



Fourth Joint Dialogue on labour migration between the ASEAN Trade Union Council and the ASEAN Confederation of Employers

14 February 2024
Vientiane, Lao People's Democratic Republic

Joint Statement

Introduction

The Fourth Joint Meeting of the ASEAN Trade Union Council (ATUC) and the ASEAN Confederation of Employers (ACE) was held on 14 February 2024 in Crowne Plaza Hotel, Vientiane, Lao People's Democratic Republic. The meeting was hosted by ATUC with support from the ILO's TRIANGLE in ASEAN programme¹, in coordination with the ILO's Bureau of Workers Activities and Bureau of Employers Activities.

Preamble

ATUC and ACE:

Acknowledge the importance of labour migration in ASEAN and the vital contribution that migrant workers and their employers make to the development of countries of origin and destination. Labour migration helps meeting labour and skills demands in countries of destination, and contributes remittances and skills transfer to countries of origin.

Reaffirm their strong commitment to advancing decent work for migrant workers with a view to achieving social justice in ASEAN.

Acknowledge that improving protection of migrant workers brings benefits for both migrant workers and their employers.

Note and reaffirm the Joint Statements adopted at the first, second and third joint dialogues on labour migration hosted in Bangkok, Thailand in 2016, in Manila, the Philippines in 2019 and in Tokyo, Japan in 2023 respectively.

Acknowledge the importance of having regular dialogue between ATUC and ACE on labour migration issues to build trust, address emerging issues, and develop and put forward to relevant organizations common positions on labour migration.

¹ TRIANGLE in ASEAN is a partnership between the ILO, the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and the Global Affairs Canada (GAC).

Reaffirm the value of bipartism, tripartism and social dialogue as a means to achieve better governance of labour migration.

Call for continued support from the ILO in building capacity of both national and regional employers' and workers' organizations, sharing good practices across countries and providing technical assistance, as needed.

ATUC and ACE agreed to:

1. Continue regular joint dialogues, with rotating host, to strengthen bipartite dialogue on issues related to labour migration governance. The host may suggest focusing on specific thematic issues in future dialogues to deepen understanding.
2. Establish a working group to support implementation and monitoring of joint ATUC-ACE efforts. Terms of Reference (TORs) outlining scope, responsibilities and working modalities for the working group will be finalized and agreed between ATUC and ACE within one month from this meeting.
3. Undertake joint advocacy towards governments of ASEAN Member States and relevant ASEAN bodies, in particular the ASEAN Committee on Implementation of the ASEAN Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers (ACMW), to influence policy development on issues identified as priorities by ATUC and ACE, including but not limited to:
 - 3.1. Ensure fair recruitment and effective legal pathways for labour migration;
 - 3.2. Promote skills mobility, recognition and development, including preparation for changing skills demands;
 - 3.3. Ensure migrant workers' access to comprehensive social protection, including portability of social security benefits;
 - 3.4. Facilitate migrant workers' and their employers' access to capacity building and support before recruitment, during employment and upon return and reintegration.
 - 3.5. Advance fair conditions of work, including occupational safety and health, for migrant workers through effective implementation of regulations.
4. Strengthen engagement with ASEAN processes, in particular the ACMW, with a view to contributing to the implementation and review of the Action Plan 2018-2025 of the ASEAN Consensus on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers and ensuring that ATUC and ACE priorities are taken into consideration in the drafting of the post-2025 ASEAN Consensus Action Plan.

ATUC and ACE agreed on a joint submission of the Joint Statement to the ACMW through the ASEAN Secretariat, with copies also to national ACMW focal points.