



## **Seoul Declaration**

### **Global Crisis and Social Economy**

The financial crisis of 2008, which triggered the European fiscal crisis in 2011, has eventually led to recent financial instability in Asian countries and in resource-abundant nations. It is undeniable that undue emphasis on market principles and unrestricted financial globalization has caused financial devastation.

The crisis has caused income inequality and social exclusion which has tended to bring about socio-political challenges. Ecological problems are also rising due to our fossil fuel-dependent system. The problems, such as global warming, the destruction of biological diversity, and the energy and food crisis are now threatening the survival of humanity.

In facing this crisis, we are now focusing on diverse movements seeking "a pluralistic economy". The "social economy movement" has been emerging as a new hope that might enable us to resolve economic polarization, social inequality and exclusion, and ecological challenges. We, the participants, believe in a social economy that would offer mankind "a better world" and "a better life."

### **Why is a Social Economy Significant?**

A social economy aims to simultaneously achieve efficiency, equality and sustainability, based on trust and cooperation. Cooperatives, community-based enterprises, social enterprises(not for shareholders' profit enterprise), credit associations, microfinance agencies, and non-profit organisations are what constitute a social economy. Of course philanthropic sector and social investors are very important. We may be able to overcome the current global crisis by harmonizing the social economy with the public sector and market economy. A social economy encompasses a broad range of issues: economic, social, cultural and ecological challenges at the local, national and global levels.

A social economy is essential for socially alienated people to create jobs and restore their dignity. It has made achievements especially well in the social service sector, which provides relational goods such as education, childcare, healthcare and care services. And social economy is critical in fostering sustainable territorial development and for food security. A social economy responds to unmet needs through cooperation among members of society. In this respect, it is the most important basis for social innovation.

It has been proven that generating sustainable energy via local communities, local food movements, fair trade and other diverse forms of social economy is effective in taking up the ecological problems we face. These ecological challenges can be fully met if regional



social economies are engaged with global institutions through measures such as joining international treaties and transforming energy systems at the national level.

A social economy is the cornerstone of participatory democracy at the grassroots and the social and economic regeneration of local neighbourhoods. The system of democratic decision-making and participation, which is inherent to the social economy, is indispensable for overcoming the current crisis. Since a social economy provides ways of overcoming this crisis and building a more integrated society and engendering an ethic of solidarity and sustainability, its importance has been significantly growing at all levels, ranging from international conventions to rules for individuals.

### **Global Social Economy Network: Toward Convergence across the World**

The current challenge facing mankind cannot be resolved by any one country. This is the primary reason why we seek global solidarity for dealing with such issues. A multilateral international network must lay the foundations of global social economic solidarity that encompasses regional communities and countries.

The 2013 Global Social Economy Forum is a venue for sharing ideas and experiences, a place to actively collaborate on envisioning a new social economy paradigm for the future among key counterparts throughout the world. This is a special opportunity for world communities to support the growth of social economy movement to envisage a new agenda for the future.

#### **All participants pledge to work together to promote the following activities.**

1. Each local government will promote public-private-community partnership to build a sustainable social economy network and emphasise cooperation for exchange between principal social economy agents in each community.
2. Each of us recognises the importance of growing citizen empowerment and supporting diverse and widespread community leadership of the social economy
3. Each of us will engage to raise awareness of the social economy and develop appropriate learning programmes for different target groups and mutually share their outcomes.
4. Each of us will promote the joint development of a standard textbook of social economy as well as civic education programmes to stimulate the social economy, which can enhance the influence and capability of civil society
5. Each of us will share our experiences and visions in order to lead in social innovation and actively operates a social economy exchange programme to foster human resources.



6. Each of us will exchange information about the social economy via the Internet and other means of communications and discuss research on the emerging social economy performance in real time. Governments would be encouraged to adjust policy in light of feedback from this information.

7. Each of us will encourage the study of development models including the public policies which promote the harmony of social economy, market economy and public economy

8. Each of us will support efforts to nurture the associations along with supporting organisations representing social economy actors and recognise their central role in determining the direction of social economy activities as well as their work in promoting cooperative projects.

9. Each of us acknowledges our responsibility for the Developing Countries, which are experiencing severe underdevelopment and poverty and seek an integrated solution to the economic, social, cultural and environmental problems which could be achieved by means of decentralized cooperation.

10. Each of us will support the joint promotion and development of social economy activities and the formation of a global advisory group to sustain operations and development. Other movement actors such as women's, labour, environmental and disability groups would be invited to contribute to the process.

In order to lay the groundwork for setting up a global advisory group, the provisional secretariat will be temporarily located and hold a general meeting in Seoul 2014. All participants wishing to take part in the group should collaborate on establishing a specific action plan with the aim of electing a host city and promoting the project at the 2014 general meeting.

The 2013 Global Social Economy Forum,  
Having met in Seoul from November 5 to 7, 2013,

Seoul Declaration is adopted in Seoul