



Organisasi Perburuhan Internasional - Jakarta
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95TH International Labour Conference **World needs 430 million new jobs by 2015**

GENEVA (ILO News): More than 400 million new jobs will be required over the next decade to keep pace with growth of the labour force, mostly in the developing countries, through policies replacing jobless growth with “job-rich” growth, the Director-General of the International Labour Organization Juan Somavia told the ILO’s annual labour conference here today.

“Some 80 per cent of the world’s work force live in developing countries. 430 million jobs will need to be created by 2015 simply to keep up with the growth of the labour force which will take place in that part of the world,” Mr. Somavia said in an address to the International Labour Conference which gathers more than 4,000 delegates representing governments, workers and employers from the ILO’s member States.

“That job creation challenge comes on top of the pressure of a continuing large scale shift out of agriculture and rural areas towards cities, pushed by poverty and pulled by the hope of a better job,” Mr. Somavia said. “The global economy is not delivering enough decent jobs that people need. Despite the many benefits of globalization, we see again and again how the dignity of work has been devalued. Economic optimism for some is matched with profound social pessimism for many. This is why we must put in place policies that replace jobless growth with quality, ‘job-rich’ growth.”

The ILO Director-General spoke as the Organization’s annual conference entered its second week. The meeting is to focus on a wide range of issues including changing patterns in the world of work, child labour, occupational safety and health, the employment relationship, labour inspection and a review of labour standards in a number of countries.

In separate comments, Mr. Cestmir Sajda, the President of the ILC and Deputy Minister of Labour and Social Affairs of the Czech Republic said: “A large proportion of the world’s population cannot enjoy the potential benefits of globalization. Moreover, the huge informal sector excludes workers from basic social security safety nets and leaves them in total insecurity.”

Mr. Somavia cited the service economy as a “major growth area for employment”, adding “this is linked to another virtually global phenomenon – skill shortages side-by-side with rising unemployment. The hardware of the new technologies is spreading much faster than the human software of manager and worker skills to make full use of its potential.”

Among other challenges facing the global economy was the need to come to terms with an aging population, discrimination, migration and the fact that six out of 10 workers in the world lack social protection^{*/}.

Hundreds of millions of workers today are connected to the global economy because the products they produce and their employers are. He cited, for example, the maritime sector which was the subject of a new Convention adopted by the ILO in February of this year.

Mr. Somavia noted that the adoption of the new maritime Convention was the most recent example of growing support for the ILO's Decent Work Agenda. He also cited the final outcome statement of the UN World Summit in September of last year, in which 150 global leaders agreed to place full and productive employment and decent work as a central objective of relevant national and international policies and spelling out the central role of decent work in development strategies and poverty reduction.

The statement "marked an unprecedented leap in global recognition at the highest political level of the relevance and centrality of the ILO's decent work agenda for the entire international community," he said.

The ILO's Decent Work Agenda is to be discussed at the High Level Segment of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) meeting in Geneva on 3-5 July. The high level discussion will be the first since last year's World Summit, and should "focus on the theme of full and productive employment and decent work".

"We can mainstream these issues within the UN system," Mr. Somavia told the delegates.

Mr. Somavia emphasized the importance of translating commitments into realities on the ground. He stressed that the ILO's Decent Work Country Programmes, as well as other efforts by international development agencies and the United Nations system come together around the jobs challenge.

"The Decent Work Agenda is seen as a practical and balanced tool to address these problems," he said. "Politicians going to election all over the world know that this is the biggest democratic demand they face. People are voting for a fair chance at a decent job. If the Decent Work Agenda connects with politics then we have to help governments and social partners put this approach into policies, translate it into meaningful change in people's lives –with each country defining their own priorities, choices and policies," he told the delegates.

Mr. Somavia said the tripartite system, as exemplified by the ILO, was the best way of dealing with the decent work challenge, adding, "Tripartism is key to the task ahead. We need to support our constituents where they are strong and reinforce them where they are weak."

^{*/} For a further discussion of these developments, see "New ILO analysis sees growing uncertainty, accelerated change in the world of work," and the ILO report "Changing patterns in the world of work", Report of the Director-General, International Labour Conference, 95th Session, 2006. Report I (C). International Labour Office, Geneva, 2006.