

**Statement by Mr. Panus Thailaun, Worker Delegate (Thailand)  
to be delivered at the 110<sup>th</sup> Session of the International Labour  
Conference**

**on 9 June 2022 (4 mins)**

Mister/Madam President

I would like to express my sincere gratitude for the opportunity to deliver a statement as worker delegate of Thailand today.

The COVID-19 pandemic is a global phenomenon which accelerates an economic transition in every country. It also has devastating impact to Thailand, as a developing country. Our employment situation has changed from the pre-COVID time. During 2020 – 2021, more than one million workers are laid off. Among these number, elderly workers aged 40 to 50 are the most affected group, because they cannot return to employment in the formal economy. In most cases, employers prefer to hire young workers aged 20 to 35. Many workers who are laid off just before their retirement age, are becoming a socio-economic issue in Thailand. At the same time, the increasing number of workers who reach their retirement age at 55 – 60 years old, also advances an unemployment rate.

It is impossible to solve these issues in the short term, however, it is possible to improve the situation by seeking for cooperation between all parties, especially from the employers, which are local and foreign invested companies in Thailand. When employers need to reduce workers amid the crisis, they should do so only when it is unavoidable and conduct in a fair and responsible way. Moreover, it is important to consider the long-term difficulty that workers shall face after the dismissal. Employers should pay extra

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lay-off compensation that higher than a minimum requirement set out in the legislation, to enable the workers to start new job and reduce the possibility of becoming a burden to the society. During this difficult time, some employers use the pandemic as an excuse to lay off workers far more than needed and replace them with sub-contractors to reduce the production cost and render more benefit. These further weaken the employment system and the economy that have been already damaged.

I believe that if local Thai employers and multinational enterprises in Thailand and in other developing countries are doing business with conscious mind, moral and good governance, these global employment issue occurred in the COVID-19 pandemic shall soon be improved.

Workers' organizations in Thailand make every effort to coordinate and cooperate with the employers and the government to improve the issue, with a view to close the gap, reduce and slow down the negative impact on the workers. So far, we are receiving good support and cooperation from the government, especially from the Social Security Office.

Thank you.