



**INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION**  
OFFICE FOR THE UNITED NATIONS

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Madam Chair,

Achieving Sustainable Development Goal 8, “sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all”, remains elusive, with many indicators demonstrating slow progress worldwide. Globally, the unemployment rate is expected to remain at 5.0% in 2019 and 2020, with the number of unemployed persons increasing by 1 million per year due to the expanding labour force. However, recent progress in reducing the unemployment rate globally is not being reflected in improvements in the quality of work. A majority of the 3.3 billion people employed globally in 2018 had inadequate economic security, material well-being and equality of opportunity, and many lack job opportunities in the formal sector. Further, young people remain much less likely to be in employment, and the labour force participation rate of women remains significantly lower compared to that of men. One third of the world’s enterprises in the formal sector have female participation in their ownership, without any significant progress since 2017.

These labour market concerns are compounded by the ongoing transformative change in the world of work, which is unprecedented in pace, scope, and effect. It is being driven by technological innovation, demographic shifts, climate change and globalization. The current technological revolution has the capacity to change, not only production processes, but the very nature of work itself. At the Centenary ILO Conference in June this year, more than 6,000 delegates, representatives of governments, employers and workers, adopted the ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work which calls for, above all, a “human-centred approach” to the future of work – an agenda that recognizes that human welfare with no one left behind, to be the ultimate aim and objective of all public policies, including macroeconomic policies. The adoption of the Declaration was welcomed by the General Assembly, in resolution [A/RES/73/342](#), and its implementation was encouraged.

Madam Chair,

To address the issues presented by slow growth, economic uncertainty and the changing world of work, macroeconomic policies must focus on fiscal stimulus to invest in people’s capacities, institutions of work and full and productive employment and decent work. Key strategic sectors, such as the care

economy, the green economy and the digital economy, present significant employment opportunities, if supported by sufficient investments. Social dialogue, social protection systems, lifelong learning and equality of opportunities are also essential for promoting inclusive growth.

Decent work and full and productive employment are not only key outcomes of sustained, inclusive and sustainable growth patterns; they are themselves fundamental drivers of those dynamics. To achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, decent work must remain a priority in macroeconomic policies.

I thank you.