

I am very pleased to address the 110th session of the International Labor Conference.

Events of the last few years and even the last few months have reminded us in dramatic fashion how interconnected we are and how important the work of the ILO is.

Workers, employers, and governments are building back from the most devastating impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. But the global recovery, like the impact of the pandemic itself, has been uneven.

- The concept of a “social and solidarity economy” could not be more timely.
- As we look to rebuild, to create a world where work is rewarded and workers are valued, we must focus on those who have been left out of security and prosperity, even in good times. For too long we’ve accepted that an economy where some people get good jobs and others don’t is just the natural way of things. We can do better than that.
- Our work to set a new international standard on apprenticeship will provide a roadmap for fair and equal access to decent work. That’s especially important for populations who have faced persistent barriers to employment. This requires us to confront not just economic inequities but **racial inequities** as well.
- The pandemic also continues to shine a light on workplace safety and health, especially for those workers who **we** depended on to keep **US** safe, healthy and fed, too many of whom lacked the basic protections they needed and deserved. So we have come together to recognize occupational safety and health as a 5th fundamental principle and right at work.

The United States fully supports this effort.

As President Biden has said, “Ensuring the health and safety of workers is a national priority and a moral imperative.”

We look forward to working together to promote this right for workers across all of our economies.

At the same time, we must stand together to condemn actions that undermine our shared goal of peace through social justice. Russia’s unprovoked invasion of Ukraine has caused further loss, death and displacement, robbing families of their loved ones and children of their futures, and causing additional stresses to the global economy.

The ILO estimates nearly 5 million more jobs have been lost as a result of Russia’s actions.

In the face of these challenges, multi-lateralism and our work at the ILO are more important than ever.

The United States echoes the ILO Governing Body resolution in condemning Russia’s actions and we call on Russia to immediately and unconditionally withdraw from

Ukraine.

Against the backdrop of these challenges, it is essential that the ILO continue to provide critical support to countries most in need.

The Director-General's report highlights the ways in which the COVID-19 pandemic has compounded the challenges facing these nations.

Additionally, the United States fully supports the UN Doha Program of Action.

We believe the ILO can make a critical contribution to this broader effort.

The ILO's **rights-based, human-centered approach** is critical to sustainable economic development.

The United States has been proud to provide support to ILO technical cooperation aimed at promoting decent work and eliminating forced labor and child labor.

We will continue to support the ILO's work to promote sustainable economic growth through strengthening workers' rights in the least developed countries.

Central to all of these efforts – a social and solidarity economy, workplace health and safety, decent work, shared prosperity—**is worker empowerment**.

So we look forward to working with the ILO on our new initiative, the Multilateral Partnership for Organizing, Worker Empowerment, and Rights – or M-POWER.

M-POWER unites governments, unions, academics, and civil society organizations to promote worker empowerment and workers' rights.

Freedom of association and the right to organize are critical for workers everywhere and undergird all other workers' rights.

We remain committed to collaborating and addressing shared challenges in the world of work.

And on behalf of the United States government, I want to offer full support for a successful, productive, and impactful International Labor Conference.

Thank you.

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