



30 May 2017

## **European Social Partners Statement on tapping the potential from greening the economy for jobs creation**

### **We, the European Social Partners**

ACKNOWLEDGE that we are at a critical juncture for the European Union concerning growth and quality job creation, as the economic recovery continues, with differences across Europe, yet we continue to face significant economic, environmental and social challenges;

EMPHASISE that robust industrial and competitive business fabric, supported by high-performing public services, in the European Union is an indispensable basis to weather the multiple challenges we are currently facing;

STRESS that the EU has committed to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals, which together comprise a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure peace and prosperity for all people;

RECOGNISE that achieving the Sustainable Development Goals requires further efforts, in particular a greener and more sustainable economic growth. This implies considerable investment and skills related initiatives to enable the necessary adaptation of enterprises and workers to changing jobs content;

EMPHASISE that the EU has committed to the provisions of the Paris agreement on climate change and that further improving resource efficiency is a key condition to decarbonise the economy;

RECALL that the EU's economy is highly resource-dependent and therefore vulnerable to exports restrictions and increased prices of imported commodities, which is expected to continue as global demand for raw materials and energy resources keep rising;

RECALL that the inefficient and unsustainable use of resources, the loss of biodiversity and degradation of ecosystems, and the impacts of climate change pose challenges for long-term economic growth and social cohesion;

WELCOME the fact that the European Union has made the transition towards a **low carbon, resource-efficient and circular economy a central policy priority**;

ACKNOWLEDGE that improvements in resource efficiency alone can bring multiple benefits for business and society at large and hence, the implementation of EU environmental *acquis* should be a priority;

STRESS that effective adaptation of economies and labour markets to more resource-efficient practices and processes requires a workforce with the appropriate skills and competences and that education, initial and continuous vocational training play a critical role in delivering and updating relevant skills, taking into account the priorities of the New Skills Agenda, as appropriate;

RECOGNISE that this transition needs to be managed transparently, fairly, and effectively by public authorities at EU, national and regional level in charge of economic, environmental and education and training policies, and in close cooperation with the social partners. Diverse economic, environmental and labour market realities, and industrial relations practices in the Member States should be taken into account;

RECALL that many enterprises of all sizes have already embarked in making their business models more resource efficient and circular and that existing good practices should be replicated as much as possible across the EU, in particular to incentivise SMEs to become resource-efficient. In that regard, WELCOME the finance and stakeholders platforms that the European Commission, the European Investment Bank and the European Economic and Social Committee are currently developing;

CALL on the European institutions to perform, in close coordination with the European social partners, an in-depth analysis to identify conditions and success factors for European enterprises and workers to benefit from the European Union moving towards a more circular economy;

CALL on the European institutions to also identify, in close coordination with the European social partners, the effects of the transition to a circular economy on various sectors as well as how to ensure good outcomes for enterprises and workers.

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