

Keynote address to the XXI World Congress on Safety and Health at Work

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Good Morning and welcome to the first full day of the XXI World Congress on Occupational Safety and Health at Work. I hope you were able to attend last evening's opening of the World Congress and had the opportunity to hear the speech of the Prime Minister of Singapore.

The Prime Minister described Singapore's journey to dramatically improve the safety and health of its workers and workplaces. In little over a decade Singapore has developed the necessary OSH policies, systems and programmes and has lead the world in innovative approaches to improving safety and health in SMEs. It is a clear example of where there is the leadership and the will there is a way.

➤ Appreciation/Growth of Congress

On behalf of the ILO, I would like to extend our sincere appreciation to Singapore for hosting the 2017 World Congress and to the Ministry of Manpower's able team for their three years of incredibly hard work planning and organizing this international event. As the World Congress has grown over the years the work of hosting the Congress has also grown.

The World Congress has become the time and the place that the global OSH community comes together not only to share knowledge, expertise and experiences but to identify partners and collaborators, to make or renew commitments to improving safety and health at work, and to organize and plan next steps for meeting the OSH challenges of today and of the future.

➤ **DG Speech**

Last evening in his speech the Director General of the ILO, spoke about global OSH challenges and he committed the ILO to working with the Minister of Finland, to develop the idea of a global coalition that would pursue solutions to those challenges.

He reminded us of the on-going global challenge to collect reliable and comparable OSH data, the need to develop OSH indicators that drive action, and the need to strengthen mechanism for the effective exchange of OSH knowledge so all countries benefit and not just a few.

He also expressed concern about OSH in global supply chains and about the global community's failure to effectively manage global migration and to protect the safety and health of migrant workers many of which are young and many of which are women.

➤ **Global Flagship**

In response to these global challenges and the growing number of requests from ILO constituents, for assistance to strengthen national and enterprise level OSH systems as prescribed by key ILO Conventions, the ILO began work on a global flagship program focused on occupational safety and health. Over the last three years the flagship programme, OSH Global Action for Prevention, has become the compass for the ILO's work on OSH.

The Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health, Convention 187 requires ratifying member states to implement an OSH System, comprised of a set of inter-connected OSH capacities.

These OSH capacities include:

- *Mechanisms for collection of reliable and comparable OSH data and development of OSH indicators ideally, that drive preventive action*
- *Effective Legal, regulatory and adjudicative OSH frameworks that address and integrate OSH*
- *Strong Enforcement and compliance systems, leveraging public and private initiatives*
- *Support for Employer and worker competencies that are necessary to improve OSH in workplaces*
- *Mechanisms for Social dialogue to support OSH*
- *Occupational health services delivered by public and private health sectors*
- *Employment injury insurance programs*

- *Education and training of OSH professionals and support for OSH institutions and networks*

For most of the people in this room, it isn't necessary to refer to an ILO Convention for you to understand that these capacities are necessary, that they are the foundation for creating a culture of prevention and to improve the health and safety of work, workplaces and workers. In fact, most of you are directly engaged in improving one or more of these capacities and many of you are working with the ILO on various initiatives. These OSH capacities are the outcome-based framework for the flagship program.

➤ **Assessment Process and Tools**

In just the last biennium, over 30 countries have requested technical support from the ILO to further develop their national OSH systems and the needed OSH capacities. Moving from the development of a national OSH policy to standing up the system needed to implement that policy has proved challenging for many countries.

To assist countries to evaluate their current capacity, to determine their needed capacity, and identify opportunities to improve their capacity, the flagship programme is developing a participatory assessment process and assessment tools for each of the OSH capacities I have just listed.

The results of the assessment process are intended to create a roadmap for action in addition to a profile of a country's current status.

➤ **OSH Data and Indicators**

Improving OSH data is another key objective of the ILO's flagship programme on OSH and we are engaged in multiple initiatives to improve OSH data.

- For its 2017 World Day on Safety and Health at Work, the ILO urged its member states to redouble their efforts to improve their notification systems, compiling in a toolbox the resources the ILO has developed to assist countries in that effort.
- The ILO has also supported the collaboration by Finland's and Singapore's Ministries and OSH Institutes, ICOH and EU-OSHA in the development of the global and regional estimates the Director General announced last evening and

that you see behind me.

- I believe these estimates speak for themselves, they are clearly a clarion call for action. But the global estimates for the number of fatal and non-fatal diseases and injuries require a bit of explanation.
 - The increase in work-related fatal injuries and diseases, from 2.3 million to 2.78 million each year, and non-fatal injuries and diseases, from 302 million to 374 million each year, is in large part due to better data --better data on global workforce participation and better data on work-related respiratory diseases.
 - This increase, is also due in part to the fact that we are living longer and our work-related exposures to hazards, such as asbestos, have the opportunity to kill us instead of other health determinants with more immediate impacts on health.
- That this increase in the global estimates is due in part to improvements in data, raises an important issue. If governments and employers work to improve their collection of OSH data, more likely than not, at least in the short term, their numbers will increase.
- This presents a conundrum for many countries whose notification and reporting systems are deficient but who have been reporting data on work-related fatalities, injury and illness. When they work to improve their systems the numbers they report will most likely increase. Not necessarily because their OAH performance has gotten worse but because their system is capturing more accurate data.
- Consequently, there are significant political and economic implications for making investments in OSH notification and recording systems. To create a counter balance to those implications, under the flagship program, the ILO is working to develop a:
 - Confidence Level Index to assess national OSH notification and recording systems ability to produce reliable OSH data, and
 - An OSH National Performance Index, for systematic and comprehensive monitoring and evaluation of national OSH system effectiveness
- As the Director General mentioned last evening, the ILO is also working with the WHO to design a common methodology that can be used in the future by

both organizations to develop global estimates on OSH, in this effort the two organizations are supported by ICOH and researchers from around the world. This collaboration is not only focused on creating a common methodology but also on improving estimates of particular work-related diseases caused by particular hazards. By building a common methodology the two organizations can speak and act with one voice.

- The ILO is not alone in its efforts to improve OSH data, the EC is engaged in an ambitious undertaking to develop an OSH Information System for the EU and EU-OSHA has developed the EU cost estimates. Organizations such as the Global Reporting Initiative, is working on updating its OSH Reporting Standard and the Center for Safety & Health Sustainability, is conducting research with Harvard University on the connections among sustainability, human capital and OSH.
 - The ILO has worked to be engaged in these efforts not only to inform them based on ILO instruments but also to find common ground among these various efforts and the work the ILO is doing related to OSH data and indicators.

➤ Legal Frameworks

In the last three biennia, more than half of the requests received by the ILO from its member states have been for technical assistance to reform national OSH laws or labour laws that encompass OSH.

To respond to this demand for technical assistance, the ILO has seized the opportunity to develop resources to support and improve the capacity of actors involved in the law-making process, to draft effective laws that address and integrate OSH.

We are currently developing a ***Guide to effective OSH Law development*** that identifies the necessary components and provisions of a comprehensive, prevention-oriented national OSH law that includes discussions of key policy issues and design choices.

This guide is complemented by the existing LEGOSH Database, the ILO's Global Database on occupational Safety and Health Legislation and will be complemented by future resources on legislative drafting techniques and best practices for stakeholder participation in the legislative process.

➤ **Enforcement and Compliance systems**

Another focus of the flagship programme is to assist labour inspectorates to more effectively respond to existing and emerging compliance issues, including those presented by global supply chains, the ILO has compiled research and good practices of labour inspectorates that have shifted their focus from traditional enforcement models toward data-informed proactive compliance strategies that: 1) target priority compliance issues, 2) diagnosis the positive and negative influences on compliance, 3) tailor the utilization of their enforcement authority to drive compliance, and 4) leverage the influence on compliance of other government agencies, social partners, media, consumers and other stakeholders. Building on this research and good practices, the ILO has developed and is currently piloting a Strategic Compliance Planning Workshop to assist labour inspectorates in developing more effective compliance strategies and inspection plans.

The ILO is grateful for the support of labour Inspectorates in New Zealand, Australia, Portugal and the United States who are working to transform how their labour inspectorates achieve compliance with the laws on their watch.

➤ **Employee/Employer competencies**

To improve the competency of employers and workers, the ILO engages in significant work to support its member state decent work objectives, using tools developed by the ILO to improve the OSH competency of SMEs. Under the flagship programme the ILO has continued its work to support improvements in SME focusing in agriculture and construction.

The global flagship programme is also working to ensure that vocational skills and training programmes prepare young workers not only to accomplish their job tasks, but also address OSH hazards and risks associated with those jobs. Under the flagship programme, the safeyouth@work project is working with national TVET institutions to revise training curricula so that instructors can teach OSH concepts hand in hand with job skills, making training courses more relevant to the realities of the workplace.

At the International Training Centre of ILO in Turin more than 20 standard or tailor-made courses on OSH are conducted every year. Some of these courses are for specific groups, workers' representatives, employers' representatives or government officials, but most are open to all interested participants. This winter, the ILO International

Training Center will conduct an academy on Labour Inspection and the ILO's new strategic compliance focus.

➤ **Networks**

In 2016, the ILO conducted a comprehensive Global Survey of 159 OSH Institutes, Organizations and Agencies and compiled information on their status, governance and internal organization, resources, research priorities, scope and pricing of services, public information and awareness-raising activities, as well as international networking practices. The compiled information will be made available in ILO database.

The ILO has also conducted a multiple case-study analysis of six regional OSH networks¹ in parallel to the survey in order to understand their constitution, functioning, development opportunities and challenges.

This work will allow the ILO to better support existing regional networks and the creation of new networks for the dissemination of OSH knowledge, expertise and experience.

➤ **Global Supply Chains and the Vision Zero Fund**

According to ILO estimates, 60 to 80 per cent of global trade is done global supply chains.

While the contribution of global supply chains to global economic growth and job opportunities is evident, their impact on the working conditions and especially the safety and health of workers involved in GSCs in developing countries has raised concern.

The ILO is implementing two initiatives specifically aimed at understanding and addressing occupational safety and health in GSC's, namely (i) a research project on OSH in Global Supply Chains, with a focus on food and agriculture chains; and (ii) a work place injury and disease prevention and protection Fund - the Vision Zero Fund. The OSH-GAP Programme in collaboration with the European Union (EU) undertook three case studies in three countries on drivers and constraints for OSH in agricultural

¹ Baltic Sea OH&S Network (BSN); Association of Southeast Asian Nations OSH Network (ASEAN OSHNET); South Eastern European Network for Workplace Health (SEENWH); Partnership for European Research in OSH (PEROSH); Interafricaine de Prévention des Risques professionnels (IAPRP); Asociación Latinoamericana de Seguridad e Higiene en el Trabajo (ALASEHT).

supply chains and possible compliance interventions, through an in depth and comprehensive analysis and identification of the main risks and vulnerabilities, at different levels of the supply chain and its legal and institutional environment, the commercial practices and policy gaps in which risks and vulnerabilities are rooted, and the main stakeholders and their incentives and capacities to contribute to solutions.

In June 2015, the G7 Heads of State called for more concrete action in low-income sourcing countries to prevent workplace-related deaths, injuries and diseases in Global Supply Chains and determined this was to be achieved **through the establishment of a workplace injury and disease prevention and protection Fund - the Vision Zero Fund (VZF)**. The ILO administers and implements VZF projects, which allows the Fund to benefit from the ILO's expertise as a global leader in occupational safety and health and social protection systems. The Fund constitutes a strategic vehicle for the ILO's OSH GAP Programme and complements ILO's social protection floors extension strategy, and the ILO-IFC Better Work Programme.

➤ **Youth Congress**

In closing, I would like to draw your attention to the picture on the screens behind me, taking particular note of the young women pictured there. These young women are among the 60 young women participating in the safeyouth@work Congress that has been organized by the ILO as part of this year's World Congress. The safeyouth@work Congress has brought to Singapore 125 youth OSH champions selected based on their commitment to improving the safety and health of young workers. The safeyouth@work Congress is working to develop leadership and organizing skills and to assist the youth OSH champions in the development of their ideas on how to improve the safety and health of young workers.

Since joining the ILO I have had the opportunity to meet and collaborate with many smart, talented and committed women, who are in leadership positions in OSH Institutes, OSH Agencies, Ministries of Labour, Health and Social Security, Professional Organizations, Worker organizations and businesses, many are in the audience this morning. I encourage each of you to engage these young women over the next few days, talk to them about your education and career path, talk to them about your work and how you navigated a career where you were often the only women in the room. This is an opportunity to mentor the next generation of women working in occupational safety and health.

Thank you, I wish you all a good World Congress.