



NGO Oral Statement by GFDD during 52nd Session of the Commission for Social Development - 11-21 February 2014 focused on: 'Promoting empowerment of people in achieving poverty eradication, social integration, full employment and decent work for all'.

Global Foundation for Democracy and Development (GFDD) and Fundación Global Democracia y Desarrollo (FUNGLODE) are private, non-partisan, not-for-profit institutions, created by His Excellency Dr. Leonel Fernández, former President of the Dominican Republic.

FUNGLODE and GFDD are dedicated to formulating innovative and strategic proposals on global issues of national interest with the purpose of contributing to the creation of effective public policies related to the governance and social and economic development of the Dominican Republic.

Mr. Chairman, on behalf of the Global Foundation for Democracy and Development (the Foundation) I would like to extend our sincere and full support to you, the esteemed Bureau at this Commission and its members, as well as our best wishes for successful consultations and outcomes.

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished delegates, dear colleagues, in today's globalized world, local economic stability is still essential for domestic consumer and investor confidence, which ultimately keeps the door open to larger corporations. In order to maintain a healthy environment where corporations and small businesses can be mutually beneficial, a careful balance must be struck. Recognizing that small businesses are a continuing source of dynamism for a nation's economy, the Foundation has led the call for a new approach to sustainable development: a local development paradigm that would:

- seek to strengthen local productivity and communities' social fabric;
- offer reliable education and professional development on a local level; and
- promote programs within both the public and the private sector that work towards social inclusion.

The Foundation's ReCreate program is a good illustration of how local productivity and social inclusion can easily be combined and have a positive impact on the Dominican Republic. Developed in 2012, this program is a unique recycling scheme, which offers women, youth and children across the Dominican Republic workshops in art recycling. It demonstrates how recycling waste into art can empower individuals and communities alike. Upon graduating from the workshops, the program then equips individuals and their

communities with the opportunity to launch their own ventures, turning this educational project into a source of income and entrepreneurship.

Offering reliable education and professional development programs is another key part of the development paradigm. Through the continuation of its Eco-Huertos program, the Foundation is supporting the creation of organic and sustainable vegetable gardens in schools and communities throughout the country. The series of workshops and sessions included in the program educate members on how to create a vegetable garden, provide instruction on planting and general garden maintenance. With the aim of developing this program on a national scale, the Foundation is helping local families learn sustainable agriculture practices that can then be applied at home. This will enable them to not only supplement their diets, but to generate income for the community as well.

The third and final part of this new development paradigm is the voluntary engagement of the private sector and its corporate social responsibility programs in an effort to work towards social inclusion. In this respect, the Foundation's work to raise awareness of the Volunteer Program at Dominican Bank "Banco Reservas" is a good example of this. The bank's Volunteering Program is the first effort by a Dominican financial institution to promote music, literature, education, sports and art in the Dominican Republic, and is considered to be among the most committed projects of solidarity and social commitment in the country, providing assistance to the needy in the areas of health care and raising awareness of environmental protection and corporate performance.

In conclusion Mr. Chairman, the education and engagement of local communities, together with the development of local economies, clearly constitutes a vital development paradigm for ensuring the promotion of sustainable development in both developed and developing countries across the world. However, as can be seen from the actions of the Global Foundation for Democracy and Development, this transition will only be effective if it is supported at both the national and the local levels by each relevant stakeholder in both the public and the private sectors.

We therefore invite the delegates gathered at this Commission to explore the role that these stakeholders can play in making this local development paradigm a reality, and in doing so promoting empowerment of people in achieving poverty eradication, social integration, full employment and decent work for all.

Thank you.