

Plenary meeting address
Kris De Meester
Employer delegate Belgium

OSH is essential, also while developing

Distinguished colleagues, on behalf of the Federation of Employers in Belgium, I present you my views on the ILO Director General's Report about the least developed countries and what is needed and best for them. We are all in support of the "leaving no one behind" principle. It will take serious efforts and investment and some of the necessary steps to get there are:

1. **Prioritize growth to create opportunities**
We need targeted policy recommendations for governments to prioritize growth and to create opportunities for business. We need a focus on best practices and success stories.
2. **Promote entrepreneurship and sustainable private enterprises**
3. **Create a conducive environment for sustainable enterprises success**
We need the ILO to undertake actions to support an enabling environment for business to grow, thrive and innovate in coherence with the ILO Centenary Declaration to allow the private sector to fulfill its role as a principal source of economic growth and job creation.
4. **Increase Productivity**
Productivity is not everything, but in the long run, it's almost everything". Enhancing productivity is essential to achieving sustainable enterprises and creating decent jobs – both core elements of any development strategy that places the improvement of peoples' lives as its main objective.
5. **Reduce Informality**
We need to fight informality, clearly one of the biggest threats to sustainable and resilient development, as a top priority! The failure to reduce informality clearly proves that there must be a rethink of public policy including the ILO's current approach.
6. **Invest in infrastructure, connectivity, and skills development**
It will be difficult to envisage adequate decent work opportunities without drastic improvements in the infrastructure and the business environment around the globe to boost confidence, increase productivity and unleash the potential for investment and innovation, including a particular focus on connectivity and skills development.
7. **Occupational safety and health**
I will now jump to another fundamental topic discussed in the Conference. We agreed to lift OSH, a safe and healthy work environment, into the FPRW framework. God gave us 86400 seconds a day. One second can be enough to damage your health. So, we need to foster a preventive approach and a safety culture which are key to achieving lasting improvements in safety and health at work, especially in the least developed countries where the risks are high, and a safe and healthy working environment are far from guaranteed.

In conclusion: Archimedes said: "Give me a lever long enough and a fulcrum on which to place it, and I shall move the world." We really need to find the proper levers to move the world of work, in both developing and developed countries. I gave you some hints in this speech. Let's get to work!

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY