

STATEMENT BY HONOURABLE VANCE AMORY
Senior Minister and Minister of Labour
AT THE 108TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF LABOUR
HELD IN GENEVA, SWITZERLAND, JUNE 10-21, 2019

Mr Chairman,

Allow me to take this opportunity to extend congratulations on behalf government and people of St Christopher and Nevis to the ILO on this its centennial anniversary. The work of the ILO over these 100 years is worthy of celebration. We commend the ILO on all of its accomplishments and pray for its continued success as we chart the way forward for the next 100 years.

In the twin island Federation of St Kitts and Nevis, we are mindful of the fact that the nature of work is undergoing major transformation impacted by demography, technological development and climate change, and the development of artificial intelligence and robotics.

In the Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis, we have begun the process of encouraging our people to prepare for the inevitable change in the structure of work by developing a program of training and retraining our people to equip them for the future of work. In addition, the Ministry of Labour and Ministry of Education in conjunction with the National Tripartite committee has established a new structure to upgrade all

workers and prepare them to meet the challenges which confront them in respect of the future of work.,

The Future of work is about people. It is about families. This transformation is about changing the attitude and the culture of people to accept the change and equip themselves to adapt to the new environment in the world of work. The future of work is about the improvement of the quality of life of the people even as they face the challenges posed by the changing socio economic and the political environment.

Our discussions at the National level must be inclusive of all stake holders –

- representative of workers
- representative employers and
- civil society

to ensure the broad consensus of tripartism to maximize the benefits of the workers in the changing world of work. In this process St. Kitts and Nevis recognizes the importance of ensuring that the institutions of learning are geared towards lifelong learning to strengthen this new strategy to prepare the workforce to adapt to the new opportunities which will be created in the future.

It is imperative that the **private sector** becomes a leading partner in the creation of jobs for the future.

It is necessary that all workers are to be accorded the dignity and social protection which is necessary for them to

- have a good quality of life

- earn a livable wage
- be able to provide the basic needs for a decent standard of living,
- be able to provide for their families and
- have some savings for the future.

This is a challenge for the future of work that workers must feel that their participation in the economic activity of the country and the world is valued and they are able to share equitably in the economic benefits generated by their skills and their labour.

Mr. Chair, the future of work must also entail that we focus on our youth and seek to identify their talents and entrepreneurial capacities to become self-employed using the technologies and provide support with resources to develop new avenues of employment for the future.

In addressing the Future of Work, St. Kitts and Nevis is in the process of reviewing all ILO conventions with a view to ratifying those outstanding.

I must take this opportunity to express our deep appreciation to the ILO for the invaluable assistance provided to enable St. Kitts and Nevis to develop a new modern Labour Code as part of its legislative reform to underpin the new strategy to prepare the environment for the future of work. In this new code strong measures will be included to safeguard workers' rights in the emerging labour market. We are adapting regulations and policies to ensure decent work for all.

Again, I congratulate the ILO on its 100th anniversary.