Declaration of the International Committee for October 17 at its Eighth Biennial Session in 2020

We, the Members of the International Committee for October 17, having met on 6 July 2020

Recall our Rome Declaration\textsuperscript{1} at the seventh biennial meeting in 2018 in which we called upon all world leaders to ensure they translate their commitments into effective implementation to end poverty in all its forms and to build peaceful societies.

Recall also our call to the United Nations to ensure no one is left behind and to fully mobilize its efforts to end poverty in all its dimensions for everyone everywhere by 2030, including through effective implementation of its Social Protection Floor initiative, and to all Governments and the United Nations to incorporate the findings of the Multidimensional Aspects of Poverty (MAP) research project into their efforts to end poverty in all its dimensions, and to take into account the Guiding Principles on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights adopted by the Human Rights Council in its resolution 21/11 of September 27th, 2012.

Recall further our commitment to vigorously promote the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, which publicly unites all those who are striving together to end poverty and those who want to join them, whether at the global, national or local levels, and renew our call to the United Nations to update its 2006 review of the contribution of the observance of the International Day to the mobilization of all stakeholders in the fight against poverty,\textsuperscript{2} and to urgently consider establishing a mechanism at the United Nations to ensure the effective participation and voice of people living in poverty and extreme poverty.

Note with grave concern the unprecedented threat of the on-going COVID-19 global pandemic to the health, safety, food security and livelihoods of people living in extreme poverty everywhere, that the poorest and most vulnerable are the hardest hit by the pandemic and that the impact of the crisis will reverse hard-won development gains and hamper progress towards ending poverty in all its forms and leaving no one behind.

\textsuperscript{1} http://overcomingpoverty.org/article/declaration-international-committee-for-october-17-seventh-biennial-session-in-2018

\textsuperscript{2} United Nations, Report of the Secretary-General, A/61/308.
Recognize the solidarity and resilience of people living in poverty who have come together to fight the threat of the pandemic in their communities — despite the additional hardships and burdens they face in their daily struggles to overcome extreme poverty, despite the inadequate or lack of official assistance of medical care and supplies for personal protection and hygiene, and despite the lack of adequate social support and financial assistance to the poorest and homeless — as an important lesson to the international community on how to achieve social and environmental justice for all.

Note that the Secretary-General of the United Nations, has emphasized that “we all need to stand in solidarity with those least able to protect themselves from the virus” and that a petition for a People’s Vaccine has been launched by World Leaders to demand that “COVID-19 vaccines, diagnostics, tests and treatments are provided free of charge to everyone, everywhere.”

1. **Call upon** Governments, the United Nations and its agencies to ensure that policies and action to tackle the global health emergency and its devastating social and economic impact take into account the particular vulnerabilities and special needs of people living in extreme poverty in order to provide them with adequate access to medical, health and social services for a sustainable and inclusive recovery, including access to education for all children, and the effective participation of people living in poverty in determining, implementing and evaluating those policies at the national, regional and global levels to ensure no one is left behind.

2. **Call also upon** Governments, the United Nations and its agencies to support and implement the principles and objectives of the People’s Vaccine initiative for COVID-19 to ensure that everyone everywhere can receive a vaccine free of charge, and that priority must be given to people living in extreme poverty, especially the poorest, as many lack adequate access to water, sanitation and hygiene services, and are therefore most vulnerable to the spread of the virus and its most serious health outcomes.

3. **Urge** Governments everywhere to implement economic and social stimulus policies that prioritize people who have lost their livelihoods because of measures to control the spread of the virus, especially those living in extreme poverty, rather than large corporations and big business, and to avoid imposing austerity measures that have been shown to have disproportionately ruinous impact upon poor people but instead to choose a path of inclusive growth, involving the active participation of all people, that delivers better outcomes for people, communities, and the environment through social solidarity.