

Resolution 19: The Social Solidarity Economy

The third StreetNet International Congress

NOTING:

1) that in most countries of the world, categorized as underdeveloped or developing countries, the lack of jobs is increasing at an alarming levels as a result of the adverse economic and market policies imposed for decades by the global neoliberal system, forcing between 30 to 70 percent of its economically active population to seek occupation in what is known as the Informal Economy Sector, for example as street vendors or self-employed workers.

2) that the working and living conditions of most of these workers are precarious, in conditions of poverty, extreme poverty and without any technical, financial and social assistance from the state, and the majority in this sector are women who are breadwinners who support their families.

3) that despite such adverse conditions, such workers maintain their working activity, avoiding partial or total unemployment through micro and small enterprises, mostly of a family nature, producing and offering a variety of goods and services, as well as handicrafts and basic consumer products.

4) that this sector of the informal economy, street vendors or self-employed workers, despite the adversities in which they work, play an important role in the economies of their countries through the positive impact they have on indicators concerning coping with unemployment, the GDP and social stability, to the point of forming **a new economic sector that is governed by principles and values of social responsibility, entrepreneurship and solidarity, and this is vital to the development of democracy and economic citizenship.**

5) that the richness and balance of the society are due to its diversity, and that this Social Solidarity Economy actively contributes to it, by improving and enhancing social, communitary and family stability, providing a model of micro and small enterprises by which the Social Solidarity Economy contributes to a stable, durable growth, **and fundamentally to the development of democracy and economic citizenship.**

6) that the values of the social solidarity economy are closely consistent with the objectives of social inclusion, decent work, training and reintegration of disadvantaged persons (as demonstrated, for example, by micro-credit cooperatives designed by Professor Mohammed Yunus, Nobel price-winner, who, by facilitating financial integration has increased the influence of women), and which provides substantial social innovation, supporting people who face difficulties in finding their own solutions to social problems, gender equality, quality of family life, and gives them the capability of taking care of their minor children, older relatives and people with disabilities.

7) in general, firms in the Social Solidarity Economy are micro-businesses and small businesses that contribute towards a sustainable economic model where people are more important than the capital.

HEREBY RESOLVES:

Demand, work, influence states where there are organizations affiliated to StreetNet to:

1) Promote policies to defend the concept of the Social Solidarity Economy as a “different approach to business,” whose main aim is not only financial return, but also, and even more, benefits for society as a whole so that the special nature of the Social Solidarity Economy is taken into account in the drafting of legal frameworks;

2) Include the Social Solidarity Economy, its members and partners (cooperatives, mutual societies, associations, and others) in its legislation and policies, implement easy access to credit, tax benefits, development of micro-credit, technical assistance and social security as well as incentives to better support organizations of this type created with a social purpose;

3) Support the members of the Social Solidarity Economy as a real investment in building networks of solidarity that can strengthen the role of communities and local authorities in the development of social policies, democracy and economic citizenship;

4) To promote local competitiveness and capacity for innovation, taking into account the potential of the Social Solidarity Economy to create stability in a context of predominantly cyclical economies, through the reallocation and reinvestment of profits at local level, promoting a new corporate culture, linking economic activities to local needs, the maintenance of risk activities (eg handicrafts) and social capital generation;

5) Develop programs for members of the Social Solidarity Economy, existing and potential, to offer them financial support, information, advice and training to streamline the process of creating and formalizing them, in order to help them cope with an economy increasingly globalized that is now affected by a serious cyclical global financial crisis;

6) To organize programs to promote experimentation with new economic and social models and research framework programs, the inclusion of issues related to the Social Solidarity Economy in calls for proposals, as well as providing for the use of a “multiplier” applied to official statistical data, and the introduction of instruments of qualitative and quantitative measurement of the growth and development of the Social Solidarity Economy;

PROPOSED: CTCP Nicaragua

SECONDED: SIVARA, FUTJOPCIF, FOTSSIEH, FNOTNA, FEDEVAL, FUTRAND