

International Day of Disabled Persons: Message from Juan Somavia, Director-General of the International Labour Organization

Transcript:

Thank you for joining this year's observance of International Day of Disabled Persons.

This year, people around the world are mobilizing to realize the values of dignity and respect, opportunity and inclusion through decent work for persons with disabilities.

Behind this theme lies an important truth: Women and men everywhere want a fair chance at a decent job. They want the dignity that work brings.

Today we put the spotlight on the right of persons with disabilities to decent work, based on

Respect for workers' rights and very specially, freedom from discrimination.

Social protection for all

Expanded employment opportunities and

Social dialogue.

What started as an ILO agenda has connected with leaders and people around the world. And a broad-based global movement for decent work for all is emerging.

Persons with disabilities are a crucial part of this movement.— some 470 million are of working age.

Every day people with disabilities are demonstrating their productivity on the job, yet far too many are still unemployed.

Too many are living in poverty.

Even when in work, they often find lower levels of security and few prospects for advancement.

We must intensify our efforts to step up the pace of change.

By promoting the rights and dignity of people with disabilities, we are not only empowering individuals but also enriching societies and strengthening economies.

We have much to build on – UN and ILO Conventions; many laws and tools. Good practices.

With these instruments:

We must banish prejudice;

We must open up work places and work spaces to persons with disabilities.

Above all, we must persist. And never, ever give up on this struggle for social justice.