

SPEECH
H.E MINISTER OF MANPOWER AND TRANSMIGRATION
REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA

ON THE FIFTEENTH ILO ASIA-PACIFIC REGIONAL MEETING
KYOTO, 5 DECEMBER 2011

Mr. Chairman,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen

Good morning.
Assalamualaikum warahmatullah hi wabarakatuh.

First of all, on behalf of the Government of Indonesia,
I would like to congratulate the Government of Japan for successfully hosting this important meeting.

In this occasion, allow me to extend our deepest sympathy to the people of Japan regarding the terrible earthquake and tsunami that hit eastern Japan in early April this year.

I have confidence that the Government and the people of Japan will be able to recover from the impact of this disaster within a short period of time, as we can see that this APRM was still able to be conducted as scheduled.

I would also like to extend our appreciation to the Director General, for your comprehensive report pertaining to the achievements and challenges of Decent Work in Asia-Pacific region, during the year two thousand and six (2006) until two thousand and ten (2010).

In addition, your views on the importance of inclusive and balanced growth is very timely with the current situation of economic downturn, in which we have to be, hand-in-hand, developing exit strategies through coordinated macro-economic, social protection and employment policies to lead the recovery process.

Mr. Chairman,
Ladies and Gentlemen.

Amid the current alarming global crisis, the Government of Indonesia shares the common concern for the need for closer cooperation among the Asia-Pacific countries to deal with this crisis, and in particular, the job crisis in some countries.

Even though Indonesia's unemployment rate has tended to decline over the years following the crisis, we continue to monitor the recent economic situation in Europe and the United States, as it may influence our growth and employment situation.

In relation to this, I would like to underline the G-20 Cannes Plan of Action for Growth and Jobs with its ultimate objective to provide more and better jobs for our citizens; to promote social inclusion in all countries; and to foster development and poverty reduction, particularly in less developed countries.

We hope that this commitment could be considered and inspire us in developing a social protection floor, in promoting the effective application of social and labor standards, as well as in strengthening policy coherence, in dealing with the crisis.

In response to its national dynamics and relevant regional and global commitments, Indonesia consistently promotes a “growth with equity” strategy. This coordinated strategy clearly exhibits the interrelated and interconnected nature of policy implementation by agencies under relevant Ministries in Indonesia.

Ensuring workers’ are treated equally, are free from discrimination, and receive wages that provide for, at a minimum, their daily subsistence needs is essential within the strategy for providing jobs. Decent jobs require social security and social protection, adequate housing, as well as health and education benefits.

Social protection systems should consist of social assistance, social insurance, and a social safety net, as stipulated in Indonesia’s National Medium Term Development Plan two thousand and ten until two thousand and fourteen (2010 – 2014).

Mr. Chairman,

As part of our common endeavors to further the implementation of the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization, the role of youth employment is indeed critical.

With nearly half of the world’s population under the age of twenty five, young people can make an important contribution to global prosperity. In connection to this, our Asia-Pacific region possesses around eighty percent of the total world population.

Yet, a recent ILO report shows that eighty-one million out of six-hundred-and-twenty million economically active fifteen to twenty-four year-olds, were unemployed at the end of two thousand and nine (2009). This is the highest recorded number in this decade.

We must therefore work together to prevent the increasing unemployment among young people. We must invest more in sectors and promote the sustainability of enterprises that generate jobs for youth, as well as provide them with enough entrepreneurial skills to start and run their own businesses.

Improving the skills of young people and strengthening the school to work transition requires extra and sustained effort from various stakeholders to join hands and work together.

School to work transition involves many issues that can not be solved by one government agency alone as it involves many areas such as education, access to labour market information, training service providers, and certification processes.

Apprenticeship programs are another key area that we focus on in terms of improving the employability and skills of the workforce, especially for young people.

We would welcome collaboration with the ILO in terms of technical assistance and knowledge sharing of best practices in other countries.

On this occasion, I would like to reiterate my President’s speech at the ILC this year, that we must also work towards a global coalition for youth employment.

Mr. Chairman,
Excellencies.

When we talk about job creation, one sector that we could focus on is tourism, as tourism creates multiplier effects for the economy and provides low-barrier entry jobs for vulnerable groups and young people. Community-based and eco-tourism which empowers local people and preserves the environment could be a strategic intervention to create sustainable jobs.

Creating jobs also means empowering our Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises, and providing a better business environment especially for the micro and small enterprises.

According to the two thousand and eight (2008) data compiled by the ASEAN SME-Working Group, Micro and Small Enterprises account for ninety-nine percent of the total number of enterprises in Indonesia and comprise of ninety two percent of total employment.

Improving access to finance, improving productivity, and encouraging formalization of business could greatly support micro and small business to grow and be part of the supply chain.

Regarding our migrant workers, we have launched start-up programs to provide information, assistance, and services, including protection and economic empowerment services at community level in sending communities for migrant workers and their families.

My Ministry recently signed a MoU with the Bank of Indonesia on Financial Education for Indonesian Migrant Workers Empowerment. Some results achieved under this scheme include: trainings on Start and Improve Your Business, and Training on Rural Economic Empowerment, which have been incorporated into programs by Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration (MoMT) involving civil society organizations, unions representing women, farmers, and migrant workers.

Mr. Chairman,
Ladies and Gentlemen

By adopting and adapting the ILO Global Jobs Pact for the Indonesian context through Indonesian Jobs Pact, our constituents have engaged in fruitful tripartite social dialogue on priorities for actions in the coming years.

The Government, workers and employers in Indonesia have joined forces and have committed to creating more jobs and to protecting people based on the agreed principles and actions in the Pact.

Finally, our delegation would also like to extend deep appreciation to ILO Regional Office in Bangkok, for their hard-work in preparation for our meeting.

We highly appreciate the chairmanship of Japanese Government, as well as the contribution of all Asian-Pacific states' for the sake of our workforce and future generation.

I thank you.

Wassalamualaikum warahmatullahiwabarakatuh.

A. Muhaimin Iskandar