



SPEAKING NOTES

SENATOR THE HON MICHAELIA CASH

**MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT, SKILLS, SMALL AND FAMILY
BUSINESS**

SENATOR FOR WESTERN AUSTRALIA

2019 ILO Centenary Conference

Geneva, Switzerland

11:25 pm, 18 June 2019

Thank you very much, Madame Vice-President.

Introduction

Ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of the Australian Government, I am honoured to address the 108th International Labour Conference — the Centenary Conference — a momentous occasion.

Australia is proud to be a founding member of the ILO.

We congratulate the ILO on 100 years of commitment to decent work for all.

Governments, workers and employers from all over the world are richer for the opportunity to come together and share our lessons, knowledge and best practices on labour and employment issues.

Future of Work

One of the main topics for this year's conference is the future of work.

As the Australian Minister for Employment, Skills, Small and Family Business – this is a priority for me and my Government.

We are committed to ensuring that all Australians benefit from the opportunities presented by the changing work environment.

Our success in this regard depends on our ability to help our workforce adapt to the changing demand for skills in the global economy.

Government, business, unions, training providers and individuals all have role to play in ensuring this success.

The ILO showed great foresight to prepare for the Centenary year by asking more than 20 world experts to make recommendations in the Global Commission's report, *Work for a brighter future*.

The ILO has taken this opportunity to not only pause and reflect on the past 100 years, but to consult with all constituents about our next steps.

Australia agrees we must actively shape our own future of work, and not stand by and watch, as all that we think we know changes.

To that end, Australia has much to offer.

In our 2019-20 Federal Budget we announced our Delivering Skills for Today and Tomorrow package.

The package will ensure Australians have every opportunity to acquire the skills needed to succeed in a changing workplace, and at the same time offer businesses qualified workers whom they depend on to prosper.

Modern slavery

We are also tackling modern slavery head on. Echoing the sentiments of Prime Minister Theresa May last week, we have a moral imperative to eradicate modern slavery from our supply chains and our businesses.

That is why last year we legislated a world-leading modern slavery reporting requirement for businesses.

This important legislation demonstrates our commitments to playing an international leadership role on modern slavery and will hold Australian businesses accountable for their actions to combat modern slavery.

No one country alone can tackle these issues in isolation – supply chains as we all know are global – so cross border collaboration is critical.

Announceables

At this very moment, the standard setting committee is drafting a new ILO Convention to *End Violence and Harassment in the World of Work*.

Stamping out gender-based violence is a particular focus of the Australian Government and is critical to achieving economic security and prosperity for all.

This convention is the first international standard of its kind and could not be more timely — violence and harassment have no place in the future of work.

That is why I am pleased to announce today that Australia will recommit funding until **2022** towards the ILO's flagship '**Better Work**' program — a program that improves labour standards and reduces gender discrimination and sexual harassment in garment factories, where **75 per cent of workers are women**.

Furthermore, Australia will support **Better Work** and **CARE Australia** to deliver a regional workshop on preventing sexual harassment in garment factories in Cambodia later this year.

Conclusion

Ladies and gentlemen, the Australian Government sees the Centenary Declaration as a critically important document, both in terms of being able to look back and acknowledge our achievements but also to help inform our work on important issues.

Australia remains firmly committed to our long-term strategic partnership with the ILO.

We again congratulate the ILO on 100 years of tripartism and social dialogue, always with a foundation in social justice.

Thank you, Madame Vice-President.