

THE SPEECH OF WORKERS' DELEGATE OF THE REPUBLIC OF TÜRKİYE MR. ERGÜN ATALAY AT THE 110th SESSION OF THE ILC

Distinguished President, Distinguished Participants,

In his report, the Director-General stated that the damage caused by the pandemic to the economy was four times greater than the global crisis experienced in 2008.

Countries that could not find masks, gloves, respirators and vaccines in the early stages of the pandemic saw that their money was worthless, and that daily life could not continue without workers who provide essential services.

Millions of our citizens in Turkey have been affected by the pandemic. Thousands have lost their lives. We worked with the government and employers to prevent job and wage losses.

Our state covered all covid testings, vaccinations and health expenses. I believe that the pandemic process in my country was managed correctly and successfully. I would like to thank to the head of the state, health workers and all those who have contributed.

Distinguished President, Distinguished Participants,

We were focusing on our post covid plans to heal our wounds just before the war in Ukraine broke out and became an increasing concern for the future. We are now discussing energy security, problems in access to food and water, and high inflation.

The purchasing power of workers is decreasing day by day. Some employers who are against union organizing continue to exploit workers. We have been expressing for years that sectors of critical importance such as food and energy should not be privatized.

We organize more easily in most of the workplaces that are members of employer organizations who are in this room. However dismissals due to unionization and anti-union actions at the other workplaces including the ninety percent of those in my country still continues.

We cannot talk about the functioning of democracy or the full existence of union rights unless employers change their perceptions towards unions and workers and set aside their profit ambitions.

It is not possible to fully establish social dialogue, prevent work accidents, establish job security or solve other problems of working life without solving the problem of unregistered employment.

We ran out of patience. In the next legislative period, arrangements which will eliminate the negative impact of the coup constitution on union rights and lift the obstacles confronting organizing must be made through negotiations with the unions.

Important and urgent issues such as the safeguarding of purchasing power of the minimum waged, retired and all workers, the situation of those hindered from retirement due to age, the recruitment of subcontract workers, the problems related with working hours of temporary

workers must be solved. In addition necessary arrangements should be made for public employees to be able to bargain collectively, just like the blue collar workers.

Distinguished Chairman, Distinguished Participants,

Turkey fulfills its humanitarian responsibility in this regard by hosting millions of Syrian refugees fleeing the war, and those coming from Ukraine and other countries. However, those who sink the boats of refugees in the Aegean are committing crimes against humanity before the eyes of the world.

During the session three days ago Greek Cypriot Workers' Delegate, used the term "Turkish occupation of the island". I would like to remind you that from 1963 to 1974 the Greek Cypriots carried out an armed ethnic cleansing campaign against the Turkish Cypriots.

For more than 50 years, it is the Turkish Cypriot people who have been suffering from the non-settlement of the Cyprus issue. One should never forget that Turkish Cypriots accepted the Annan Plan in 2004, while Greek Cypriots rejected it.

You cannot hear the Turkish Cypriot worker or employer organizations today as their rightful representation at international platforms are denied by the Greek Cypriots.

The weapons that independent and democratic countries cannot buy for self-defense are freely provided to the terrorist organizations by some countries.

While people die, the winners are the arms dealers. As stated by the Director-General, those who start wars and support terrorism hinder social justice.

Eroded values such as human rights, democracy and social state in the world should become priority targets for every country again.

According to the quote by a famous writer ; Being good is easy. What is difficult is being just. Everyone has to be just for a better world.

Thank you for your attention