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Friday, 7 June 2024, 3.40 p.m.

President: Mr Buzu

Strategic dialogue with the co-facilitators of the intergovernmental preparatory process of the Second World Summit for Social Development: Summary

The President warmly welcomed all participants and said that the Conference was honoured by the presence of Mr Hilale, Permanent Representative of Morocco to the United Nations in New York, and Mr Kridelka, Permanent Representative of Belgium to the United Nations in New York, in their capacity as co-facilitators of the intergovernmental preparatory process of the Second World Summit for Social Development, following their nomination for that role by the President of the United Nations (UN) General Assembly.

Mr Hougbo (Director-General of the International Labour Office and Secretary-General of the Conference) extended a warm welcome to the co-facilitators. He said that the Second World Summit for Social Development was of paramount importance for the ILO and offered an unprecedented opportunity to address the pressing challenges of the time, in particular the three core themes of social development, namely: poverty eradication; full and productive employment and decent work for all; and social inclusion. The Summit should serve as a global platform to reaffirm the commitments that had been made to social justice, and its outcomes would have far-reaching implications. The ILO's unique tripartite structure was a strength within the UN family. A working party of the Governing Body was in the process of developing a tripartite input to the Summit, with a first statement to be adopted on 15 June. The co-facilitators brought a wealth of experience and insight from their work in New York, offering a perspective that was both complementary to and distinct from the dynamics in Geneva. He urged all participants to engage actively and constructively in that crucial intergovernmental preparatory process.

Mr Hilale (Permanent Representative of Morocco to the United Nations in New York and co-facilitator of the intergovernmental preparatory process of the Second World Summit for Social Development) congratulated the President and the Vice-Presidents of the Conference on their election and thanked the Director-General of the ILO for his invitation. He said that the co-facilitators were firmly committed to undertaking the intergovernmental process in an inclusive, transparent, ambitious and pragmatic manner. They would make every effort to create and enable a constructive, inclusive and positive environment for the preparations for the Second World Summit for Social Development.

In his report entitled "Our Common Agenda", the UN Secretary-General had made a proposal to convene a world social summit in 2025, to be discussed and agreed upon by Member States. At the Sustainable Development Goals Summit in 2023, Member States had emphasized that the possible summit outcome should have a social development approach and give momentum towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In resolution 78/261, adopted on 26 February 2024, the UN General Assembly had decided to convene the "World Social Summit" in 2025, under the title "Second World Summit for Social Development". That enabling resolution stressed that the Summit should address the gaps and recommit to the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and Programme of Action and its implementation and give momentum towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The Summit would therefore be a crucial opportunity to scale up efforts to deliver on the three pillars of social development, namely poverty

eradication; full and productive employment and decent work for all; and social inclusion. It would also be an opportunity to reinforce respect for all human rights and promote gender equality.

The 2030 Agenda, which was strongly influenced by the Copenhagen outcome, set out a commitment by Member States to work towards sustainable development in its three dimensions – social, environmental and economic – in an integrated manner. Thus, the international community had moved the policy discussion from social development to the social dimension of sustainable development. Social development had become integral to the development process, rather than being relegated to a separate track, where it was often subordinated to economic priorities. Yet, too many communities were being left behind. According to the UN Secretary-General's most recent report on progress in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), only 15 per cent of the SDG targets were on track to be achieved, 49 per cent showed minimal or moderate progress, and 36 per cent of the targets showed signs of stagnation or regression. It was imperative to invest in the productive potential of people, build trust, reinforce social dialogue, create decent work and narrow inequalities. Full and productive employment and decent work were the link between social justice and the economic and environmental components of sustainability. The ILO's expertise in advancing social justice and promoting decent work was indispensable to address the core themes of social development.

The process leading to the Second World Summit for Social Development was taking place as preparations for the Summit of the Future and the fourth International Conference on Financing for Development were progressing. The mobilization of resources and solidarity were expected to be at the heart of the deliberations of the Second World Summit for Social Development. The Summit had the potential to cement the political will required to foster investments in human capabilities, social protection and decent work, build resilience to safeguard progress and deliver on the commitment to leave no one behind.

The co-facilitators were keen to listen to the ILO's expectations for the Summit and the perspectives of the ILO's tripartite constituents on the preparatory process and its outcome. They relied on the ILO's constituents to ensure harmony in the views and positions taken in Geneva and in New York.

Mr Kridelka (Permanent Representative of Belgium to the United Nations in New York and co-facilitator of the intergovernmental preparatory process of the Second World Summit for Social Development) congratulated the President of the Conference on his election and thanked him for the invitation to participate. He said that he and Mr Hilale had been appointed by the President of the UN General Assembly on 4 March 2024 as co-facilitators for both the modalities and the outcome of the Summit, in accordance with resolution 78/261. The aim was first to produce a modality resolution and then a concise political declaration to be adopted by consensus. The political declaration should have a social development approach and give momentum towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. It was their firm intent to finalize the modality resolution in June. The negotiations on the political declaration should start, as was usual in such a process, during the next session of the General Assembly, after the High-level Week in September 2024.

A first consultation of the Member States in New York on 28 March had highlighted that the Summit offered an opportunity to strengthen and refocus efforts and commitments in respect of the social dimension of sustainable development, building on the 2030 Agenda and on the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development of 1995, while taking into account the preparations for the

Summit of the Future, the Global Digital Compact and the discussion on financing for development.

The co-facilitators were firmly committed to facilitating the discussions among Member States in an open, inclusive and transparent manner that considered the views and priorities of all stakeholders. The Summit should be a message of hope and commitment to deliver on people's dreams towards a more prosperous and more just world.

Following the consultation in March, extensive consultations with a broad spectrum of stakeholders, including many UN agencies in Geneva, including the ILO, had taken place. He thanked the Director-General of the ILO for the extensive briefing the ILO had organized on 22 April.

The first reading of a zero draft modality resolution had taken place on 7 May. It was followed by two further readings, which had led to a revised version of the text, which had been discussed on 3 June. Seven out of the ten proposed preambular paragraphs had been closed, as had one of the 14 proposed operative paragraphs. Referring to the status of the negotiations, he drew attention to three important points. First, negotiations were still ongoing regarding the explicit reference to specific institutions – including the ILO – and their role. The question of the role and participation of civil society and the social partners was also still under discussion. Second, new elements had been introduced to the discussion on the possible themes of the high-level round tables, including the new social contract. And third, regarding the location of the Summit, there were currently two options, namely Qatar and New York, during the High-level Week. Member States had been invited to provide written comments in that regard and the next steps would be announced soon. Once agreed on, the text of the modality resolution would be submitted to the General Assembly for approval, following which the preparation of the Summit's outcome would start through an extensive consultation process.

The Summit was very important and it would be taking place against the backdrop of a difficult context, calling for a spirit of partnership that put the needs, rights and aspirations of people at the centre of decisions. The co-facilitators were fully aware of the difficulty of the tasks ahead, and they hoped and believed that it would be possible, collectively, to live up to the commitment to progress that had been made at the 1995 Summit, 30 years earlier.

Ms Hornung-Draus (Chairperson of the Employers' group) thanked the ambassadors for their presence and for having visited the Employers' group that morning. She said that the ILO had an instrumental role to play in achieving the goals of the Summit through its tripartite structure, anchoring economic and social policy in the real economy, and through its human-centred approach. Five key elements should be reflected in the outcome document of the Summit.

The first element was the recognition that the private sector, and in particular micro, small and medium-sized enterprises of the real economy, as the main employment provider, contributed to sustainable development. Enterprises were the backbone of any economy, driving investments, innovation and growth. Without sustainable enterprises, there were no jobs. It was essential to create a conducive environment for sustainable enterprises in order for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises to thrive. The conditions behind such a conducive environment included political and macroeconomic stability, agile labour markets and effective and sustainable social protection that stimulated both jobs and growth.

The second element was a reference to effective labour market governance. Trust in public institutions was key. The Employers called for the outcome to promote effective

governance to fight corruption and to ensure equitable and sustainable labour markets. That required effective, flexible and modern national regulations with robust labour market institutions. Investment in labour market data collection and research to inform evidence-based policymaking was a precondition for achieving that goal.

The third element was the recognition of the central role of employers' and workers' organizations as social partners committed to the well-being and economic prosperity of entire societies beyond their own interests. The social partners were anchored in the real economy, and they should be recognized in the outcome document as key actors and also, most importantly, as actors in the implementation of the outcome, as they provided first-hand expertise on the realities of work.

The fourth element was the importance of investing in skills and development. Education was the backdrop of any thriving society. From early childhood to adulthood, investing in quality education that was accessible to all and in continuous skills development was essential. Investing in adaptable training programmes that met the demands of modern economies, particularly in the digital and green sectors, laid a strong foundation for lifelong learning and employability.

The fifth element that should be reflected in the outcome was the recognition that productivity growth was a driver for social justice. The ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work (2019) recognized that enhancing productivity created employment opportunities and improved living standards. A robust productivity agenda was essential. It included reskilling, improving regulations, reducing informality and strengthening institutions to create high quality jobs and elevate living standards for all.

Ms Passchier (Chairperson of the Workers' group) thanked the co-facilitators for their presence. She said that there were four priorities that the Workers' group would like to see reflected in the process and outcome of the Summit.

First, the Summit would take place in a context in which geopolitical polarization was undermining multilateralism. However, global challenges – including achieving peace, tackling climate change and combating inequalities – required global solutions. The ILO was uniquely placed to support a more inclusive multilateralism, founded on its mandate of setting international labour standards and on its tripartite structure. The ILO's expertise and its tripartite structure were key to the promotion of social justice and to the advancement of sustainable development. The first demand was therefore to support the leading role of the ILO in shaping the 2025 Second World Summit for Social Development, based on its mandate and constituent members.

Second, the Summit outcome should reflect the call of the Workers' group for a renewed social contract, with Goal 8 of the 2030 Agenda at its core, to advance social development. The new social contract should emphasize the creation of decent and climate-friendly jobs, the extension of labour protection to all workers, the establishment of living wages, universal social protection and the promotion of equality and inclusion with a special emphasis on gender equality. That demand aligned with the calls made by the UN Secretary-General in his report "Our Common Agenda" for universal social protection, decent work for all and universal labour protection floors for just transitions.

Third, the role of social dialogue and tripartism in the preparations for the Summit and in the implementation of its outcomes must be recognized. Social dialogue was a fundamental pillar of the ILO's Decent Work Agenda and an essential governance tool for social development and for achieving the SDGs. The pivotal role of social dialogue for social justice

was recognized in the work of the UN Commission for Social Development. It must be absolutely clear that, in that context, the enabling fundamental rights of freedom of association and collective bargaining would have to be addressed explicitly. The social partners must be included in the Summit and the key role of social dialogue in social development must be recognized in the Summit outcome.

The fourth priority was to ensure that the Summit enhanced the nexus between social justice, peace and democracy. Trust in democracy and its institutions was at an all-time low, as working people did not feel that their voices were being heard or that they were getting a fair share of the wealth that they helped to create. The Summit must be used to prioritize the rebuilding of democratic institutions to ensure human dignity and peaceful and inclusive societies.

She thanked the co-facilitators for meeting her group, which stood ready to engage on a renewed social contract that included robust financial mechanisms and social dialogue as a driving force for change.

Ms Makonda-Ridley (Government Malawi, speaking on behalf of the Africa group) said that, in preparing for the Summit, the multilateral community must undergo a paradigm shift in respect of how it dealt with social justice and social development in order to focus on the most excluded, in particular in the least developed countries. Tackling exclusion of all forms started with education and skills building. The shortest route to dealing with exclusion was to look again at how to support education in those countries where populations were growing fast – which included most African countries – and where budgets for education were lacking. A paradigm shift was needed to ensure that agencies across the multilateral system could work on issues that delivered on social justice and social development. Education was one of those issues, and it must be at the heart of the Summit.

Mr Pecsteen de Buytswerve (Government, Belgium, speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States) said that North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, Ukraine, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Norway and Armenia aligned themselves with his statement. He thanked the co-facilitators and expressed the commitment of his group to strengthen the social dimension of sustainable development. The Summit offered an opportunity to rebuild the social contract on the basis of human rights, social cohesion, solidarity and decent work. The renewed social contract should be anchored in the ILO's fundamental principles and rights at work and should address inequalities and transformative challenges. His group expected the Summit to address the new challenges that had emerged since the 1995 Summit and to give momentum towards implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The Global Coalition for Social Justice and the Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions should play a crucial role in contributing to the objectives of and follow-up to the Summit. The Summit preparations needed to be closely coordinated with the ILO and its tripartite structure. He asked the co-facilitators to share their assessment of how the negotiations were developing regarding the ILO's role, decent work and the renewed social contract. He also asked them to share their views on the steps that the ILO had defined for its contribution to the Summit.

Mr Muñoz Castro (Government, Colombia) said that economic development must create jobs and working conditions that respected the freedom, safety and dignity of workers. Colombia insisted on the need for greater support and depth in order to guarantee adequate conditions for workers in rural areas and those who belonged to indigenous communities. Their access to freedom of association, safety, social protection, professional and vocational training, and technologies should be guaranteed. Strategies for decent work must be

implemented, which required the commitment of all partners. Workers in the informal economy should enjoy their rights. The goal should be generations of people working in formal work without precarious conditions. The Summit should focus on the effective protection of women, the LGBT+ community, rural workers, ethnic and cultural diversity, and the creation of spaces for tripartism.

Mr Ghariani (Employer, Tunisia) said that employers in Tunisia supported the underlying principles of the Summit and encouraged the Members of the United Nations to address the Summit in a constructive and positive manner, recognizing the important social and economic progress that had been achieved since the World Summit for Social Development in 1995. A realistic approach to poverty eradication was recommended. Innovation, globalization and trade had led to progress, such as increased life expectancy, improved social protection, poverty reduction and the progression of the middle class. However, the global economic community was still facing enormous challenges, including persistent unemployment, particularly among young people, and weak or uncertain growth.

Ms Sequeira Mata (Worker, Costa Rica) said that it was fundamental for the Summit to recognize social dialogue based on respect for freedom of association, collective bargaining and the right to strike as key mechanisms to drive social development and justice, both nationally and internationally. That should be recognized in the outcome of the Summit. In terms of process, employers' and workers' representatives should fully participate alongside governments in the preparation process, the deliberations, and the follow-up to the Summit. She asked how the full participation of the social partners in the Summit could be ensured and how the role of tripartism and social dialogue would be reflected in the Summit.

Mr Jordan (Government, Barbados) said that Barbados encouraged colleagues to review the outcome documents of the recent Global Supply Chain Forum (in partnership with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) while preparing for the Summit. SIDS needed a global partnership which recognized that developed nations had a responsibility to invest in building their resilience. The vulnerability of SIDS must be properly assessed, as gross domestic product per capita alone was not a sufficient indicator. The Global Coalition for Social Justice was essential for advancing policy coherence and a human-centred approach. The climate crisis remained an existential threat to humanity as a whole and urgent action was needed to mitigate its negative effects. The impact of rapid advances in technological development must be recognized and guidelines put in place to ensure that the vulnerable in our societies did not become collateral damage. The need for a just technological transition was as imperative as the need for a just energy transition.

Mr Nur (Worker, Somalia) said that, as global migration continued to rise, there was a need for a rights-based approach to labour migration that took into account sustainable development, just transition and equality, as well as the needs of migrant workers and their families, in a holistic and coherent manner. The Summit must ensure that migration pathways were not only regular, safe and orderly, but also rights-based and gender-sensitive. The Summit was also an opportunity to break the silos between migration and labour, employment, education policies and governance structures. Social dialogue and international labour standards must guide labour migration governance. Workers must enjoy full freedom of association and the right to bargain collectively. He asked how international labour standards and social dialogue for migrant workers could be promoted during the Summit negotiations.

Mr Dragún (Employer, Argentina) said that enterprises were the key drivers for decent work, especially for work formalization. Getting out of informality required close consultation with employers as they played an important role. Social dialogue must take place. The transition towards the formal economy should occur within regulatory frameworks and should offer incentives to move away from informality. Guaranteeing employability and increasing productivity should be the main aims in order to combat the main causes of informality.

Mr Lee (Government, United States of America) said that the United States regarded the Summit as an opportunity to refocus the world's attention on equity, inclusion, social justice and non-discrimination. The potential of the Summit must be realized in order to address serious gaps in the implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration, including by advancing decent work and protecting workers' fundamental rights. The world was also facing newer challenges that must be addressed promptly with a focus on social justice. The Summit should unite the international community behind a climate transition that delivered justice for workers and harnessed the full potential of the digital transition to improve workers' lives. The Summit should also be used to strengthen labour protections and overcome inequalities. He asked how the ILO and its constituents could best shape the Summit and its outcome, and what the appropriate framework was to maximize the impact of an ILO tripartite input in the Summit.

Ms Mayers-Granville (Employer, Barbados) said that social development envisioned through the SDGs could not be achieved without including businesses. The private sector included local enterprises, multinational corporations and micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, which all drove inclusive growth and provided sustainable employment opportunities. Creating decent jobs required conducive domestic and international conditions for businesses.

Ms Zimna (Worker, Maldives) said that the Summit was a historic opportunity to call firmly for the universality of human rights, women's rights and labour rights, and to invest in gender equality as one of the most effective means to further social development and social justice. Three elements were pivotal: enhancing the care economy, recognizing equal pay for work of equal value and eradicating gender-based violence. The Summit should recognize care as a public good and call for universal ratification of the Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190). She asked how those issues and policy coherence could be promoted at the global level.

Mr Oeschger (Government, Switzerland) said that Switzerland believed that the goal of the Summit should be to assess progress, identify current challenges and renew commitment to the principles of the Copenhagen Declaration, while giving new impetus to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Switzerland called upon all Member States of the United Nations to support the inclusive integration of all partners, in particular the social partners, in preparation for and during the Summit. Switzerland wished to draw attention to the important role that the Global Coalition for Social Justice should play in providing consistency between the various goals of the Copenhagen Declaration.

Ms Whittier (Government, Trinidad and Tobago) highlighting the specific vulnerabilities of SIDS, said that it would be important to ensure that the Summit placed a special focus on those countries. SIDS recognized the importance of developing productive populations through policies to promote employment and reduce unemployment through avenues such as skill development, productivity enhancement and knowledge transfer. It would be important to ensure that those elements featured in the discussions at the Summit.

Ms Sephomolo (Employer, Lesotho) said that an enabling environment for sustainable enterprises included the promotion of entrepreneurship, the reduction of the costs of doing business and the unlocking of investment opportunities. Businesses in the least developed countries often operated in difficult environments. She asked that employers be included in UN processes at both national and global levels and that their voice be brought to the Summit in a meaningful way.

Mr Annisette (Worker, Trinidad and Tobago) said that social justice, human dignity and equity must become a tangible reality. The global labour movement had always been at the forefront of the fight for social justice, advocating for the rights of workers, fair wages, safe working conditions, and the right to organize and bargain collectively. New economic policies were needed. The labour movement was also a central player in the transition to a green economy, advocating for policies that created sustainable jobs and protected the planet for the future. Workers' rights should be universally respected. The principles of solidarity, justice and equity should guide preparations for the Summit.

Ms Reyes Parra (Government, Peru) said that the preparations for the Summit constituted a fundamental and urgent opportunity to join collective efforts towards the consolidation of a more just world. Significant progress had been made in terms of social development, but considerable work remained to be done. She said that everyone must unite to overcome challenges and must show compassion and act in solidarity.

Mr Gallego García (Worker, Spain) said that the Summit needed to drive real progress in terms of social justice and come up with ambitious commitments, not only in terms of social development but also in terms of funding. The Summit should include commitments for increased official development aid and reserve at least 7 per cent of it for social protection. Other issues to be addressed included building a multilateral debt architecture for middle-income countries, a fiscal reform based on participative and democratic governance, and the reform of the Bretton Woods decisions to respond to the needs of developing countries. A key question would be the articulation between the Summit's outcome and the discussion on finance for development, including the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development taking place in Madrid in 2025.

Ms Corrods (Government, Jamaica) said that the Summit must secure outcomes that responded to the growing need to redefine how labour was engaged, in particular young people. In crafting those solutions, an inclusive and people-centred approach must be considered. The conversation around the future of work, social development and social justice must incorporate youth engagement, focusing on the thematic areas of transitional unemployment support, greater social protection for workers in the platform economy, informality, and non-standard work engagements. Another issue of interest would be how labour authorities could respond to a changing world of work.

Ms Fuentes Furuya (Representative, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)) said that the OHCHR supported the integration of human rights, labour rights, gender equality and social protection and hoped to see human rights put at the centre of the Summit. Human rights could help address the root causes of social, economic and environmental challenges. The OHCHR promoted a human rights' economy and encouraged the Summit to address care and support systems as a key lever to sustainable development. For the transformation of the care and support economy and systems, it would be crucial to apply a full range of relevant international labour and human rights standards addressing the human rights of women, persons with disabilities, children, young people, older persons and migrant workers, both as caregivers and receivers of care and support.

Mr Kridelka (Permanent Representative of Belgium to the United Nations in New York and co-facilitator of the intergovernmental preparatory process of the Second World Summit for Social Development) said that the exchange had been very useful and that all the points had been well noted. The questions regarding the ILO's involvement in the preparation of the Summit called for a coherent approach between Geneva and New York to ensure that Member States spoke with one voice. Likewise, the answer to the question regarding the involvement of social partners in the Summit lay with the individual governments that instructed their missions in New York. Coherence was also important regarding human rights, which was a holistic concept giving equal importance to all human rights, including economic, social, civic, cultural and political rights. The ILO was mentioned as one of the key agencies in the modality resolution for the World Summit for Social Development held in Copenhagen. He expressed the hope that the same language would be kept for the modalities of the Second World Summit for Social Development.

Regarding the thematic priorities, good note had been taken of the five priorities of the Employers and the four priorities of the Workers. The specific situation of the least developed countries and SIDS was also a priority in New York. Migration, formalization, gender equality, the fight against all discrimination, rural workers, support for entrepreneurship and the focus on young people were all very important issues.

To conclude, he said that it was important that individual governments listened to the priorities of the social partners and transmitted them to the delegations in New York as the outcome document would be agreed through a process led by Member States.

Mr Hilale (Permanent Representative of Morocco to the United Nations in New York and co-facilitator of the intergovernmental preparatory process of the Second World Summit for Social Development) said that due note had been taken of the interventions, which would be shared in New York. The co-facilitators attached great importance to the contribution of the ILO. Specific concerns would be best addressed if raised in New York by individual countries. Labour ministers needed to raise awareness among their governments so that their concerns could be integrated into the outcome document of the Summit.

The expressions of interest and the focus that had been placed on social dialogue, social justice and gender equality had already been heard in New York, and he expressed the hope that they would be reflected in the Summit's final declaration. Those issues, together with the creation of decent work, were key components of the society they were dreaming of for the future and which it was their responsibility to leave for the generations to come. He also expressed the hope that financing for development would find its place in the Summit. Renewed commitment was needed for the financing of policies that created decent jobs.

Regarding artificial intelligence, it was necessary to ask the right questions. Beyond the positive forecasts, to what degree could countries integrate a social dimension? How could the wealth generated by artificial intelligence improve working conditions, help to invest in a healthy environment and strengthen the rights of workers? Participants' contributions on those issues were key. Finally, he expressed the hope that human rights would take a rightful and noble place in the vision for the future at the Second World Summit for Social Development. The universality of all human rights must be recognized. There could be no prosperity, nor economic and social development, without upholding human rights.

The President thanked the co-facilitators and the delegates for their participation.

(The Conference adjourned at 6 p.m.)