunities:

- International commitments have been newly acquired
 - Civil society in different countries has moved forward with the creation of a shared agenda
 - The use of accountability and monitoring mechanisms is on the rise and this can function as a tool to press for positive results.
 - Efforts towards the consolidation of a comprehensive social protection information database
 - The transitory momentum of the rights-based approach in the public debate
- Strategy:
 - Civil society ought to develop technical capacities to offer governments concrete proposals for achieving SDGs
 - Create and consolidate think tanks to strengthen lobby capabilities
 - Profit from the GCSPF's global outreach to boost the strength of advocacy initiatives
 - Build alliances among NGOs and the academy to improve the quality of analysis, as well as between civil society and trade unions to push for the enactment of SPFs

Asia

- Challenges:
 - Two-thirds of the global poor are in this continent
 - However, this is also an ageing population
 - Great volume of immigration and emigration from the region is a significant challenge with regard to the “portability” of social rights. Citizens living in foreign countries without the relevant nationality lose the rights they had at home. Rights should be portable and effective no matter where each Asian citizen is residing.
 - Shrinking space for civil society engagement, especially from those organisations representing minorities.
 - Some middle-income countries are in a better position to negotiate, while several low-income ones cannot keep up
 - The private sector is a new player in this area. They are already present in the SDG debate and it is imperative for the Coalition to figure out a way to hold them accountable for their actions and commitments.
 - South-South cooperation also needs to be boosted and accountability is an important issue here as well
 - The public debate is framed in terms of economic growth and not in terms of human rights, universality and social protection
 - Armed conflict, geopolitics and terrorism are also major hurdles, mainly because they dictate the public discourse and agenda priorities. Social protection is relegated and not seen as in the interest of national security.

- Opportunities:
 - Resources are available because the region is growing in economic terms, so civil society needs to find a way for those resources to be channelled to social protection
 - There is great abundance of home-grown innovation and experience from a wide range of countries on social protection
 - Regional alliances such as ASEAN represent a major opportunity for incidence

- Strategy:
 - The Global Coalition can incorporate the Asian and Latin American experts that are taking part in the events and meetings in its strategy to make concrete impact on the national level.
 - In national contexts, the GCSPF cannot just present projects because they are not sustainable. The way forward must involve fostering national platforms that can take the international initiatives and adapt them to local conditions.
 - It is paramount for civil society to have simple administrative procedures in Asia so as to focus on results.
 - Women must be treated as individual right-bearers, not just as members of a family group.

Latin America II (Southern Cone)

- Challenges:
 - High degree of job rotation and insufficient employment opportunities for the long run
 - Inequality in the social security system
 - Difficulties with regard to keeping young people inside the education system
 - Low quality employment (informality, instability)

- Opportunities:
 - Social Protection systems are already in place but, paradoxically, SPFs are not being guaranteed.
 - Knowledge derived from past experience is widely available
 - A minimum educational threshold is already guaranteed
 - Old-age pension system already in place

- Strategy:
 - Conduct an in-depth analysis of all subsidies and transferences, especially in light of the fact that much of that investment goes to the top quintiles but also bearing into account that several gaps exist in lower-income groups. The resources to close these gaps could come from repurposing at least some of the transferences the richer segments are getting.
 - Promote fiscal and tax reforms

- Create a regional chapter of the GCSPF to function as an Observatory devoted to the monitoring of those SPFs gaps left unresolved by the social protection systems in place. This forum will aim at systematising data in order for those gaps to be shown publicly and with great emphasis on differences related to class, ethnicity, age and gender. The Observatory will shed some light on the amount of resources destined to social protection and include cost-projection exercises to clarify the level and type of spending essential to close the gaps. Transparency and a focus on feasibility are vital in efforts such as this one. The Observatory could use SDG indicators for this first information-related mission. The second component of this initiative would be fostering communication between national and regional actors in a horizontal way. The Observatory would also have an important role in advocating for universal social protection among leaders and political parties.

(3) Learning Session

How and why do governments implement social protection policies to attain SDGs? Lessons learnt from a former Minister: Clarisa Hardy.

Clarisa Hardy began her presentation by noting how complex the 2030 Agenda is and the wide range of issues it encompasses. However, she also underlined that this same complexity ultimately served as an asset because it means that a more systemic and comprehensive approach to social protection policies is feasible. In this same regard, the linkage between SPFs and SDGs becomes evident.

As far as Hardy is concerned, the SPFs approach revolves around three main ideas that she finds useful when tackling the design and implementation of social protection systems. Firstly, its focus on the life cycle and the idea of building a dense network of state interventions that can accompany the individual as it traverses a series of stages in his or her life. Secondly, she underlined the comprehensive approach of the SPF initiative, which takes into account the two main elements which she deemed essential to any social protection system: income security and creation of opportunities. This is to say, a truly comprehensive social protection system should combine conditional cash transfers with good quality public services which are universally available and foster the development of socially-useful skills. Thirdly, Hardy referred to the importance of universality and the need for governments to promote the transition from an outmoded and detrimental conception of citizens as needs-oriented towards an approach based on the recognition of their human rights (inherent to social citizens and inalienable from them).

Nonetheless, the speaker was adamant at stating that these three pillars run the risk of being forgotten if state initiatives lack adequate methods to confront five main challenges which hinder the establishment of comprehensive social protection systems.

In the first place, she mentioned several hurdles related to the pervasive assistentialist approach which is exclusively centred on reducing poverty and only formulates public policy for those most in need. Clarisa Hardy felt that it was high time (particularly for Latin American governments) to start designing social policy with a wider spectrum of citizens in mind, including those who may not necessarily be catalogued as poor or in need but suffer from a series of vulnerabilities which need to be addressed if they are to be protected from sliding back below the poverty line. In this regard, a good articulation of quality public services with CCTs is needed if these last ones are to be separated from the assistentialist perspective.

In the second place, the former minister mentioned a further challenge related to the rampant myth that public initiatives and services are badly administered and of meagre quality. In order to help build trust around state-funded provisions and entice the middle classes to adopt them instead of the services they buy in the market, Hardy noted that a public agenda focused on transparency and fighting corruption is essential.

In the third place, Clarisa made reference to segmentation and the differing quality of the services that each social stratum is able to get. Hardy noted that, at least in Latin America, segregation in terms of service quality is more pervasive than outright lack of access to some form of education or health coverage, for instance. Therefore, she argued that frame the debate in terms of how to improve the quality of public services in particular.

In the fourth place, the speaker highlighted that the aforementioned challenged was related to another obstacle: that of the lack of sufficient citizen participation. This hurdle becomes manifest in two ways. On the one hand, citizens' voices are not heard with regard to the monitoring and accountability of public services. This is so because lower-income groups who use public services do not complain about them because of the prevalent dictum that one is entitled to offering feedback only when paying for something directly (in the market). As to higher-income strata, their voices could also be useful because they are usually accustomed to higher attention standards, but they do not complain either because they don't use those deficient public services in the first place. On the other hand, on top of this obstacle, citizen feedback is also lacking in a previous phase of the public policy process: that related to their design and formulation. Here, Hardy made great emphasis on the need to take into account the information that subjective indicators can bring. In her own words, the former minister succinctly stated that "there is no better answer than that which can be provided by he who needs the answer".

In the fifth place, Clarisa Hardy mentioned the institutionality dimension. She felt that it is imperative for the state to enshrine social rights in different national laws in order to protect those rights from being overrun by future governments which may come from different political parties and with differing intentions. On top of this, a solid network of institutions is also crucial with regard to guaranteeing sufficient fiscal manoeuvring space to invest progressively in social protection and sustain this investment over time. Finally, robust institutions are also key when it comes to articulating state interventions in an active way to avoid fragmentation and disintegration. In this regard, the family ought to be the recipient of social protection and be relieved of its protection burden. There are multiple advantages to selecting the family as the unit of choice, such as the possibility of incorporating gender and life-cycle perspectives to public interventions.

To conclude, Clarisa Hardy proved more than adept at shedding light on how the construction of a truly universalistic, comprehensive and life-cycled oriented SPF's system requires a series of challenges to be duly confronted. Only then will social protection progress become feasible.

- **Thursday, November 3rd**

(1) Review of seven-step action plan for national impact, as discussed in Delhi (copy of document attached)

Resuming as from what was discussed on Wednesday in terms of assessment of national and regional conditions, the meeting tackled the issue of how the GCSPF can make concrete impact on national landscapes. In this regard, the Core Group members summarised the action plan that had previously been drawn up in the Delhi meeting (a copy of the document is attached to this report).

Several points were raised by the participants at this stage:

- There was some consensus around the fact that the steps were not necessarily designed as part of a rigid chronological scheme, and several participants agreed that the stages could indeed overlap in time and actors involved.
- The role of the GCSPF in helping national NGOs work together was deemed important. Hundreds of NGOs advocating for social protection initiatives already exist, but isolation is often a problem. In order for change and impact to be possible, coordination and team work between civil society actors was understood as the crux of the matter. Dialogue and strategic alliances are the best ways to go about this.
- Some participants were concerned about SPFs being monopolised by individual political parties or national leaders. This is troubling insofar as social protection rights are usually enshrined in national constitutions and norms and their fate cannot be decided by each incumbent government. The GCSPF must have a role in empowering citizens to claim what belongs to them.
- Importance of understanding what each concept entails. Each social protection concept ought to be clearly understood by all relevant actors in the same way. It is imperative that the debate be framed in terms of universality, the core belief of the GCSPF.
- Funding issue. Which is the best strategy to find the necessary resources to fund these initiatives?

(2) Ways of linking SPFs and SDGs

The participants then tackled the conceptual challenges involved in the use of “Social Protection Floors” as a category. Some members echoed previous remarks that in some regional contexts the idea of “floors” is not entirely useful because national actors and governments could take them as “ceilings” and refrain from pursuing serious reform. In Latin America, in this regard, SDGs are sometimes better suited with regard to orchestrating support for social protection. Therefore, participants from Latin America felt that, even though everyone in the room agreed that the ultimate goal and meaning of SPFs is universality, it was nonetheless important to consider adapting the concepts to boost the effectiveness of local advocacy strategies. In Latin America, the debate should be framed not just in terms of absolute poverty but also in terms of relative poverty and inequality.

Other participants also noted that the two concepts sometimes do not target the same groups or are taken up by different actors. It is important to note that “floors” are universal but should not necessarily be uniform in their approach. Each country can and should adapt the thresholds to suits its own needs and priorities and in line with its level of economic development. For the Latin

American region this was shown in a recent report of CEPAL, entitled: “Towards a system of basic cash transfers for children and older persons”. There was a general feeling that floors should not be conceived as static concepts, but as evolving with the level of economic development of countries and with their priorities. With regard to SDGs, they are important because it allows the Coalition to see how social protection can coordinate and feed into other areas. The GCSPF could show how investing in Social Protection makes a country more productive, more environmentally-friendly or better in terms of the security situation, for instance. This could be a very effective way of linking work in both areas to strengthen advocacy.

Many members also felt that they had already reached agreement as to the importance of conceptual clarity. One of the Coalition missions is to make clear that “floors” represent basic levels of protection, and should not be regarded as a ceiling or maximum. Since social protection floors are an evolving concept, they are relevant for communicating the message and achieving the goals advocated by each organisation within the Coalition. Semantics should be used strategically towards the attainment of universal social protection. In this regard, another way of linking the two spheres could entail taking advantage of the political space opened up by the SDG debate. The idea is that if SPFs are guaranteed, several SDGs could also be attained.

A third way of linking the work done in both dimensions revolves around indicators. The GCSPF should use the SDG indicators for monitoring and accountability activities. For this to happen, some of them could be adapted as “human rights” indicators, so as to make them consistent with the SPF rights-based approach.

- **Friday, November 4th**

Global Coalition for Social Protection Floors Core Group Meeting: Coalition Role, Governance and Leadership (Plus Future Planning)

Representatives from the organisations integrating the Core Group of the Coalition convened on Friday to follow up on the discussions they had started in New Delhi and at the Strategic Meeting in Geneva. The Report from that last event was used as a guide and the members debated and expanded on several of the issues raised in the short and long-term roadmap on page 3. Finally, the Core Group identified certain pending issues that they would go on to discuss over the next meeting, hopefully in Africa.

(1) State of the Coalition and role of each individual member

Several participants expressed concern about the state of the coalition. In particular, they highlighted that the Geneva roadmap was not honoured, the newsletter was not being published and the website was not being updated regularly. There was also concern about Yvonne Theemann's role, given that she used to perform these administrative tasks voluntarily but could not continue any longer. This raised the issue of structure and administration. However, it was also made clear that Yvonne is far from gone; she is still very much interested in the Coalition and the work that it can get done.

Another important issue voiced in these preliminary discussions was that of the role of Global South members in the Coalition. There was concern that their voices weren't being heard because they haven't got the resources, contacts and network that members from the North usually have. This challenge went beyond the question related to structure and administration and referred to the core interests of the Coalition. The South has important expertise and is particularly knowledgeable about what is happening at the local level. Therefore, the Coalition needs to define what their role must be and what value they can add. This issue was reinforced by other members who also felt that the "global" aspect of the Coalition actually stayed in paper and this probably had to do with the fact that there are internal differences as to what issues the Coalition should tackle, whether its work should focus on the national or the international level and how both should be balanced. Even though at this stage the development of national social protection floors is considered the highest priority, there was consensus about looking at ways of enhancing the "global" component of the Coalition.

A third and final view offered with regard to the role of the Coalition was that of thinking how to organisation can become an effective tool in two senses: by getting together regional experts so as to encourage the building of local networks and alliances and through the production of position papers on key issues. There was a feeling that a more thorough review of the work of the Coalition needs to be done before there can be agreement about administrative matters. The Coalition cannot be limited to producing newsletters and being an effective communicator, although these institutional activities also have a part to play.

(2) National-level work

After all participants had had the opportunity of voicing their general concerns about the state and direction of the Coalition, the meeting moved on to the question of what role the coalition should play with regard to fostering social protection alliances at the national or regional level, a core issue also outlined previously in the short-term priorities in the Geneva report.

One of the first debates in this area revolved around whether experts and representatives from national contexts should be incorporated into the Coalition as new members or whether this was too complex (because they might not feel included and at ease inside the Coalition) and finding a way to empower them was more adequate. Those who advocated for this second option favoured a decentralised work dynamic in which the Coalition could build ties with regional alliances. However, the success of an empowerment strategy involves guaranteeing regional equality as a precondition.

Gradually, a consensus was formed around the viability of the second option at least in the short run. However, several members felt that the Coalition had limited legitimacy with regard to building national coalitions in a top-down manner. Therefore, the approach should be bottom-up. The Core Group agreed on this and it was suggested that the best way to make concrete progress with this agenda would be to identify and list a few national or regional coalitions that the Coalition can support and ask them what they need from us and how we can assist them best. The Coalition ought to identify these demands and respond to them. However, many members felt that the Coalition should avoid overextension, that is, opening up to too many national actors and dispersing its energy. A major concern that also surfaced was that of the budding state or inexistence of many national or regional initiatives, so the Coalition should also encourage them to form.

Given these constraints, it was decided that the Coalition ought to focus on building national coalitions in five selected countries and on supporting one regional coalition: that of South America.

The ILO flagship programme was proposed as a framework for choosing which five countries the Coalition could focus on. The countries that were singled out for further work were Zambia, Myanmar, India, El Salvador and possibly Iraq. There was some preliminary debate about what the Coalition could offer the representatives from these national contexts and several participants felt hopeful that they could move forward given that their organisations knew or had worked in some of these countries before. Getting in touch with national organisations so that their demands can be met is a pending issue, however.

Regarding the regional South American initiative, there was a strong consensus that the strategy there should be different to that of the countries in the ILO flagship programme. This is because the relevance of social protection is already understood in this region, even if more works still needs to be done so as to reframe it in a way consistent with universality and the human rights approach. The first two days of the meeting were essential in providing a good framework for making progress in between South American experts and representatives. They have already reached agreement with regard to building a regional chapter of the global coalition and analysing where the gaps between national social protection systems in the region and SPF standards are. This regional chapter will start by generating systematic information about this scenario and wants help from the Coalition with regard to SDG indicators, given that they want to use these tools to assess where the aforementioned gaps are. Nevertheless, this depends on the indicators being

systematised for Latin America, and some participants indicated that only 20% of them had been adapted up to now.

(3) UN Resolution

The next item of the first-year priorities listed in the Geneva report that the meeting tackled was the issue of the drafting of the UN resolution. Sergei had been in charge of writing a preliminary draft and Odile and Wouter had commented on it. The participants clarified this matter and recognised that, though the UN had expressed interest in the draft, the Coalition had no definite power of its own to guarantee that the resolution will be passed. However, at this stage, those Coalition members involved in the matter requested that members from the Global South join them and participate in the drafting as well. It was also pointed out that the Coalition should prepare a short statement summarising the four main points the resolution entails. This written document should be delivered to the UN by one of the member organisations which are represented at ECOSOC, such as Social Watch. Nevertheless, great emphasis was placed on the need for the statement to be delivered on behalf of the whole Global Coalition. There was consensus that after the draft is submitted the following step would involve informing the discussion at the UN and lobbying for the resolution among member states. It was also suggested that the Coalition could ask the five selected countries to support the resolution in New York. This was thought to be feasible given that several Core Group members have contacts in different state delegations and could make a strong case for the resolution with them. In particular, the Finnish, German and Uruguayan delegations were thought to be good candidates, even if it was noted that the relevant trade unions ought to be contacted first in the case of Uruguay so as to ensure the government is willing to consider the matter.

It was underlined, however, that for this to happen within a reasonable timeframe, all members must first agree on a definite version of the Resolution draft. There was consensus that everyone had to read the proposal and make the comments they thought relevant. A deadline (November 30th) was suggested for comments from Core Group members. After everyone has had their say, the draft will be sent over to the whole Coalition and, if nobody replies or makes a concrete comment, the draft will be considered final. The deadline suggested for this second phase was December 10th. The advocacy effort would begin as from that date. The first step in that process would be getting the text approved by the Commission for Social Development, Functional Commission of ECOSOC. Only then can ECOSOC act.

(4) SDGs follow-up

The meeting went on to address the issue of SPF and multidimensional poverty indicators, which was a commitment agreed upon by the Geneva meeting of March 2016. Wouter had sent a two-page document exploring progress in this matter. Still, there was concern among several participants with regard to the fact that reducing the Coalition's analysis just to SDG Goal 1 might mean that the concept of social protection runs the risk of being diluted. In particular, there are some gender considerations present in Recommendation 202 which are not part of Goal 1 but participants felt that they were essential to the concept of social protection the Coalition wishes to endorse. Indeed, the meeting recognised that this was a real danger and so decided to include the rest of the goals in the plan and also check what Christina from ILO presented on the first day of the event. The final deadline for feedback from participants on this matter was set for December 31st.

(5) Terms of Reference

The next topic the meeting sought to discuss was the idea of updating the Coalition's Terms of Reference (TORs). Sergei Zelenev suggested he could draft a proposal by the end of November for the Core Group to revise it before it is distributed to the broader Coalition group. Cécilie Schildberg offered to work on this too, as did Rachel Moussié. Some members expressed a willingness to make the Terms of Reference more specific in order for external actors to better understand what they can expect from the Coalition and what assistance they can ask from it. Nevertheless, too much specificity was also seen by participants as a hurdle, so a compromise solution will be devised by the three participants working on this so that a balance can be struck between the two intentions. With regard to Core Group membership, for starters the participants decided to keep it as it is and only consider enlargement in case somebody asks to join.

(6) Position on fiscal sustainability

The issue of fiscal space and the need for sustainable social policy was also considered a pressing topic the Coalition should offer its views on. It was proposed that the group should think about the challenges faced by countries in this dimension, especially those that cannot seize the opportunity to launch the 2030 agenda because they lack the necessary resources to do so. The tension between sustainability and emergency and the differential funding that goes to each scenario is also vital. Still, the participants expressed that this is not just an international issue but also a domestic one, especially with regard to creating national fiscal spaces. The fiscal committee will keep on discussing this matter. Gala Diaz Langou asked to be incorporated.

(7) Coalition structure and administration

Two main topics were put on the table at this stage. Firstly, the Core Group addressed the issue of membership. It was noted that only about half of all Core Group members are actively taking part in the meetings and discussions. Several participants mentioned the need to consider an exit strategy for some of those members of the Core Group and the team in charge of updating the Terms of Reference committed to considering how that could be designed and included in that framework. Other members underlined that The Coalition doesn't necessarily need more members but must guarantee meaningful and thorough participation from the members it already has. Therefore, the matter of how to foster deeper engagement was brought to the agenda. The challenge of ensuring that the Coalition remains balanced (gender and region-wise) was also debated as a priority in this dimension. Another matter that demanded certain attention was which role the Core Group can assign to the non-Core Group members and how they can be useful. This ought to be discussed further.

Secondly, the meeting tackled the more urgent matter of administration. Although some members were keen on devising a more formal structure which included a Secretariat and a team in charge of communication, not everyone agreed this is what the Coalition needs right now. However, the importance of finding someone to be in charge of all administrative and communication tasks was stressed by all participants. This was deemed essential by everyone, even if there were slight disagreements at first as to which was the best way to deal with the issue. In the end, a compromise solution was proposed. The idea is to secure assistance from a single person

who can take over administration and communication activities. Yvonne will specify what her tasks were so as to organise this.

Concretely, a consensus emerged around three successive options. Plan A is funding someone to be in charge of the administrative work. Cécilie offered to ask whether FES could cover this, but initially she was not very hopeful. Plan B is getting Bröt fur die Welt to cover the costs of someone from one of the member organisations who is willing to take over the aforementioned tasks. If both these initiatives fail, Plan C consists of introducing a rotation scheme organised around a calendar. Each member organisation would take over the necessary tasks for six months and then rotate. Finally, Cécilie noted that an important priority in this dimension was the issue of the Coalition website. The contract between SOLIDAR and Bröt fur die Welt expired in March and the SOLIDAR employee who was in charge of this can no longer take this responsibility. Nicola Weibe mentioned that Bröt fur die Welt might have resources to cover those costs but she needs to ask and the Coalition should also move quickly to find an alternative organisation to update and maintain the website.

As of November 15th, in a series of follow-up emails, Cécilie informed the Core Group that she has managed to secure funding from FES for one or two years to move forward with Plan A. She will now be contacting Social Watch, which had offered to take over these responsibilities at least over the first year.

(8) Pending issues, assigned tasks and deadlines

With regard to evaluation, Gala Diaz Langou thought it had been hard to combine the two groups which took part in the event (regional experts and Core Group representatives). She felt everyone could have done more background reading on prospective agreements and the latest components so that it would have been easier to set up a working agenda. Most members nonetheless felt that the Coalition had made great progress over the BA event.

Before closing the session, the Core Group outlined several pending issues for future discussion. These were:

Drafting a joint work proposal to develop larger and deeper networks in the countries selected. This would entail a joint work proposal for each of the five countries and another one for the South American coalition. Gala Diaz Langou suggested she could have that last one ready by March and share it with the rest of the members of Latin America's Southern Cone countries. It is vital to assign the rest of the papers on the selected countries to other Core Group members.

Choosing a location for the next meeting. Suggested countries include Zambia, Lebanon and Morocco. Visa requirements were underlined as a core criterion for deciding. The date is October 2017.

Ana Zeballos from Social Watch Uruguay will keep in touch with Cécilie Schildberg and FES so as to move forward with setting up someone to be in charge of administrative matters.

In connection with next year's schedule for the UN Committee on ESCR – which Priti Darooka shared in a series of follow-up e-mails –, it was decided that the Coalition will write shadow reports on several countries that the CESCR will be monitoring and on which Core Group members have particular expertise. These reports ought to be focused on SPFs and their situation in each national context in particular. The dates and countries are as follows:

May 2017: Australia, Liechtenstein, Netherlands, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Uruguay.

Deadline to submit the report is 15 March 2017.

September 2017: Colombia, Mexico, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Spain.

Deadline to submit the report is 31 July 2017.

Gala Díaz Langou offered to tackle the report on Uruguay together with Social Watch and other Uruguayan experts and partners. It is important for other members to consider whether they can tackle any of the other reports. In particular, GVD Tilakasiri might be able to help with Sri Lanka and Wouter van Ginneken with Netherlands. The shadow reports ought to be submitted two weeks prior to the deadline indicated by the CESCR. Priti Darooka offered to send over a model which could be of great use in order to guide the writing of these reports.