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World of Work Summit

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Wednesday, 14 June 2023, 9.55 a.m.

President: Mr bin Samikh Al Marri

Opening of the World of Work Summit

The President

It is a great honour to declare open the World of Work Summit of the 111th Session of the International Labour Conference, the theme of which is “Social justice for all”.

A total of 16 Heads of State and Government and a number of other high-level dignitaries will be honouring us with their presence at this year’s Summit. The Summit will also be attended by representatives of 22 participating international organizations. It will consist of addresses by our high-level guests and four panel discussions featuring tripartite constituents from across the regions.

On behalf of my fellow Officers and of the delegates to the 111th Session of the Conference, I wish to express our high appreciation to all of the high-level participants for coming to address our assembly. We are looking forward to hearing their views on the issue of social justice, which is at the heart of the ILO’s mandate.

To begin with, let us watch a video on the screens in this room, addressing the need to advance social justice for all, which will set the scene for this Summit.

(An introductory video is shown.)

After these powerful images, it is now my pleasure to give the floor to the Director-General of the International Labour Office and Secretary-General of this 111th Session of the Conference, Mr Gilbert F. Hounbo, so that he may address this Summit.

Address by the Director-General

Mr Hounbo

Director-General of the International Labour Office and Secretary-General
of the Conference
(Original French)

We meet today in order to respond to a critical call, a call for social justice, a call to reaffirm the right of every individual, the right of every individual to pursue their material and spiritual development in conditions of freedom, of dignity, of economic security and equal opportunity. These words are taken from the Declaration of Philadelphia of 1944.

This call is particularly relevant to young people. This multitude of young people, divided against its will by agonizing inequalities of birth, young people some of whom embark – undermined by unemployment, trapped in informality and without social protection – on the dangerous route of migration, even child labour. Young people who find themselves having simultaneously to reconcile the challenges of immediate survival with those related to the preservation of the environment, facing the challenges of the end of the world and the end of the month. Young people born in the age of new technologies, of a completely open world, waiting for opportunities to be exploited while risks are managed so that no one is left behind.

Social justice is essential in order to make our societies and economies more coherent, more productive and more peaceful. Social justice is essential in order to restore trust in

institutions and prove that multilateralism is effective, multilateralism that meets the expectations of our populations.

As Director-General of the International Labour Office, I am deeply honoured to uphold the legacy of an Organization which, since 1919, has acknowledged in its Constitution, and I quote, that “universal and lasting peace can be established only if it is based upon social justice”. Subsequently, the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (1998) and the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization (2008) strengthened this priority by establishing the four pillars of decent work. The ILO has not turned from this quest, including in 2019 with the publication of the ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work.

Our responsibility is to ensure that a just transition to a more sustainable economy is achieved equitably. This involves building a greener economy, while creating opportunities and safeguarding social well-being, where sustainable businesses, productivity and skills development can play a crucial role. Our body of standards, our experience in social dialogue are assets that should no longer be considered as optional.

(The speaker continues in English.)

Greater social justice gives us a cause to rally around. But it is much more than that. It is a driving force that can steer us towards a more equitable and sustainable future. As such, it must become our guiding principle, for both policies and action.

In pursuing this cause, we must not underestimate the importance of a re-dynamized multilateralism, which is essential if we are to effectively tackle the interconnected crises of our times, and rebuild trust in governance and trust in the UN system. If we are to create a renewed social contract, it will need to be driven by solidarity; it will need to be driven by fairness; and, above all, it will need to be driven by social justice.

The Global Coalition for Social Justice will support these goals by ensuring policy coherence to increase the impact of our actions. It can provide a focused platform that will put social justice front and centre at the United Nations World Social Summit, expected in 2025.

Being gathered together here today gives us the chance to really think about the route to take if we want to achieve social justice for all. I know you will hear, and you will share, inspiring stories. I hope you will also discuss innovative, even radical, ideas. Because we need new approaches if we are to have different outcomes and thus bring about the meaningful change expected by the new generation.

We will use the outputs of this Summit to craft a road map that will provide and guide our next steps. That starts by identifying priority themes and tangible actions, and ways to improve solidarity and cooperation among and between States.

We have a unique opportunity to bend the arc of history in favour of social justice. The prize is a world where everyone – everyone – can fulfil their potential and enjoy the benefits of economic and social progress. Let us seize this opportunity and take this chance to show our collective commitment, to show our collective determination. Let us not be afraid to be bold in our approach.

I thank you for your presence here today. It is a concrete demonstration of your commitment to social justice and gives me confidence that we will succeed in this great enterprise. We have a responsibility to make a difference and I know, together, we will do so.

Address by the Secretary-General of the United Nations

The President

I am now honoured to announce that the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr Guterres, will make a special address to us. On this occasion, his address will be delivered by video.

Mr Guterres

Secretary-General of the United Nations

I send my warmest greetings to the World of Work Summit and the International Labour Organization.

Work is central to our economies and our lives, but, as you have highlighted so effectively, the world of work is changing at warp speed. Societies and economies are still reeling from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Poverty, hunger and inequalities are rising, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are on life support. The climate crisis, conflict and humanitarian emergencies are uprooting and disrupting the education and working lives of hundreds of millions of people. Divisions are widening, hatred and discrimination are rampant. Women's rights are under attack and people are losing trust in the institutions that represent them.

The fourth industrial revolution is unfolding against this chaotic backdrop. We cannot predict its results, but we already know the outlines of the seismic shift that is under way: greater automation; the digital transition; a shift towards renewables; sustainable production; and a need for quality education, reskilling and retraining. Jobs will be lost in some areas and created in others. But they will require different sets of skills. We must prepare now, to avoid even greater divisions, injustice and mistrust.

The ILO has been at the forefront of laying out a road map to navigate the transitions to a sustainable and just future of work. The foundation of that road must be social justice.

I thank Director-General Hounbou and all of you for working to mobilize a Global Coalition for Social Justice. I see such a Coalition as a crucial force to help advance the SDGs and meet the challenges of today and tomorrow. At its heart, this effort is about rebuilding the social contract through people-centred policies grounded and guided by social justice. The social contract must have women and young people at the centre and encompass equal opportunities for all; access to essential services; lifelong education and training; decent jobs; and social protection.

The Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions is our platform to coordinate global financing for hundreds of millions of new jobs and to extend social protection to the 4 billion people who are without coverage.

I look forward to the outcome of your discussions, which will inform the Sustainable Development Goal Summit in September, the Summit of the Future in 2024 and the World Social Summit in 2025.

The world is at a decisive moment. Today's policies on climate, on threats to global security, on social solidarity and more, will shape our future and that of our children and grandchildren. The World of Work Summit is an opportunity to explore solutions that will make that future more just, equitable, sustainable and inclusive.

The President

Before I invite our next guests to take the floor, we will hear from people from around the world sharing their thoughts about what needs to be done to achieve greater social justice.

(A video is shown.)

High-level addresses

The President

We shall now be hearing from the first of our high-level guests, who are invited to deliver their addresses from the podium.

Mr Berset

President of Switzerland

(Original French)

Allow me first of all to extend a very warm welcome to you here in Geneva, on the occasion of the 111th Session of the International Labour Conference organized by the International Labour Organization. Switzerland has been the Organization's host country since 1919, and its establishment in Geneva was indeed the cornerstone for the development of what is now known as International Geneva. I mention this here as a reminder of the very strong link, which has held for over a century, that binds Switzerland and the ILO.

Switzerland is very honoured today to host the first World of Work Summit dedicated to social justice for all. As fate would have it, today is the day of the feminist strike in Switzerland. Unfortunately, you know why. Far too often, women earn lower wages and receive lower pensions than men. They do unpaid work more often than men. They suffer discrimination and harassment, and indeed one of the demands of the women on strike today refers explicitly to the ILO Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190).

Today's strike is an extremely clear illustration of how indignation in the face of injustice can be transformed into political action. However, for this to happen, we need optimism – we need a deep-seated conviction that things can change, whether within our own societies, on a local scale or on an international and global scale. It is essential for anger at societal dysfunction to be accompanied always by optimism, otherwise it engenders resentment, defeatism and even cynicism, which are of absolutely no use in the fight against social injustice.

The history of the ILO is precisely a history of anger. This indispensable Organization came into being more than a century ago in response to legitimate indignation at the tragic working conditions in factories and the widespread use of child labour at the time. But this indignation has been transformed into commitment, and even today, the challenges we face are monumental.

Inequalities in the world have swollen to extreme proportions and indeed the *World Inequality Report 2022* concludes that these inequalities in wealth or income, in gender and ecology are at the same level as in the early twentieth century, that is, at the same level as when the ILO was founded.

This social injustice affects the most vulnerable, first and foremost women, young people and people with disabilities, in an absolutely disproportionate way, and the consequences of these inequalities are extremely harmful. They are even becoming a political poison that weakens social cohesion and discredits democratic institutions.

It is worth recalling here that there can be no social justice without respect for human rights, social protection and guarantees of fundamental freedoms. That is why we must commit ourselves to creating opportunities for the most disadvantaged, to improve their well-being and their quality of life; to guarantee gender equality and access to rights.

That is why we must encourage a just transition: a structural change towards a social and economic order that is climate-neutral, inclusive and egalitarian. That is why this theme, which underlines the extreme importance of the work done at the ILO, linking the agendas of social, climate and environmental justice and their respective interest groups, is precisely one of the subjects of this International Labour Conference.

Si vis pacem, cole justitiam: "If you want peace, cultivate justice." These historic words are written in a document that was sealed under the very first stone of the main building of the International Labour Office here in Geneva. These words, which link us to the history of those who came before us in this endeavour, illustrate the *raison d'être* of the ILO, whose Constitution aims at social justice to serve world peace. Through its commitment to upholding and respecting fundamental principles and rights at work, the ILO has had a positive and lasting influence on social welfare legislation in every country of the world. By bringing together representatives of Governments, employers and workers in executive bodies, the ILO's founders pioneered – there is no other word for it – the multi-stakeholder dialogue promoted today. This social dialogue makes it possible to find the best solutions to the challenges facing the world of work by putting human beings at the heart of the debate. Moreover, with social partnership, the Member States we represent and the ILO guarantee that labour is not a commodity.

Nonetheless, social justice cannot be the sole responsibility of the ILO. We need to go beyond these walls and beyond our work too, to mobilize the entire multilateral system. You recalled, Mr Director-General, the words spoken in 2019 on the importance of multilateralism, recalled before the successive harsh crises of the past three years. This message is probably even more important today and the ILO, with its normative mandate, its tripartite structure and its agency, has all the legitimacy necessary to encourage other players to join their efforts with its own.

In this context, we can set ourselves four priorities, which Switzerland has also set for itself. The first priority is to strengthen the ILO's cooperation with international financial institutions and multilateral development banks to establish a socially sustainable anti-crisis mechanism. The second priority is to promote universal social protection, with contributory protection systems and a particular focus on universal healthcare. The third priority is to set up an initiative to help businesses and their employees take advantage of the transition to a green and digital economy. Lastly, the fourth priority is to set up an initiative to promote socially equitable trade, which obviously involves a link with another extremely important international organization, the World Trade Organization (WTO).

You will have noticed that these priorities include the ILO's link and role as a hub for other organizations, such as the World Health Organization, also based in Geneva, which I indirectly mentioned, or the WTO; I believe that this role as a hub for coordination and collaboration with others is one that the ILO cannot escape.

As you know, Switzerland was the driving force behind the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization in 2008, which is now some 15 years old, and which must continue to guide our efforts to achieve the objectives of promoting employment, strengthening social protection, fostering social dialogue and tripartism and respecting the implementation of fundamental principles and rights at work. These objectives are inseparable

from one another and mutually reinforcing; any failure to promote one or the other is obviously detrimental to the achievement of the whole. The ILO's partnerships with non-state entities and private sector players must also be encouraged in this context.

At a time when the Russian Federation is waging an unacceptable war of aggression against Ukraine, multilateral platforms are more important than ever and here we are together in person in Geneva, Geneva in Switzerland, International Geneva in Switzerland, committed to tackling today's challenges within the framework of the closest possible international cooperation.

Global inequalities are, probably along with global warming, one of the greatest scourges of our time. And yes, as I said at the outset, we must be indignant, but above all we must remain optimistic, particularly at a time when one crisis follows another and crises overlap, sustain and reinforce one another to the point of sometimes shaking our faith in the future, and, in this context of uncertainty, it is all the more important to pursue our commitment to social progress, multilateralism and rational politics.

Franklin Roosevelt, a former President of the United States of America, said in his speech to the ILO in 1941: "The essence of our struggle today is that man shall be free. There can be no real freedom for the common man without enlightened social policies. In the last analysis, they are the stakes for which democracies are today fighting." As I have just said, there can be no real freedom for the individual without enlightened social policies. That was true in 1941 and it is still true today.

Mr Suárez Santos

Secretary-General of the International Organisation of Employers

I am pleased and honoured to represent the International Organisation of Employers (IOE) here at this critical session. Just five years ago in 2019, we were here together discussing the future of work, which is now the present of work. Some of you may remember, we were estimating a time frame of a decade for the full transformation. Our predictions were not necessarily wrong; the world of work is changing profoundly, as is the world of business. But little did we know that this transformation would happen not over a decade, but in one week, and, in some cases, 24 hours.

The extraordinary impact of the pandemic on the world of work was like a tsunami. The roll-out of different technological advances happened in 24 hours; in some cases, remote work became compulsory, within a few hours, across the globe. But let me remind you that this accelerated pace of change is not over; it continues, as new artificial intelligence disrupts today's world of work even further and as climate change and climate change policies are pushing all of us to work, consume and live more sustainably.

With all this fast-moving change, how does the founding principle of the ILO from over a century ago, the principle of social justice, still apply? Well, let me be stubborn and remind all of us that social justice goes hand in hand with decent work opportunities. Social justice goes hand in hand with employers being able to create jobs and doing so in a sustainable manner. Many companies, and I call attention to the role of small and medium-sized companies, have not been able to survive. In a region such as Latin America, some estimations indicate that up to 20 per cent of companies disappeared during the pandemic, which can be considered as a disaster, as a drama, for social justice. So while the concept of social justice is as old as the ILO, we need to examine how we can adapt it to new situations: how we, as employers, can be better integrated in this equation; how the ILO can work differently with other partners and with other international organizations; how we can ensure that the international community

agenda and the ILO remains the central driving force leading to impactful results, especially – and I want to insist on this point – for those individuals that remain in the informal sector, who represent 60 per cent of the total occupied population.

As President Berset has rightly said, indignation leads to change. We as the IOE representing many business organizations around the world and we as employers are ready to develop, with ambition, effective action for social justice. For this it is imperative that we focus on how to increase productivity, how we expand skills, how we bridge the digital divide, how we can create a better environment for sustainable enterprises to grow. Let me elaborate on these essential points.

First, it is increasingly clear that those countries without a proper environment in which individuals – women and men – and companies can develop their ideas, their projects, lack not just jobs, they lack in innovation, they lack in productivity, they lack in creativity. It is also worth recalling that weak institutions, corruption and inadequate regulations prevent employers from creating jobs. There is no social justice without entrepreneurs, no social justice without sustainable enterprises.

Second, collaboration between companies, workers and educational institutions has never been so critical to improve social justice. I have to say that in too many countries this collaboration is far from optimal, to the detriment of young people, to the detriment of women, to the detriment of the most vulnerable. For educational and skills policies to succeed, we need to involve social partners better, and we need to involve private sector institutions better. The ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work was clear on this: skills development is a priority for social justice. We need to avoid risking that the skills agenda lags behind other programmes. And allow me to recall that it is equally important that the intended nationally determined contributions for climate change integrate proper skills plans, which is not often the case: there are no just transitions without skills.

Third, the latest technological revolution from artificial intelligence to virtual reality provides amazing opportunities, especially in developing economies, to lift more individuals out of poverty, to bring more decent jobs. However, we have to admit that these can further increase the digital divide and worsen existing economic inequalities. A social justice partnership needs to focus on ensuring equal access to meaningful connectivity, affordable internet services and digital literacy. Other international organizations, such as the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), can be key partners for further enhancing the achievement of social justice.

Fourth, universal social protection is another area of action for social justice. The IOE has been very clear: we are committed to enhancing social protection and social protection floors, but social protection schemes need to be sustainable. Let me be sincere: this sustainability is under threat as never before in many countries. Partnerships to build these sustainable schemes should also remain a priority, but again, it should not be forgotten that major contributions on social protection schemes come from employers and companies. If they cannot grow and cannot develop their activities, we will not have the fiscal space for such schemes. There is no universal social protection without sustainable enterprises.

Fifth, the pandemic showed us how important collaboration with employers and with workers is, also, for access to public goods, apart from education, for instance to address health challenges or to access finance. During the pandemic, the level of trust placed in many employers, as providers of health guidance, was very high. Let us leverage this partnership without prejudice. For this and other reasons, we ask to be more open in our approach and in

our discussions to integrating the role of the private sector in achieving social justice. This is totally in accordance with the important approach of the ILO Centenary Declaration.

An expression frequently used in-house at the ILO is “the elephant in the room”. This renewed interest in social justice also comes from a need to make the multilateral community work better together. The ILO is the reference international institution on social justice. But also allow me just to say, on partnerships, that efficient partnerships can make a huge difference in peoples’ lives and the ILO has been able to prove that. The Organization’s tripartite strategy can complement the impressive work undertaken by other international organizations efficiently, without overlapping. Tripartism can be a driver of change, but I should not like to finish my contribution without referring to the preconditions for this tripartism to be effective. Independent employers’ and workers’ organizations need to be respected in their role, without interference. Fundamental principles and rights at work are more important than ever for social justice, and freedom of association is far from being respected in many countries. Picking individual companies to legitimize the business voice will not work. Threatening or intimidating employers’ or workers’ organizations will not yield the result that we all want. Being credible also means that we must strive to create a society where everyone is treated with respect and dignity, irrespective of their background. At the workplace, inclusivity means that no discrimination should be admitted on any grounds.

We need to look at engaging further in social justice actions with the ILO, with the United Nations and other international partners, without prejudice, with ambition, but also with pragmatism, not merely engaging in a talk show but leading with action. The IOE has supported the Director-General on bringing new energy and vigour to this founding principle. The concept of the Global Coalition for Social Justice is a bold initiative that comes at a crucial moment. It can undoubtedly promote the unique tripartite governance of the ILO, safeguard and enhance the ILO’s central place in the multilateral system and breathe new life into a fundamental ILO principle. Let us all work together in this direction.

Mr Triangle

Acting General Secretary of the International Trade Union Confederation

Let me give you a message on behalf of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), which represents 200 million workers and 340 national trade union centres in 165 countries and territories all over the world. Our world is at a crossroads of converging crises. Global shocks to economies and societies upset by the COVID-19 pandemic and the war of aggression against Ukraine have exacerbated pre-existing vulnerabilities and undermined the slow progress that we had seen in the fight against poverty and inequalities.

Climate change and its intersecting effects are strongly impacting people across the globe. Across the world, we have seen social regression rather than progress in the last few years. Authoritarian government responses to the multiple crises are on the rise and corporate interests continue to predominate over the well-being of the majority of the population. Besides the direct and indirect consequences of war in a polarized geopolitical context, workers have also suffered from the climate crisis, the food and energy crisis and high inflation, which has undermined their purchasing power, pushing many of them further into poverty. Interest rate rises have further increased the debt crisis in many countries around the world, threatening public services and the much-needed social spending for a human-centred economy.

The state of social justice in the world, as described in the Report of the Director-General, should shame us all. The top 1 per cent has taken 38 per cent of all wealth accumulated since

the 1990s, whereas the bottom 50 per cent has gained only 2 per cent and 685 million people live in extreme poverty. Over 50 million workers are in modern slavery and at least 160 million children remain in child labour, with numbers going up again after decades of decline. Every year, 3 million workers die and hundreds of millions are injured or made ill because of work. More than 60 per cent are working in the informal economy without any labour protection and 4 billion are excluded from social protection. Job losses resulting from the pandemic have not been recovered.

A total of 207 million are unemployed and the gender pay gap remains at 20 per cent. In this world parliament of labour, these sobering numbers can surely leave none of us untouched. We have to do better. The converging crises that we are facing need an all-encompassing response that will build more sustainable and resilient societies: a transformative agenda with social justice at its centre.

We need to develop a new social contract with jobs, rights, living wages, social protection, equality and inclusion for all, in all its dimensions. A social contract with the creation of decent and climate-friendly jobs for all, with just transition through an industrial transformation to achieve net zero carbon emissions, along with investments in strategic economic sectors such as the care and green economy and sustainable infrastructure, as well as the formalization of informal employment. A new social contract with rights for all workers, regardless of their employment arrangements, to fulfil the promise of the ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work, with its labour protection floor that includes fundamental labour rights, maximum limits on working time and health and safety at work. A new social contract with minimum living wages and equal pay policies. Wage inequality is the greatest determinant of overall income inequalities. Workers need pay rises to face the cost-of-living crisis and make a decent living. And equal pay for work of equal value has to be guaranteed to all. A new social contract with universal social protection that can be supported in the least wealthy countries, through a global social protection fund.

In this new social contract, we will need equality and an end to all forms of discrimination, including on grounds of race, gender, religion, sexual identity and others. And we need inclusion, ensuring a truly inclusive multilateral system to redress the current imbalances of power and wealth and give developing countries the policy space to define their developing models while making social dialogue a key part of global governance. In this situation of emergency that we are facing, the Global Coalition for Social Justice is an opportunity to put these demands for a new social contract at the centre of multilateralism. And at the centre of the Decade of Action to deliver the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with Goal 8 on sustainable economic growth with full and productive employment and decent work for all as a centrepiece.

World military expenditure grew by 19 per cent over the last decade to reach a record high of over US\$2 trillion. We are putting all our money into war and destruction, exacerbating division rather than building a shared common global security system based on social justice for all.

The UN Secretary-General has reiterated the importance of this renewed social contract and emphasized the need for a renewed multilateralism. The Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions is a key element to make the new social contract a reality in many countries around the world. With its aim of creating 400 million jobs by 2030, primarily in the green, care and digital economies, and extended social protection to 4 billion people that are currently uncovered, it covers two fundamental pillars of the new social contract.

It is really crunch time for multilateralism and global governance. The UN Secretary-General's *Our Common Agenda* provides an important framework for upcoming high-level events, such as the 2023 Sustainable Development Goal Summit, the 2024 Summit of the Future and the 2025 World Social Summit. And the Global Coalition for Social Justice should contribute to these key moments and mobilize the necessary political will for the success of a just and sustainable global agenda. Together, we need to put the ILO in the lead of global governance and integrate tripartism and social dialogue more firmly into the multilateral system. Social dialogue among governments and workers' and employers' organizations is crucial for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, promoting more inclusive, effective and just policies.

A stronger and more networked multilateralism based on social justice is needed within the UN system and beyond, in coordination with international financial institutions, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the G20 and the BRICS countries (Brazil, the Russian Federation, India, China and South Africa). At its 2022 World Congress, the ITUC reaffirmed its commitment to multilateralism and its support to the United Nations as the peak multilateral body. But it also stressed that UN reform must increase accountability and effectiveness, recognizing the responsibilities of Member States to support the UN Charter and its work. As trade unions, we are a fundamental piece for all these necessary actions and the ITUC is strongly committed to building a just future for all.

The President

I wish to thank the high-level speakers and the Director-General and to introduce the second part of this sitting of the Summit, the panel discussion on addressing inequalities, informality and facilitating inclusion.

Wednesday, 14 June 2023, 11.30 a.m.

President: Mr bin Samikh al Marri

The President

I would now like to invite you to watch another video, reminding us why gender equality is central to achieving social justice. We will then all have the privilege of attending the first high-level panel discussion of the Summit, on the theme "Addressing inequalities, informality and facilitating inclusion".

For this purpose, it is my pleasure to hand over the chairing of this sitting to Ms Nozipho Tshabalala, internationally acclaimed conference moderator and broadcaster, so that she may moderate the panel discussion as soon as the video is over.

(A video is shown.)

High-level panel discussion on addressing inequalities, informality and facilitating inclusion: Summary

Moderator

- Ms Nozipho Tshabalala

Panellists

- Ms Karien van Gennip, Minister of Social Affairs and Employment, Netherlands
- Mr Shri Bhupender Yadav, Minister of Labour and Employment and Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, India
- Mr Jorge Luis Araya Chaves, Executive Director, Costa Rican Union of Chambers and Associations of the Private Business Sector (UCCAEP)
- Mr Plamen Dimitrov, President, Confederation of Independent Trade Unions of Bulgaria (CITUB)
- Ms Winnie Byanyima, Under-Secretary General of the United Nations, Executive Director, Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)
- Mr Paul Ladd, Director, United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD)

The moderator welcomed all participants, setting the scene by stressing how the multiple crises that the world had faced in recent years had highlighted the extent of pre-existing inequalities, their consequences and the need to jointly tackle them. These crises had led to further increases in multidimensional inequalities, and the most disadvantaged and marginalized populations had been the hardest hit. She further stressed how the panellists would share global and national responses to these challenges, and examples of actions needed to accelerate the reduction of inequalities and the advancement of social justice.

The moderator asked Ms van Gennip to explain the role that stakeholders can play to overcome those structural barriers that prevent certain groups from benefiting from equal opportunities and treatment, which were essential to achieve social justice and to eliminate discrimination.

Ms van Gennip stressed that ensuring the well-being of all citizens was fundamental for countries to thrive, the necessary preconditions being to provide equal opportunities for all. The Global Coalition for Social Justice was recognized as a crucial initiative in this regard. Societies should first acknowledge the presence of discrimination in any aspect of society, including the labour market, or in access to opportunities and services, especially towards some groups, including youth, those with different sexual orientations and the elderly. Discrimination could stem from unconscious biases, persistent inequalities, or even institutional racism. Individuals should break the cycle of favouring those who resembled themselves and instead strive for a more diverse workforce. At the organizational level, businesses should integrate measures against discrimination into all procedures, showcasing leadership commitment from the top. Value chain management was highlighted as an area to tackle child labour and discrimination in order to ensure equitable opportunities. She urged governments to take stronger action. The Netherlands had adopted measures such as an anti-discrimination law, the implementation of gender equality quotas, an action plan against labour market discrimination focusing on people with a bicultural background, and the Dutch

feminist foreign policy, which aimed to incorporate anti-discrimination and equitable opportunities into the core of government actions and foreign relations.

Mr Ladd commented on Ms van Gennip's intervention and highlighted that the absence of national care systems was one of the main structural barriers to eliminating discrimination in the workforce and preventing gender equality. He urged governments to adopt policies to recognize the true value of unpaid care workers.

The moderator invited Mr Yadav to indicate what actions had been taken by the Government of India, and what more could be done to bridge the gap between formal and informal economies and ensure a fair distribution of progress.

Mr Yadav said that the latest technological advancements could bridge the gap between formal and informal economies and ensure a fair distribution of progress. India had used a whole-of-government approach to create eShram, an online portal with about 290 million registered people, that connected informal workers to skills and employment opportunities in the formal economy. Recognizing the importance of social welfare, the Government of India had introduced social welfare schemes that provided various forms of social assistance to informal workers. Nonetheless, developing countries often lacked technologically skilled workers to establish such digital solutions, and therefore governments should finance lifelong learning policies.

Ms van Gennip further commented that the role of families in contemporary societies was fundamental. Equally important was the role of care, and its significance would only increase in the future as life expectancy continued to improve, thus increasing the need for support care for the elderly.

Mr Yadav remarked that, further to a human rights-based approach, societies should approach the care sector with a duty-based approach, and that country-specific approaches were needed tailored to each one's societal values, which reflected local circumstances.

The moderator asked Mr Araya Chaves to explain the possible measures that could foster productivity to narrow the productivity gaps across enterprises, as it could contribute to reducing inequalities, and the mechanisms that could ensure the fair sharing of productivity gains.

Mr Araya Chaves echoed previous speakers and stressed that investments were needed to close gaps, particularly in education and training. Employers' organizations were called upon to ensure that the benefits of development were enjoyed by all people, but support from governments would nonetheless be needed. Governments needed to support the development of investment-conducive environments, necessary for small and medium-sized enterprises to continue playing their major role as creators of decent jobs. Integrated approaches should be adopted so that the two measures could advance in parallel. Investments were also needed to improve access to connectivity and to infrastructure, both preconditions for digitalization and to ensure that micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) had more resources to create more and better jobs.

The moderator asked Mr Dimitrov to comment on the role that wage policies and social dialogue, including collective bargaining, could play in reducing income inequalities.

Mr Dimitrov said that both horizontal and vertical inequalities were important. Noting the importance for productivity to continue growing, he stressed that the long-term decoupling of wages from productivity had led to growing income inequalities within countries, along with a global decline in labour share. Earners at the top of the income

distribution experienced much faster wage increases compared to those at the bottom. Collective bargaining was a crucial response in all dimensions, including within global supply chains, to ensure fair distribution of profits for all. The minimum living wage that adequately addressed the cost of living and the needs of workers and their families was equally important. He further highlighted the critical issue of worker misclassification that often resulted in individuals being denied employment protections and entitlements, as well as the issue of insecure forms of work. Fair taxation for both income and for corporate profits could also contribute to a reduction in income inequality.

The moderator invited Ms Byanyima and Mr Ladd to comment on how wage policies should change so that all workers could have a just share of the fruits of economic progress.

Ms Byanyima said that extreme and rising inequality was a direct effect of the demolition of workers' power resulting from the excessive returns on capital that were collected at the expense of labour. The COVID-19 pandemic had had an enormous negative impact on economies, on job security and on the lives of people around the world. Companies, however, had seen their profits increase as they were allowed by the existing legal frameworks to create artificial demand and limit supply of fundamental goods. She advocated policies at global and national level to shift away from prioritizing growth over inclusivity, leading to extreme inequality. She urged governments to regulate markets and shape them to ensure minimum living wages and dignified jobs, including for workers in the platform economy. The erosion of workers' power and the limitation on their right to join trade unions, she said, were factors contributing to growing inequality. She stressed the importance of collective bargaining and highlighted the need for workers to have the right to organize and negotiate fair wages.

Mr Ladd said that wage policies had worsened with regard to their impact on income inequalities. Since the Second World War, the ratio of pay of a chief executive officer (CEO) to that of a typical median worker had substantially increased. Inequalities had continued to escalate during the COVID-19 pandemic while pay disparities had risen, and a gender-adjusted perspective revealed an even bleaker picture. He further acknowledged the importance of living wages as a baseline floor and proposed two initiatives to address disparities. Firstly, he underlined the importance of the ILO resolution concerning decent work and the social and solidarity economy. Social and solidarity economy enterprises showed that company policies were able to address inequalities by prioritizing social and environmental objectives and reducing the CEO-worker pay ratios. Secondly, he emphasized the need to clarify environmental, social, and governance labelling and address the lack of thresholds associated with them. The UNRISD had worked with standard setters to propose sustainability indicators with specific thresholds and, based on their research, suggested a maximum threshold of 30:1 for CEO-worker pay ratios.

The moderator asked Mr Dimitrov to illustrate the possible steps that could be taken to make institutions of social dialogue more inclusive so that they could advance social justice and a fair distribution, also for workers in the informal economy.

Mr Dimitrov said that legal frameworks should comply with fundamental principles and rights at work in all ILO Member States. Freedom of association should be guaranteed without limitations, as some workers faced exclusion by law. He urged action to secure sectoral collective bargaining, as in the past it had had a positive impact on reducing wage and income inequality. The internal structure and democratic rules of unions should be reviewed to further facilitate their adaptability, particularly regarding inclusion of domestic, migrant, and informal workers.

The moderator asked Ms van Gennip and Mr Yadav to highlight how governments could effectively integrate policies on income distribution and social inclusion, and to explain the possible mutually reinforcing synergies that existed between those two areas that could spur the achievement of a more equitable and inclusive society.

Ms van Gennip said the first step to be taken was to acknowledge the collective need for more inclusive societies. She emphasized the importance of transitioning structural work into fixed contracts both within the Netherlands and abroad. Policies in Western countries needed to be adapted to the changing nature of work, since workers were now not normally working for the same employer on fixed contracts permanently. Such an adjustment was crucial to achieve social inclusion and income redistribution, as it would make individuals eligible for benefits and minimum wage. The Netherlands intended to abolish zero-hours contracts that had led to uncertainty regarding working hours and wages.

Lifelong learning should be guaranteed so that people would be equipped to face future challenges, including the need for digital skills and mid-career changes. As people worked longer and potentially transitioned to different careers, digital capabilities were essential, including to prevent a digital divide that would add to the divide between contract types. Minimum wages, and particularly the ratio between CEO pay and workers' pay, were equally important factors that required attention, as well as addressing the impact of climate change and digital transformation on those who were already vulnerable, ensuring that they did not bear the greatest burden. To progress on these fronts, a healthy economy and businesses were needed.

Mr Yadav insisted on the need for integrated strategies and structural transformations to promote transitions to formality, owing to the complexity and diversity of situations in the informal economy and its associated economic, political, social, and labour market challenges. He explained that such transitions, in the context of tripartism, were strategic interventions for governments as well as for industries depending on informal economy outputs and for workers, in their search for better wages and better working conditions. Secondly, Mr Yadav stated that poverty was the biggest challenge to address when it came to the informal economy. Citing his country as an example, he referred to the imposition of a 1 per cent tax on companies in the Indian construction sector, which was reinvested into a pension and welfare fund for informal construction workers.

The moderator invited Ms Byanyima and Mr Ladd to reflect on the possible role that the United Nations and other international organizations could play to support such policies, and to highlight possible good practices and priority steps that should be taken.

Ms Byanyima said that much still needed to happen at both global and national levels and that the United Nations could facilitate such change. The United Nations could help all nations to agree to minimum and living wages and to set fair taxation, particularly corporate taxation. The United Nations could further be instrumental in supporting a global reform of the management of intellectual property to ensure the dissemination of life-saving know-how. She emphasized that social protection and health benefits should be globally regulated, and that multilateral cooperation could help establish rules to regulate the global economy.

Mr Ladd said the United Nations provided a unique meeting place for governments to agree on minimum standards, and to generate knowledge to support policy development to solve difficult problems. The UNRISD, for example, would partner with the Club of Madrid to research the role of progressive fiscal policies in both mobilizing national resources and in providing resources for redistribution and reinvestment policies. The United Nation's work

nonetheless needed to be supported by governments, which were responsible for implementing the recommended appropriate policies through country-specific approaches.

The moderator invited Ms van Gennip, Mr Yadav, Mr Araya Chaves and Mr Dimitrov to comment on the role that coordinated policies on social dialogue could play to contribute to social justice, and to emphasize the role that governments, employers and workers and their representative organizations could assume in this process.

Mr Araya Chaves said governments had difficulties in ensuring the compliance of informal enterprises with labour standards, which in some countries represented up to 90 per cent of total enterprises. Employers were thus convinced that social dialogue was fundamental in order to reach informal enterprises. Costa Rica had been one of the first countries where the three constituents had designed, through social dialogue, a formalization strategy in line with the Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy Recommendation, 2015 (No. 204) to support the formalization of enterprises, increase compliance with laws and to increase public revenues. He stressed that businesses were all committed to supporting informal enterprises to formalize and to create more decent jobs.

Mr Dimitrov commented on the previous question on the role of the UN system and emphasized that its role was that of supporting the achievement of social justice, noting the importance of the Global Coalition for Social Justice. He stressed the need for increased coherence among the members of the multilateral system, including international finance institutions, to ensure the presence of international labour standards in every agenda. He welcomed that the ILO was taking action to regulate platform work, while urging that standards should be set also on algorithmic management of workers to mitigate its negative impact on them.

Ms van Gennip noted that the European Council had recently reached Council Conclusions on platform work. She further stressed that tripartite social dialogue was crucially important, although its impact relied on the time stakeholders invested in the dialogue. Stakeholders should first identify the common goal to be reached and ensure the presence of all concerned parties at the discussion table. Trade unions, in her view, were not always representative of all workers, looking for example at independent, informal and migrant workers. Civil society organizations were also important voices that needed to be heard.

Mr Yadav stressed that, to achieve formalization, all workers should be covered by labour and social protection measures. Only then could all workers live in dignity, and it was the responsibility of tripartism to achieve this goal.

Mr Dimitrov said that a new social contract was needed. This could ensure all workers were covered by three important measures: a universal labour guarantee, including for informal economy workers, social protection for all and reducing inequalities.

The moderator thanked the panellists for their contributions and emphasized that the world would benefit from a Coalition which improved coordination and policy coherence to increase the scale and impact of actions towards social justice across the multilateral system. As the ILO Director-General had proposed to forge a Global Coalition for Social Justice, which was timely and in line with the UN Secretary-General's call for a new social contract, the moderator asked the panellists to indicate what they believed was missing in the quest for social justice, and what they were committed to do.

Ms Byanyima said that political leadership was missing at global and national levels. Leaders needed to take action to regulate the economy and the role of corporations and

restore workers' power, and to come together to agree on rules for sharing global public goods. Alternative business models should be promoted.

Mr Ladd said that the UNRISD would be glad to join the Coalition. He emphasized the need for a new eco-social contract, based on a common political vision. Leadership was also needed to fully realize the potential of the digital transformation to contribute to humanity, but within clear ecological boundaries.

Mr Araya Chaves emphasized the need to fight informality and to focus on the role MSMEs could play as champions of social justice due to their role in productivity. He stressed that it was crucial to include informal MSMEs in the discussions to fully achieve social justice. People should be placed at the centre of public policies. He emphasized that employers were committed to relying on social dialogue.

Ms van Gennip said the Netherlands had made a commitment to support the Director-General and the Global Coalition, and to work together on a shared vision based on decent work and social justice. The Netherlands was committed to making the ILO stronger so that it could work on the issues that were discussed during the panel. She noted that nothing was missing: all the pieces of the puzzle were there, all the necessary actors at the table; they now needed to deliver.

Mr Yadav said the Government of India was committed to improving the lives of informal workers, including by researching the occupational diseases faced by them in order to better provide health and social security. The Government of India was committed to providing targeted and time-bound delivery of welfare schemes to informal workers through technological interventions. He emphasized that the ILO played an important role for tripartite discussion, but that action-oriented programmes are missing.

Mr Dimitrov said change, and a new social contract, was needed. Workers were committed to forging this new social contract to restore confidence among workers and to take action across all policy areas. Global action should be framed by global and national policies, agreed upon through tripartite dialogue. He further emphasized that established workers' and employers' organizations should be the ones representing all workers and employers.

The moderator thanked the panellists for their contributions and highlighted the main messages that resulted from the exchanges. The moderator said that addressing inequalities in all its forms was fundamental to advance social justice, and that the latter could not exist without social inclusion and without addressing informality.

(The Conference adjourned at 1 p.m.)

Wednesday, 14 June 2023, 2.10 p.m.

President: Mr bin Samikh Al Marri

The President

It is a great honour to declare open this second sitting of the World of Work Summit of the 111th Session of the International Labour Conference, the theme of which is "Social justice for all".

This afternoon, we are honoured to welcome a further nine high-level guests. We shall also hold the second of our four high-level panel discussions.

High-level statements

Mr Ramaphosa

President of South Africa

It is indeed a great honour to have an opportunity to address this esteemed World of Work Summit. As South Africa, we carry a profound sense of responsibility, as well as a deep commitment to the advancement of social justice, given our history. This commitment to social justice stands at the centre of our democratic constitutional order and has guided us over the last three decades as we have sought to build a new nation from the ashes of an oppressive apartheid system. As we gather here, we are reminded of the importance of collaboration as we work to address the challenges facing our global society.

The International Labour Organization was founded on the principle that universal and lasting peace can only be achieved through social justice. And yet, despite our collective efforts, progress towards achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals has been slow and uneven. The COVID-19 pandemic, the economic shocks that many countries continue to face, the rising costs of living and environmental change have exacerbated poverty, inequality and social fractures in many countries. We need urgent access and action to measures that will enable us to address these challenges. We are therefore encouraged by the call of the UN Secretary-General for a new social compact to give effect to our shared responsibility to create a more just and equitable society. We are encouraged by, and indeed support, the proposed Global Coalition for Social Justice, which in many ways aligns with the vision of the UN Secretary-General and seeks to promote decent work while advancing the Sustainable Development Goals.

As leaders we must prioritize the actions that we need to take to advance social justice. Through this summit, we should generate renewed momentum towards a more sustainable and equitable world. South Africa was honoured to participate in the ILO Global Commission on the Future of Work. The Commission's report highlighted the transformative forces shaping the world of work, and the need for decisive action to harness the opportunities that these forces present. We fully support the report's human-centred agenda for the future of work and its recommendations, such as increasing investment in peoples' capabilities and in decent and sustainable work. We firmly believe that social justice is a fundamental pillar of sustainable development. That means we must remove the structural barriers that hamper equal access to opportunities for all. We must prioritize the removal of discrimination based on gender, age, race, migration status and other grounds. Institutions must deliberately work to dismantle these barriers, while actors in society should work towards eliminating discrimination of any sort and ensuring equal treatment for all. We must create platforms for open and inclusive discussion, where all stakeholders can contribute their perspectives. Social dialogue allows us to harness our collective wisdom and find solutions that reflect the needs and aspirations of all segments of society. Income inequality is another major problem that must be addressed. Wage policies and collective bargaining have a vital role in reducing income inequalities and ensuring a just distribution of economic progress. We must focus on increasing the labour earnings of non-wage earners, who often find themselves at the lower end of income distribution. Social partners all have a role to play in narrowing income gaps and promoting fair and equitable societies. Social partners also need to collaborate to foster productivity and ensure that its gains are shared fairly by all. By narrowing productivity gaps across countries, across industries and enterprises, we contribute to a more equitable distribution of wealth and opportunities. At the same time, we must extend social protection to workers in the informal economy. By aligning education and skills development with the demands of the job market,

we can enhance productivity. Trade and investment arrangements should also incorporate a social dimension that respects human rights. It is important that we pursue transitions to low carbon economies in a just and inclusive manner. As we develop opportunities in emerging sectors, that are given rise to by our migration or transition to low carbon economies, we need to focus on digital industries and the green economy. We must ensure that these jobs that are created are decent and provide comprehensive social protection.

As leaders we must demonstrate our commitment to social justice. At a time of great uncertainty, and amid heightened geopolitical contestation, we need to work together to safeguard the mandate and the critical work of institutions like the International Labour Organization. We should not allow these institutions to be diverted from the path of social justice by partisan interests. The Global Coalition for Social Justice is a significant step towards collective action. It will provide a platform for sharing experiences, learning from each other's successes and challenges. It is important that we should use this moment to reaffirm our commitment to social justice, and redouble our efforts to build a more equitable, as well as an inclusive world.

Let us use this World of Work Summit as a catalyst for change. I urge all Member States, all organizations and stakeholders, to join forces to contribute to the realization of the proposed Global Coalition for Social Justice. Together, I do believe that we can create a world where every individual, regardless of their background or circumstances, has equal access to opportunities, has equal access to rights and a decent quality of life. If we can do so without leaving anyone behind, we will have a more just, more equal and fairer world. May this summit be a catalyst for the fundamental global change that we seek towards the attainment of social justice for all.

Mr Vella President of Malta

I am pleased to join you in Geneva today at the World of Work Summit.

I thank Gilbert F. Houngbo, Director-General of the International Labour Organization, for his relentless efforts in leading the ILO to enhance protection for workers worldwide. The past years have presented each and every one of us with major challenges, not least in the employment and labour sectors. The COVID-19 pandemic, economic uncertainty, rollbacks of social advancement and the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine have all left indelible marks on our societies and on our peoples. These ongoing events have prompted calls to not only build back, but also to build back better.

Recovering, Rebuilding and Revitalizing are the "three Rs" that have become essential components of the global response to devising such a strategy.

This challenging international climate does not seem to be ending in the immediate term. The report by the ILO Director-General, presented at the International Labour Conference, is indeed alarming.

A staggering 658 million people are living in and enduring extreme poverty – the highest ever recorded figure. The World Bank has observed an increase in the poverty index over the past three years. This means that achieving the goal of bringing the global absolute poverty rate to below 3 per cent by 2030 appears to be unfortunately out of reach unless we embark on swift, significant and targeted policy measures. For this reason, our approach should be based on the principle of "leaving no one behind" and "building back better".

Echoing the words of the UN Secretary-General, it is imperative that we make significant and concerted effort at the highest political level to regain momentum and effectively accomplish the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (the 2030 Agenda) within this critical decade of action and delivery. We believe that the 2030 Agenda, which enjoys universal support, should be the primary road for all States.

The ILO is a unique international organization in which Governments, employers and workers, through their respective representatives, sit around the same table as equal partners. The ILO therefore has a unique contribution to make to the fulfilment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

This Organization's founding Constitution recognized long ago that universal and lasting peace can be established only if it is based upon social justice and that, thus, all human beings have the right to pursue both their material well-being and their spiritual development in conditions of freedom and dignity, of economic security and equal opportunity.

These principles have been reaffirmed numerous times, including in the ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work, 2019.

To accomplish these noble aims, we must adopt a proactive rather than reactive approach; we have to foster creativity and adopt a holistic and forward-looking agenda that seeks to increase momentum to improve the lives of millions. We owe it to our people to embrace these transformations and face any challenges that come along the way.

The ILO's core activities should serve as a guiding principle in our collective efforts to build a world where individuals have access to fair opportunities, to dignified work and to a life of dignity.

In today's world, it is more crucial than ever to shoulder the responsibility of demonstrating the value of all individuals within our communities regardless of age, race, creed, colour, language, nationality, disability, sex, sexual orientation or gender identity; diversity should be embraced and celebrated as a source of enrichment of society.

Only by acknowledging diversity can we actively take a stand for acceptance, inclusion and empowerment of all segments of society. This also means that we have to make every effort to ensure the promotion and protection of human rights for all and to create the necessary conditions in our domestic environment, including legislative action, that allow everyone to fulfil their full potential.

We cannot truly appreciate the immense benefits a diverse society brings unless we recognize and acknowledge that it is precisely this diversity that our communities need to thrive and to succeed.

In terms of social cohesion, governments play a vital role by recognizing that it is crucial for continued economic growth and the betterment of their respective countries. Each of the tripartite stakeholders has an essential role to play when it comes to social cohesion. Governments have the responsibility to ensure that legislative and social protections are effective, operational and up to date. Employers have the responsibility to ensure that they provide decent work and salaries. Employees have a right to be assured that their rights are protected and respected.

Autonomy and empowerment are values that Maltese legislation and practice seek to incorporate into mainstream society, while ensuring appropriate support to persons who may find themselves in more vulnerable situations.

Women continue to play a significant role in society, contributing to communities and increasingly participating in the workforce in recent decades. Yet, their contribution has often been undervalued, underestimated and, at times, completely unrecognized. I firmly believe that the momentum gained to overcome the gender pay gap and to secure women's rights should serve as a powerful inspiration for leaders to review the pace of progress and to ensure that governments make steadfast commitments to achieving gender equality within our lifetime.

At the national level, Malta has been actively promoting various initiatives which underscore our commitment to the promotion of equal opportunities for all, including gender equality. These initiatives have led to a notable increase in women's participation in the labour market in my country. In Malta, the participatory rate of women in the workforce has risen strongly since 2005, reaching 74.1 per cent in 2022 and exceeding the euro area average of 64 per cent. The Government has undertaken a number of initiatives to encourage women to either remain in or return to the labour force. These initiatives tackle two main aspects: those that directly enhance disposable income, such as the introduction of tax credits, a new parent tax band computation, or in work benefits and enhanced maternity benefits.

The second set of measures are those that impact disposable income indirectly, such as increasing maternity and paternity leave, the introduction of partial payment for parental leave, free childcare services, afternoon school programmes and other schemes to facilitate the return of women to work.

Together these initiatives aim to improve the financial circumstances of women and their families, promote gender equality in the labour market and enable women to fully participate in the economy.

Around 15 years ago, the ILO unanimously adopted the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization, a landmark declaration which serves as a powerful reaffirmation of the values the Organization is committed to uphold. It reflects the wide consensus on the need for a strong social dimension in globalization to achieve improved and fair outcomes for all. Moreover, it acts as a guiding compass for promoting fair globalization based on decent work as well as a practical tool to accelerate progress in implementing the Decent Work Agenda at country level.

Malta's long-standing commitment to advance dialogue within international forums towards accessible and high-quality education and employment opportunities for all reaffirms its stance to support the creation of policies for an actively engaged society that leaves nobody behind. Indeed, Malta's performance on decent work and economic growth (Goal 8) and on macroeconomic stability (Goal 16) have also been positively noted within international circles.

In this regard, fostering equitable and open-ended inclusive learning pathways, supporting lifelong learning for all and investing in human capital through the emergence of a skilled labour market are three important pillars to strengthen economic progress which takes into account our social well-being and equal rights for all.

Malta holds a strong track record in the field of employment. The overall positive labour market outlook is a direct result of an integrated "make work pay" reform package aimed at investing in human capital through a number of targeted policies and measures to reach those groups identified as being most at risk of labour market alienation.

In the years prior to the pandemic, Malta's economic performance was characterized by continued growth. The exponential economic growth which Malta experienced in the last years was connected to sustained employment. In view of the pandemic and the sudden economic

turbulence brought upon labour markets and economic systems, the Government of Malta launched a holistic strategy to address the impact of the pandemic, with the objective of protecting jobs and mitigating unemployment.

This resulted in around 25,500 jobs out of a workforce of around 250,000 being saved by protecting many businesses from closing their doors. This was all done through constant consultation between social partners, resulting in expedited action being taken on the ground, based on the situation as it evolved.

As we look ahead, Malta will continue to work on elements from the ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work, in particular by taking a human-centred approach to reforms related to the world of work. The Government of Malta is also committed to further strengthening the distribution policies enacted in recent years, with the objective of strengthening social inclusion, promoting social mobility and reducing poverty.

Our priority for the upcoming period is to continue building on what has been achieved so far, by further enhancing labour market access for all groups through continued upskilling and labour market incentives and by facilitating the transition towards labour market participation.

At the international level, we have come to realize that due to our interconnectedness, we are only as strong as our weakest link. Only by working together and in solidarity with each other can we successfully confront emerging challenges. Only together can we build resilience against future pandemics and other globally disruptive events. Multilateralism is not an option, it is a necessity, as we strive to build back better, for a more equal, more resilient and more sustainable world.

Only through collective action can we truly recover together. For this reason, the ILO's mandate has become more relevant than ever and the launch of the Global Coalition for Social Justice this year cannot be any more timely.

I firmly believe that this Coalition would be instrumental in addressing and preventing inequalities. It will be vital in ensuring that social justice is prioritized in national and global policymaking. Our commitment lies in striving to provide the best for our peoples in order to ensure a higher quality of life and a brighter future. Sustainable development is all about current and future generations and not solely limited to specific economic sectors or social strata.

Being part of our generation implies that we are all involved and hence we are all expected to contribute, to define our own future and to leave a better world for generations to come.

Mr Touadéra
President of the Central African Republic
(Original French)

The Central African Republic is honoured to take the floor at the World of Work Summit: Social justice for all, which is being held as part of the 111th Session of the International Labour Conference in this beautiful and legendary city of Geneva.

I would like to thank the Government and people of Switzerland for their warm welcome and for the excellent arrangements that have been made to ensure the success of our Summit. I would also like to thank the Director-General of the ILO for his exemplary leadership and for the welcome initiative of convening this Summit and inviting my country, the Central African Republic, to attend. In so doing, he has made it possible for stakeholders from all over the

world to discuss the major obstacles to achieving social justice and to make a firm commitment to take more powerful, coordinated and consistent action in support of this welcome international initiative.

I would like to reiterate the full support of the Central African Republic for the Director-General of the ILO in his mission to promote social justice and strengthen tripartism.

The desire for social justice and decent work manifests itself in similar ways in all parts of the world, through a set of shared values such as solidarity, equality and justice, the ultimate aim of which is to guarantee human dignity.

Injustice, violations of universally recognized rights, lack of trust and failure to honour commitments, as well as geopolitical and geostrategic tensions, are the breeding ground for conflicts all over the world. These conflicts, whose tragic effects have been exacerbated by COVID-19 and climate change, have aggravated social inequalities and weakened institutions designed to protect workers and close the social divide. This is why the Central African Republic welcomes the initiative of the Global Coalition for Social Justice, based on the principles and values of equal rights for all and for all peoples and the opportunity for all human beings, without discrimination, to enjoy economic and social progress.

When I talk about social justice, I am thinking primarily of Africa. Despite the enormous challenges it faces, Africa also holds the key to solutions because it is brimming with enormous economic potential, a dynamic workforce and an increasingly creative, innovative and enterprising population of young people. In addition to its estimated 1.3 billion people, 60 per cent of whom are under 25 years of age and capable of sustaining its economic growth, Africa has immense natural resources that make it the continent of the future.

This Summit is an opportunity for us to reaffirm our shared responsibility to create the optimal conditions for young people to unleash their genius, express their talent, nurture their inspiration and give free rein to their creative energies by harnessing the benefits of digital technology.

Allow me to say a few words about my country, the Central African Republic, where the fight against vulnerability, job insecurity and the underemployment of young people and women is a concern of the Government.

At a strategic level, having realized what was at stake, the Government – with the support of its development partners – drafted a National Recovery and Peacebuilding Plan for 2017–23. This plan has facilitated the socio-economic stabilization of our country and the construction or rehabilitation of basic social infrastructure.

On the social front, thanks to constructive social dialogue, the Government and employers' and workers' organizations have drawn up, with ILO support, a National Covenant for Social Stability and Economic Recovery for a period of three years. This social model made it possible to obtain a three-year social truce, giving the Government the opportunity to initiate a range of socio-economic measures and to implement innovative projects in the fields of work, employment, social protection and vocational training.

With regard to reforms, bearing in mind that progress towards the objectives of decent work requires the contribution of all political, economic and social stakeholders, we organized a national dialogue in March 2022 to further cement the achievements of national reconciliation. The key recommendations arising from this dialogue, which are linked to the Decent Work Agenda, are included in the Government's programme, which is periodically reviewed.

With a view to providing legal certainty for business so as to create more wealth and jobs, we have set up the Joint Committee for Improving the Business Climate, a framework for exchanging views and promoting dialogue between the public and private sectors.

After road-testing the Labour Code to determine its strengths and weaknesses, the Government and the social partners revised it. It contains a host of innovations, notably the incorporation of measures relating to violence and harassment in the workplace, which is the subject of the ILO's Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190), which our country ratified on 1 September 2021, depositing the instrument of ratification with the Director-General of the ILO at the 110th Session of the Conference.

The text also addresses the issues of migrant workers, domestic workers, teleworking, flexibility in the procedure for settling labour disputes and raising the retirement age from 60 to 62 years. The Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182), has also been transposed into the Child Protection Code.

With a view to providing the country with an inclusive social protection system that is tailored to the national context, we have relaunched the process of updating the National Social Protection Policy, the strategic framework for all action to combat poverty and social exclusion. Socio-economic reintegration is one of the major pillars of the social progress we want for our country. To this end, a number of human capital training programmes and projects have been launched, helping to lift a number of school drop-outs out of job insecurity.

We share the same ambition: bringing about social justice as a guarantee of decent work, in a spirit of complementarity and solidarity, with a view to transforming our world of work into a safe, healthy and profitable place for all.

The aim of our partnership is to create links, not dependencies; solid links to meet the common challenges facing our world. If each of us recognizes his or her responsibility and commits to it, our world of work will become better than ever and the desire for economic growth, combined with social progress, will no longer be a hollow promise.

Sheikh Hasina
Prime Minister of Bangladesh
(Original Bengali)

I offer my sincere thanks to the Director-General of the ILO for inviting me to this Summit. We need to develop a new social contract for our world, to address the multidimensional challenges of the present century. The main objective of this social contract would be to ensure social justice for all, for the purpose of achieving sustainable development.

The 1971 Declaration of Independence, enshrined in the Constitution of Bangladesh, upheld equality, human dignity and social justice as the overarching goals. In the same spirit, the Father of our Nation, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, identified Bengali nationalism, democracy, socialism and secularism as the fundamental principles of a state policy for guiding the way towards building the "Golden Bengal" of his dreams. Under Bangabandhu's leadership, and within a few months of gaining independence, Bangladesh became an ILO Member in June 1972 and ratified several ILO Conventions in a single day. Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur strongly believed that lasting peace would not be achieved without ensuring justice across society. During his three and a half years in office, while rebuilding our war-ravaged Bangladesh, he underscored the importance of preserving the dignity and changing the lot of our peasants, labourers and hardworking people.

Following Bangabandhu's ideals, we continued to work for the development of our suffering, toiling masses. One of our foremost priorities is to create massive employment in the farming and non-agricultural sectors, while protecting the rights of workers and ensuring decent working conditions in all spheres of our economy. My Government has thus gained popular acceptance as one that is agriculture, labour and business friendly.

Bangladesh today is resolutely moving towards building a just, inclusive and resilient society with the ability to deal with the various natural and human-made disasters of the past. During the COVID-19 pandemic, our Government allocated US\$588 million for regular salary payments to workers in export-orientated industries, around US\$300 million for distributing food, free of charge, to underprivileged families and approximately US\$156 million for distribution among 5 million poor families. We are supplying essential food items at subsidized prices to 10 million low-income families to help manage the inflationary pressures in the wake of the Ukraine war.

We have further enhanced social safety net coverage for indigent freedom fighters, elderly persons, widows and abandoned women, persons with disabilities and other marginalized groups of people. A total of 27 million people are receiving direct cash transfers under 119 social protection schemes. Furthermore, 16.7 per cent of the budget recently announced for the 2023/24 fiscal year has been earmarked for social security in general.

Under my social housing programme, the Ashrayan Project, we have so far provided safe and sustainable housing for 5 million people, or 550,000 homeless and landless families, without any cost to them. We are providing 30 essential medicines and insulin free of charge, alongside maternal and child healthcare, through 18,000 community clinics and rural healthcare centres.

We place emphasis on education. We continue to offer stipends at the primary and secondary levels, provide free education for girls up to higher secondary level and distribute free textbooks at the primary and secondary levels. From next month, we have taken initiatives to provide nutritious food among all schoolchildren. This year, for the first time, we have taken steps to introduce a universal pension scheme on a pilot basis.

We attained all the Millennium Development Goal targets. We are taking multipronged initiatives to achieve the Sustainable Development Goal targets. We shall conclusively graduate out of the United Nations "least developed countries" category by 2026. Accordingly, we are implementing a road map on the labour sector for the 2021–26 period.

Bangladesh is a signatory to eight of the ten fundamental ILO Conventions on labour rights protection. We are actively considering the ratification of the two new fundamental ILO Conventions concerning occupational safety and health. It is a matter of great regret that certain developed countries, which are otherwise vocal about labour rights, have not, themselves, ratified most of the fundamental ILO Conventions. For instance, a major industrialized country has signed only two fundamental Conventions.

Bangladesh has recently signed the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138). We have declared eight hazardous sectors to be free of child labour. Furthermore, in the 2023/24 fiscal year, a programme is under way to rehabilitate 100,000 children engaged in hazardous work by providing them with non-formal and technical education. I want the country to be free from the scourge of child labour for the sake of a healthy and secure future generation.

We have followed the ILO's recommendations to amend the Bangladesh Labour Act of 2006 on two occasions, in 2013 and 2018. Moreover, amendments have been made to the Bangladesh Labour Rules of 2015. We are working on further amendments to the Labour Act,

to be made this year. We have already given approval for the Labour Act to be applicable in the special economic zones.

Alongside the Labour Appellate Tribunal and seven labour courts, six additional labour courts have been set up by our present Government. In addition, alternative dispute resolution mechanisms are being institutionalized with the participation of the social partners. Furthermore, an industrial police unit has been formed for promoting sound industrial relations.

The safety and the working environment of all ready-made garment factories in the country have been assessed and issues in the export-orientated ones have been remedied accordingly. More than half of the world's top 100 environment-friendly garment factories are now located in Bangladesh. To take forward this achievement, we have formulated a Green Factory Award policy. I hope that our international buyers will encourage such eco-friendly initiatives by paying fair prices for the products.

We are setting up a national research and training institute on occupational safety and health. Specialized doctors are providing regular medical services to workers through 32 labour welfare centres.

We have increased the number of labour inspectors to 711 to ensure safety and an enabling environment at workplaces. A web-based labour inspection management application has been launched with the ILO's technical assistance. A tripartite consultative council comprising representatives of workers, employers and the Government continues to monitor and advance the overall labour situation in the country. A separate council has been constituted for the apparel industry.

It was our Government that increased the minimum wage for garment workers from 1,600 to 8,000 taka. I have taken steps to increase the wage of the workers every time I have come to power. We have plans to formulate a policy framework to determine minimum wages through collective bargaining in different industrial sectors.

A trade union registration system has been made available online. The rate of trade union registration has increased from 60 per cent in 2013 to 90 per cent in 2022. The number of trade unions in the garment sector has increased ninefold in the last nine years. Workers and employers are receiving regular training on the trade union registration process. Two separate toll-free helplines have been launched for export processing zones (EPZs) and non-EPZ areas. In addition, databases are being developed containing the particulars of garment factory workers to ensure transparency and discipline in administering their remuneration and other benefits.

A provision has been included in the Labour Act allowing for four months' paid maternity leave and other maternity benefits for female workers. Accommodation facilities have been made available for 1,530 working women at an affordable price in the Narayanganj and Chattogram industrial areas. Furthermore, 6,430 day-care centres have been set up in different factories and establishments. We have called for zero tolerance to all forms of violence or harassment against women in industries and workplaces.

Recently, I have issued directives to explore ways to factor women's unpaid domestic work in our gross domestic product (GDP). Under the aegis of the Bangladesh Labour Welfare Foundation, our workers and their family members receive financial assistance in various sectors. In addition, a central fund has been established under the Ministry of Labour and Employment to support the socio-economic development of workers in export-orientated industries, along with their families.

In 2022, an employment injury insurance scheme was launched on a pilot basis for workers in the garment sector.

Some 2 million young men and women are entering our employment market every year. We are setting up 100 special economic zones across the country with a view to creating 10 million new jobs by 2030. In parallel, initiatives have been taken to establish 39 high-tech parks for investment and employment in the information and communications technology sector. This will create job opportunities for 50,000 young people by 2025 and 200,000 young people by 2030. We have made a commitment to build a “Smart Bangladesh” in line with our Vision 2041 and we are working to that end. For that, a special allocation of US\$9.2 million has been made in the budget of the next fiscal year for the purposes of research and development. Some 80,000 young men and women will be trained in advanced technologies through research and innovation centres under various universities. Furthermore, 650,000 information technology freelancers in the country have been registered with a view to bringing them into the folds of the mainstream economy.

We are providing soft loans, refinancing schemes and free training for the cottage, micro, small and medium-sized industries. These industries have so far been providing working capital to the tune of around US\$6 billion under the Government’s stimulus package to mitigate the adverse impacts of COVID-19. In the current fiscal year, Bangladesh Bank has launched a refinancing scheme worth about US\$2.3 billion for that sector. To date, more than 50,000 entrepreneurs have been given training through the Small and Medium Enterprise Foundation.

We have set a target to increase the enrolment rate in technical education from the current 17 per cent to 30 per cent by 2030. We are setting up specialized institutes for ocean research, aeronautics, biotechnology, nanotechnology and frontier technology, to prepare our youth for the fourth industrial revolution.

We have established the Expatriates’ Welfare Bank to help reduce overall migration costs and provide easy loans to migrant workers. Bangladesh continues to play a leading role in ensuring safe, orderly and regular migration.

We urge the international community to pay heed to climate change impacts on human mobility and the overall work environment.

This Summit, with the launch of the Global Coalition for Social Justice, has created an opportunity to place social justice at the heart of the international development agenda, including the Sustainable Development Goals. Our Government will actively consider joining the Global Coalition through further discussions with our social partners at the national level. In this context, I would like to make five suggestions from our viewpoint. First, it would be advisable to develop this Global Coalition as a consultative or advocacy platform rather than as a norm-setting or negotiating forum. Second, the Global Coalition must guard against weaponizing social justice by one international quarter against the other in the current geopolitical context. Third, the Global Coalition should make sure that, instead of being used as a protectionist tool, social justice should be widely promoted under a rules-based multilateral trading system. Fourth, the Global Coalition needs to ensure broad-based support from the ILO’s own constituents with a view to enlisting the international financial institutions for the purpose of promoting decent work and productive employment. And fifth, the Global Coalition should give attention to making our young people champions of social justice.

We can achieve lasting peace and sustainable development on the foundation of social justice. We must invest in social justice in our efforts to build peaceful, just and inclusive

societies worldwide. In this connection, I want to cite from the only statement given by the Father of our Nation, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, who was also my father, at the United Nations General Assembly in September 1974. I quote: "Peace is an imperative for the survival of mankind; it represents the deepest aspirations of men and women throughout the world. Peace to endure must, however, be peace based upon justice."

My father was the President of Bangladesh; he was brutally assassinated in 1975. My mother, my three younger brothers – the youngest was 10 years old – and the wives of two of my brothers, in total 18 members of my family, were brutally assassinated at the same time. My younger sister and I were abroad, which is why we survived. We had been abroad as refugees for six years. The military dictators used to run our country. When I came back and got the opportunity to form the Government, I started working to change the lot of my country's people. My aim is to change their lot and make Bangladesh a peaceful and developed country. I have dedicated my life to the toiling masses of Bangladesh. I thank you all. *Khoda Hafez. Joy Bangla, Joy Bangabandhu.* May Bangladesh live forever.

Cardinal Parolin Secretary of State of the Holy See

On behalf of His Holiness, Pope Francis, I thank the International Labour Organization for inviting the Holy See to address this World of Work Summit, and extend my cordial greetings to all gathered here today for the official launch of the Global Coalition for Social Justice. This laudable initiative holds a very special interest to the Holy See, since it resonates deeply with the indications, counsels and exhortations by which the Catholic Church encourages her faithful to be responsible citizens. In this regard, it is noteworthy that the term "social justice" was first used in the nineteenth century by Catholic philosophers and theologians, with the intent of overcoming the poor conditions of industrial labourers who languished in inhumane misery.

Although the world has largely changed since then, the Holy See remains committed to supporting any effort to promote social justice, especially in the workplace, by making her means available to the international community and, above all, by sharing the social doctrine of the Church.

More precisely, considering the current geopolitical scenario, characterized by many conflicts and instabilities, the Holy See wishes that the Global Coalition for Social Justice will contribute to furthering the cause of peace. Indeed, the common thread linking the teaching of the Church confirms that commitment to justice must be closely linked with commitment to peace in the modern world. This affirmation is particularly meaningful on the 60th anniversary of the encyclical letter *Pacem in Terris*, by which Pope Saint John XXIII appealed to a peace that is "founded on truth, built up on justice, nurtured and animated by charity, and brought into effect under the auspices of freedom".

Unfortunately, this vision of peace sustained by social justice for all still seems utopian in the face of millions of weak and defenceless beings who are frequently at the mercy of economic interests or indiscriminate exploitation. Let us think of the huge numbers of people who are unemployed or underemployed and the countless multitudes of people suffering from hunger, the low-skilled workers, day labourers, those who work in the informal sector, migrant and refugee workers, those who perform what are commonly referred to as the "3D occupations" – dangerous, dirty and degrading – and the list could go on. These people in vulnerable situations are often exploited and their human dignity is relentlessly trampled upon.

The Church is well aware that, in her dialogue with the State and with society, she does not have a solution for every particular issue, but she remains committed to continually proclaiming the gospel of peace and to cooperating with all national and international authorities in safeguarding this immense universal good, the gift of peace, nurtured by true social justice.

The pandemic shed light on the risks and consequences inherent in a way of life dominated by selfishness and a culture of waste. And it set before us a choice: either to continue on the road we have followed until now, or to set out on a new path. It is therefore crucial that those on the margins of the labour market are always held at the forefront of our hearts and minds during any political discussions on social justice. The reality of their experiences must shape our thoughts and actions. And of even greater importance is their inclusion as full and active participants in any decisions we take to reach a more secure peace within our societies. In practice, the search for social justice demands that we fight against the causes of poverty: inequality and the lack of labour, land and lodging; against those who deny social and labour rights; and against the culture that leads to taking away the dignity of others.

To this end, it is of the utmost importance that we do not succumb to a reductionist conception of social justice that focuses solely on economic and social indicators. Rather, it should rest on the threefold cornerstones of human dignity, solidarity and subsidiarity.

Pope Saint John Paul II said “the guiding principle ... of all of the Church’s social doctrine, is a *correct view of the human person* and of his unique value ... God has imprinted his own image and likeness on man ... conferring upon him an incomparable dignity ... In effect, beyond the rights which man acquires by his own work, there exist rights which do not correspond to any work he performs, but which flow from his essential dignity as a person.” This fundamental cornerstone calls for the protection of the fundamental rights and well-being of all individuals, including their physical, emotional and spiritual needs. It demands that individuals and societies respect the inherent dignity of every person, from conception to natural death, and work towards creating a society that upholds and promotes the dignity of all.

Second, solidarity is the principle that emphasizes the interconnectedness and interdependence of all people. It is the fabric for authentic relationships and calls for a sense of responsibility and care for one another, particularly for those who are marginalized, vulnerable or experiencing injustice. Solidarity urges individuals and communities to recognize that their well-being is intertwined with the well-being of others, and to work towards the common good by promoting justice, equality and human rights for all. It involves actively standing with and advocating for those who face discrimination, poverty, violence or injustice.

The last of the threefold cornerstones is subsidiarity, which is the principle that guides the appropriate distribution of power and decision-making. Subsidiarity encourages individuals and communities to have the freedom to make decisions that affect their lives, while larger institutions and authorities provide support and assistance when necessary. It seeks to prevent the concentration of power and supports the empowerment and participation of individuals and communities in shaping their own destiny.

It is only when these three principles of human dignity, solidarity and subsidiarity work in synergy that the common good prevails and that we can make our world a just and compassionate one, in which social justice can truly flourish for all.

Ms Tomégah-Dogbé
Prime Minister of Togo
(Original French)

I would like to begin by conveying the warm greetings of His Excellency Mr Faure Gnassingbé, President of the Republic of Togo, who welcomes the Director-General's initiative to make social justice one of the priorities of his mandate at the helm of the International Labour Organization. He supports the idea of creating a Global Coalition and is deeply convinced that globalization must be fairer.

We are all, despite ourselves, inhabitants of a world that has dragged us into the globalization of everyone and everything, a world dominated by confrontation between power blocs. At a time when we are facing increasingly complex challenges, with an unprecedented concentration of crises and thus the return of old threats, our people are looking to us with high expectations for social justice. Our responsibility is great. There was the health crisis. The environmental crisis obviously remains, and we are experiencing an explosion of hybrid and asymmetrical security conflicts, resulting in agricultural and food supply crises.

On the economic front, inflation and the scarcity of resources are gradually paralyzing all vital flows. These crises, which are linked to one another, if not one and the same, have a severe impact on the daily lives of our children, women and men. In Africa, as elsewhere, we are seeing escalating inequalities and conflicts, and the weakening of institutions that are supposed to protect rights. This is why we believe that, for our continent, the time has come to enter a new era, based on a firm commitment to fight for social justice. Today, it is not just a question of taking a leap forward, but of entering the era of an Africa that expresses its current importance for a global balance and a socially just present. We can and must be proud of what we have already achieved in terms of development and social justice, despite the complex conditions of dependence, instability and the current conflicts of globalization. We are still paying too high a price for a legitimate and natural emergence. We are paying too high a price for Africans to have a better reality. We are paying too high a price for them to believe in a decent and socially just future and to remain in the land of their birth. So, yes, we want Africa's growth to deliver social justice and for this growth to be inclusive, sustainable, green, resilient and balanced. We want it to make an even greater difference to the daily lives of Africans.

In Togo, under the leadership of His Excellency Mr Faure Gnassingbé, President of the Republic, we remain convinced that solutions to meet our responsibilities are within our reach. As in many countries of the South, it is not a matter of statistics or figures, but a reality on which we try to act every day.

Togo 2025, our government road map, has a single objective: to overcome poverty and make Togo a stable and peaceful country; a modern, ambitious and fair nation, with inclusive and sustainable economic growth. The road map aims to improve living conditions, competitive emergence and strategic sovereignty, and to strengthen the human capital of the Togolese people by speeding up access to essential public services such as education, health, water and social protection and by relying on digital technology. Measures are also being taken to improve healthcare and local care services and to remove financial barriers to healthcare through universal health coverage.

We also need to create even more jobs for our young people and strengthen entrepreneurship and Togo's economic competitiveness by developing the private sector, supporting the productive sector, and improving access to energy, digital technology and

finance. We have therefore focused on access to finance for women, who are generally excluded from the traditional financial system.

Finally, we need to support resilience and ecological and social sustainability and improve our governance and institutional capacities. But all this must be done in strict accordance with the country's continued progress and shared prosperity. Togo must feed the Togolese. Social justice for all requires food security and sovereignty. Access to fertilizers for agricultural producers, for example, is facilitated by a state subsidy, especially as agriculture and the agro-industry remain the driving forces behind the transformation of our economy. Major initiatives are being taken in this key sector to realize our ambitions for a sustainable increase in the incomes of agricultural producers, who are dealing with consequences of climate change. We are therefore focusing on mechanization, irrigation, the development of large areas and the construction of industrial platforms.

Similarly, social justice for all requires energy security and sovereignty for the country and universal access to quality energy. We are trying to accelerate our country's energy coverage by setting up the Tinga Fund to reduce the cost of electricity connections.

Togo needs to provide education for its people. Social justice for all means universal access to education for everyone everywhere. Vulnerable areas, for example, benefit from a national school meals programme that supports parents' efforts to send their children to school. Human capital remains our greatest asset – growing up and flourishing thanks to an excellent and accessible education system that provides access to decent work. With this in mind, we have set up work-linked training institutes for development in key areas such as aquaculture, livestock farming, construction and renewable energies. We are building on our own experience.

We are convinced that our approach must first and foremost be holistic, multidimensional and, above all, concrete if it is to tackle the structural causes of crises and social justice. The universal right to human security must be asserted. Having enough to eat, being able to go to school and prepare for the future, having good healthcare, being able to work and earn a decent living – all these things are the driving forces behind dignity, justice and stability and help to consolidate peace.

But none of this can occur if we cannot guarantee security for our people. There can be no dignity or social justice if we stand by as the terrorist hydra kills our people, destroys our crops and herds, and burns down schools and hospitals. Like any country under attack, Togo must defend itself and help stabilize the region to guarantee human security, which is a prerequisite for dignity and social justice.

We must act collectively here within the International Labour Organization and impose a global vision, because our destinies are linked and this is a collective struggle. In a changing world, the rules of the past must be adapted. For example, artificial intelligence and its uses must be taken into account. While automation fuelled by artificial intelligence can improve efficiency and productivity, it can also lead to job losses. It is therefore important to develop training and retraining policies to ensure a fair transition. At the same time, these technological developments also offer opportunities to promote social justice. For example, the analysis of extensive data can help to identify patterns of discrimination and possible measures to reduce them. Likewise, if we have a better understanding of climates and climate change thanks to projections, we can strengthen our resilience to natural disasters.

If we want to avoid plunging our entire planet into a permanent battle that will have no winners, we must work together to rewrite the rules of the economic game, the geopolitical

game and the environmental game in order to rebuild sustainable, inclusive, fair and safe societies – societies that are quite simply humane – everywhere, and not just in Africa.

Mr Obiang Nguema Mbasogo
President of Equatorial Guinea
(Original Spanish)

On behalf of the delegation of Equatorial Guinea accompanying me, I would like to begin by expressing my gratitude for the invitation to participate in this important World of Work Summit, organized by the International Labour Organization under the heading “Social justice for all”. This relevant and crucial issue requires an examination of the factors underpinning the enjoyment of certain rights, such as the right to work, in order to determine why the conditions for more equitable development and relations have still not been met. Social justice based on equal opportunities and human rights based on equity are essential for each person to reach their maximum potential, for the advancement of humanity and the integrated development of society.

While the ILO’s ongoing efforts for social justice are laudable, we are clearly still far from achieving the lofty goals set for employment, considering that more than 200 million people in the world are still unemployed. Nevertheless, by virtue of its mandate, the ILO must support governments in their efforts to promote labour rights, create decent employment opportunities and improve social protection, which is, in short, the consolidation of social justice worldwide. Accordingly, as part of the coordination and cooperation between Equatorial Guinea and the ILO, we request assistance in the implementation of the Decent Work Country Programme, advice on industrial policy for productive transformation, and capacity-building for staff for the consolidation and optimization of government policies.

For Equatorial Guinea, social justice should consist of creating the conditions for all people to enjoy the same rights and the same opportunities. To this end, the United Nations should establish more efficient and effective mechanisms for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, which implies equal treatment and opportunities. Thus, a binding international Convention on the right to development should be adopted so that developed countries accept that the right to development is a human right. We cannot ignore the crises that have been affecting the global economy in recent years, generating instability and insecurity in many areas, including labour. However, social injustice, the effects of which we wish to mitigate, is the cause of poverty, conflict, migration and discrimination, elements that affect people individually, and responsibility for which lies with many governments, especially those of industrialized countries, because of the policies they apply to developing countries, resulting in problems of varying degrees, such as poverty, discrimination and the migration of young people in search of a better life. A few countries have taken control of the world economy, enriching themselves unfairly at the expense of the impoverished majority and dividing the world into two blocs: rich and poor.

In an increasingly interconnected and globalized world, we note with concern the imposition of political restrictions and barriers that hamper the exercise of social justice and the full integration of certain countries in international trade. This adversely affects job creation and encourages both vertical and horizontal migration. To achieve meaningful social justice, the root causes of these problems must be tackled and the ILO must play a key role in the search for definitive solutions to this worrying situation.

Since it joined the ILO, Equatorial Guinea has remained faithful to the principles and objectives set by this Organization. The International Labour Conference is, therefore, a good

opportunity to reaffirm that my Government is willing to work for equal opportunities and full, freely chosen and productive employment for all through education, lifelong learning and skills development. In line with this objective, we are developing policies in the education sector, especially centres for both formal professional training and vocational and occupational training, thereby facilitating access to education for the less affluent and the elimination of gender discrimination. The goal is to have these centres in all provinces of the country and to meet the demand for skilled labour in our labour market. The ILO's assistance and collaboration are necessary for these objectives to be achieved.

The ILO and Governments must make an active effort to protect employment and workers; the protection of workers must certainly take precedence, but never to the detriment of the protection of employers. Based on this principle, Equatorial Guinea has clearly opted for the protection of both workers and employers through an Employment Protection Forum.

My country fully intends to work towards achieving the goals set for the conclusion of this session of the Conference, joining efforts in the conviction that respect for human rights, international law and the sovereignty of States is the true and only path to peace and social justice.

Mr Katonivere President of Fiji

I commend the ILO for convening this important event on the theme of "Social justice for all". Social justice is a fundamental value or goal of humanity. It means fair treatment of all people in society, including respect for the rights of minorities and the equitable distribution of resources among members of a community or a nation.

Achieving greater social justice in the world requires collective action and solidarity from all stakeholders, including government, workers, employers, civil society and international organizations. We need to address the root causes of inequality, discrimination and exclusion that undermine human dignity and social cohesion. We need to promote decent work, social protection and social dialogue.

Fiji is committed to advancing social justice at home and abroad. We have ratified all eight fundamental Conventions of the ILO and implemented various policies and programmes to protect and empower workers, especially those in vulnerable sectors such as tourism, agriculture and fisheries. We have called for urgent and ambitious action from the international community to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and support the adaption and resilience efforts of small island developing States like ours.

This Summit provides us with an opportunity to inform the international community that, in March of this year, the Fijian Government, through its Cabinet, took an important step in announcing Fiji's support for the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. We join the international community in affirming the fullest expression of Indigenous Peoples' aspirations. Fiji's support for the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is complementary to its commitment to the ILO's Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169), which Fiji ratified in 1998. As a nation, we will continue to ensure that the rights of Indigenous Peoples are safeguarded and protected.

As a regional hub in the Pacific, Fiji is facing complex migration challenges that have a direct impact on our society and economy. According to the *Migration in the Republic of Fiji: A Country Profile 2020*, Fiji has experienced mass migration of its population due to political upheaval in the past, and continues to have significant rates of emigration, especially among

skilled workers. At the same time, Fiji is a destination country for migrants from other Pacific islands and beyond, who contribute to our labour market and cultural diversity.

These migration dynamics pose both opportunities and challenges for Fiji's social justice agenda. On one hand, migration can enhance human development, social mobility and cultural exchange. On the other, it can create social tensions, inequalities and vulnerabilities among different groups. Therefore, we need to adopt a holistic and human rights-based approach to governance that ensures the well-being and integration of all migrants.

One of the key challenges that we face as a country is the increase in our ageing population, which has implications for our social protection system, healthcare services and intergenerational solidarity. To address this, a stronger social protection system will ensure adequate income security and healthcare. We also need to enable older persons to participate fully in society as productive workers, volunteers, caregivers or mentors.

Another challenge we face as a country is the economic disruption caused by external shocks such as natural disasters, pandemics or global market fluctuations. These shocks can have devastating effects on our livelihoods, especially for those who depend on sectors such as tourism or agriculture. To overcome this challenge, we need to diversify the economy and build resilience against future shocks. We need to invest in sectors that have high potential for growth and innovation, such as information and communications technology, renewable energy and creative industries. We also need to enhance our digital connectivity and infrastructure so they can facilitate access to information, education and services for our people, especially those in remote or rural areas. And we need to strengthen our social safety net and emergency response mechanisms that can provide timely and adequate assistance to those in need.

A further challenge that we face as a country is a dependence on imports. For many of our essential goods and services, Fiji is a net importer, which exposes us to price volatility and supply chain disruptions. To address this challenge, we have to boost our local production and consumption of goods and services that are vital for our well-being and development. We need to support our farmers, fisherfolk and foresters to increase productivity, quality and value addition. We have to encourage our entrepreneurs and innovators to create new products and services that meet the needs and preferences of our consumers, and we need to educate our citizens and raise awareness of the benefits of buying and using locally made goods and services.

All these goals cannot be achieved by working alone. We need to establish creative partnerships with various actors. These are the private sector, civil society, academia, media and the diaspora. We should leverage their expertise, resources and networks to support our social justice agenda. We also need to cooperate with our regional and international partners, such as the ILO and other United Nations agencies, to share best practices, learn from each other's experiences and coordinate our actions. We must embrace the spirit of multilateralism and solidarity that underpins the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

As we recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, which has exposed and exacerbated the existing gaps and challenges in our society, we have a unique opportunity to build back better with social justice at the core of our agenda. We cannot afford to leave anyone behind or to repeat the mistakes of the past. We must seize this moment to create a more fair, inclusive and sustainable world for ourselves and future generations.

Ms Bouden Romdhane
Head of the Government of Tunisia
(Original Arabic)

At the outset, I would like to say how proud I am to participate in the World of Work Summit: Social Justice for All, which represents a prime opportunity for the various parties to come together for dialogue and consultation on vital issues of common concern.

I also wish to take this opportunity to congratulate Mr Gilbert F. Houngbo for taking office as the 11th Director-General of the International Labour Office. He is the first African to assume this position and will, without doubt, make a distinguished contribution to the achievement of the Organization's objectives and to strengthening its course, in view of his activities at the global level as well as in his country.

The choice of social justice for all as the theme of this session is an excellent one that is consistent with our established national values and our representation of the concept of social justice as a deep and universal human value that stands as the triumphant ally of people in the fight against poverty, discrimination, marginalization, exploitation and inequality.

I would also like on this occasion to commend the ILO for its tireless efforts in pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goals by making social justice a priority issue on the global agenda as part of a comprehensive approach in which human beings are the means and the end of every development process.

In this context I would like to mention the initiative of the Director-General of the ILO to form a Global Coalition for Social Justice, which elevates social justice to the rank of global policies. This Coalition would spur us all on to find within ourselves the ability to confront the multiple challenges facing the world of work.

We are proud to participate in the activities of this summit. We recall the cries uttered by young Tunisians from 17 December 2010, calling for work, freedom and dignity, embodying our people's demands for social justice, which can only be based on the actual substance of the various individual and collective freedoms.

Those slogans were but an expression of a genuine Tunisian heritage. Since the first years of independence, the State has worked actively for social justice. It has mobilized and invested, despite the scarcity of resources, in education, health and social welfare and various other services that build people, citizens, up and give them dignity in their country thanks to the services provided by the social elevator.

Our reformist approach was based on the establishment of a truly viable democracy, on the restoration of the true pulse of the 17 December revolution, which called for social justice and the provision of decent livelihoods for the various segments of our society that have long suffered injustice, poverty, marginalization and inequality.

Tunisia today believes that justice, dignity and human freedom are to be achieved as a matter of priority and, more than ever before, upholds fundamental rights and principles at work by enshrining them in law and in practice as an embodiment of the concept of the rule of law. This approach was embodied in the Constitution of 25 July 2022, which expressly stipulates these rights and principles in addition to the right to decent work, a fair wage, healthcare and social coverage.

We believe that social justice means seeking to eliminate the various causes of exclusion and marginalization and dealing with the problems of integration and integration projects,

taking an approach that addresses the causes of the disease rather than merely relieving the symptoms.

We also believe that social justice means directing deliberate, targeted public policies to accompany vulnerable groups to participate actively in changing their economic and social situation, through economic empowerment programmes for women and through publicly owned enterprises, as productive citizens who contribute to entrepreneurship and wealth creation.

We believe that social justice also means supporting young people – university and training centre graduates, men and women suffering from the scourge of unemployment who are at risk of deviance, radicalization and migration – by providing programmes that guarantee them decent work and set them on the path to entrepreneurship, and on which they can contribute to building a knowledge society.

Social justice extends beyond the borders of a single country to include migrants in search of a livelihood and dignity. For that reason, we devised a strategy at the national level that is fully compliant with international charters and treaties in order to address the problem of migration and to prevent the violation of the rights of migrants, protect them from all forms of economic exploitation and tackle the various human trafficking networks.

In view of the international dimension of this humanitarian dilemma, the President of Tunisia, Mr Kaïs Saïed, has called for an international conference on migration that would bring together the various countries concerned in the north and south of the Mediterranean to come up with common solutions and mobilize capacities and efforts to address the issue.

We believe firmly and deeply that the goals and objectives of social justice can only be achieved at the national level when there is justice in the broader sense at the international level. Disparities in development, imbalance in international relations, lack of agreement and convergence on values, particularly on justice, all stand in the way of achieving aspirations within our countries to achieve a decent life for humanity as whole.

The Tunisian Government has taken numerous economic and social measures with a view to improving the situation of workers in the public and private sectors, by giving effect to agreements concluded between the social partners, thereby contributing to purifying the social climate and achieving decent work. The occupational risks prevention system has also been strengthened and the social security coverage ceiling for all categories of workers has been raised, given that social security coverage is a cornerstone of human dignity.

In this context, I wish to recall the Tunisian experience with regard to social dialogue, which, since the 1930s, has become an established tradition in our country.

It is well known that the current situation in my country is difficult; this reality calls on all of us to enshrine work as a civilizational value and reconsider workers, in thought and deed, by undertaking a series of profound reforms.

Against this background, the Government has prepared a strategic vision based on key priorities, namely, to expedite the implementation of the appropriate economic reforms with a view to ensuring positive and sustainable growth, to maintain public fiscal balance by controlling the budget deficit and indebtedness and to improve the business climate and economic empowerment.

Over the coming two days, with the sponsorship of the President of Tunisia and the support and partnership of the United Nations, the Employment and Youth Fund will be

launched. The Fund will finance and support economic empowerment projects, entrepreneurship and various programmes supporting employment.

As we are dealing with issues of justice at this summit, I should also like to recall the injustice and persecution suffered by our Palestinian brothers and sisters in the occupied Palestinian territories and the oppression that they endure on a daily basis, as well as the brutal escalation that has left many dead, including women, children and the elderly. From this platform, I call for a global human awakening to support this valiant people and assert their unconditional right to live in dignity in their usurped lands.

In conclusion, I wish to reiterate the support of Tunisia for the Director-General of the ILO's initiative to establish a Global Coalition for Social Justice that is comprehensive and equitable, and for the holding of a United Nations Social Summit in 2025 to establish genuine social justice, the burdens and fruits of which are shared by the international community and which provides decent living conditions for future generations, so that no one is left behind.

Human beings are human beings no matter where they are from, and we are on the same journey no matter how our views differ.

Wednesday, 14 June 2023, 3.20 p.m.

President: Mr bin Samikh Al Marri

The President

I now invite you to watch a touching video featuring voices from around the world on what needs to be done to achieve greater social justice. Following the video, we will all have the privilege of attending the second high-level panel discussion on the Summit, on the theme "Fostering equal opportunities and full, freely chosen and productive employment for all through education, lifelong learning and skills development".

For this purpose, it is my pleasure to hand over the chairing of this sitting once again to Ms Nozipho Tshabalala, so that she may moderate the panel discussion as soon as the video is over.

(A video is shown.)

High-level panel discussion on fostering equal opportunities and full, freely chosen and productive employment for all through education, lifelong learning and skills development: Summary

Moderator

- Ms Nozipho Tshabalala

Panellists

- Mr Brendan O'Connor, Minister for Skills and Training, Australia
- Ms Luisa María Alcalde Luján, Secretary of Labour and Social Welfare, Mexico
- Ms Sonya Janahi, Board Member, Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI)
- Ms Zingiswa Losi, President, Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), South Africa
- Mr Yoshiki Takeuchi, Deputy Secretary-General, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)
- Ms Rola Dashti, Executive Secretary, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UNESCWA)
- Mr Nicolas Schmit, Commissioner for Jobs and Social Rights, European Commission

The moderator welcomed all participants and launched the panel discussion by noting that, even where the access to education and training was ensured, many education and training systems were not equipping people with values, knowledge and skills needed to face challenges throughout their lives. She invited Ms Alcalde Luján and Mr O'Connor to reflect on how skills and lifelong learning policies could be better matched to the interests and aspirations of people, the needs of employers, the labour market and to wider social needs, based on their national experience.

Ms Alcalde Luján emphasized that youth unemployment was one of the main challenges of the labour market in Mexico. In the past, many young people were excluded from the labour market due to lack of opportunities. In 2018, there were 7.5 million young women who were not studying or working. Those not in education or employment were often stigmatized. To address the challenge, the Government of Mexico had set up a programme to have young people in businesses, working and acquiring skills through on-the-job training. For one year, they were provided with a grant, which had the same value as the minimum wage, and acquired the skills needed by businesses. In four and a half years, a total of 2.6 million young people had been trained through the programme, of which 60 per cent were women. As a result, youth unemployment in Mexico was the lowest in 20 years.

Mr O'Connor stressed that education and training were critical to ensure a good quality of life and highlighted the responsibility of governments to ensure that public education was provided to all. The need to equip the workforce with the relevant skills and training was not only an economic imperative but was also a social good. If the workforce of a country was more skilled and more knowledgeable, then it could result in a more efficient, productive economy, which led to a better quality of life for its citizens. The Government had convened a Jobs and Skills Summit, bringing together employers and unions, the vocational education and training sector, vocational education and training universities and others, to discuss problems in

responding to skills shortages in the country. He cited two reasons for the acute skills shortages in Australia: the pandemic and the fact that there had not been enough strategic investment in areas of existing and future skills demand. Australia had created a tripartite body “Jobs and Skills Australia” to provide advice to Government and industry on current and future labour market needs to guide investment in education and training. Economic and financial barriers to training for people needed to be removed. For technical training, the entrance fee had been removed. In addition, 180,000 fee-free places had been announced for technical training; so far, 150,000 training positions had been filled, of which 60 per cent had been filled by women, many in areas of demand.

The moderator invited Ms Janahi and Ms Losi to reflect on some of the future-oriented skills that people needed to acquire, and how an enabling environment could be created to foster and accelerate the learning.

Ms Janahi emphasized that today’s education system was lacking the needed brain stimulation to foster the creativity and skills needed to address problems through innovation. The education system globally should be transformed to focus more on technology, green technology, and their dynamic development, and to push new generations to develop necessary skills, creativity, and innovation. Digital literacy, critical thinking and problem-solving skills were some of the skills needed in order for youth and future generations to be resilient and adaptable.

Ms Losi highlighted the importance of core skills, including digital literacy skills, leadership skills, critical thinking, and emotional intelligence. In addition, companies needed to invest in people who were able to use and analyse data to understand the company’s vision. In today’s changing world, the workforce must have both core and technical skills to enable the development of emerging sectors. The need to prepare the workforce for the jobs of the future was evident. Governments, businesses, and social partners needed to work together in understanding the skills needed for an inclusive economy, leaving no one behind.

The moderator highlighted the outcome of the United Nations Transforming Education Summit (2022) which had noted a “triple crisis” of inclusion, quality, and relevance in education. She asked how international and regional collaboration could work to address the crisis.

Mr Takeuchi mentioned the importance of collecting and sharing data in order for States to make informed policy decisions in the education sector. He outlined the benefits of the OECD’s Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), which found students with differing socio-economic backgrounds had different outcomes in their academic careers.

Turning to the same question, **Ms Dashti** pointed to the importance for policymakers to complete skills mapping on both technical and soft skills to optimize job mobility. She noted that it was increasingly important to ensure the teaching of skills over qualifications. The use of digital technology for both young workers and small and medium-sized enterprises were key in aiding transition between jobs, reskilling efforts, and for networking purposes. Ms Dashti outlined how digital technology allowed for improved knowledge sharing, and the importance of “scalability” in the use of digital tools.

Mr Schmit observed that the panellists were from different regions, yet the same challenges and approaches to education policy were being encountered. He underscored the European Union’s commitment to its values on social justice, fairness, and leaving no one behind. He noted societies had a responsibility to adapt to climate change and to recognize the right to lifelong learning. He outlined the European Commission’s strategy on “the year of skills” and noted the opportunity technology and education presented to address, adapt, and

renew skills so that vulnerable groups were not left behind. He recalled that educational and work success were often determined by social situations. These social justice factors needed to be addressed to ensure education and training could lead to decent and productive work.

Picking up on the importance of technology, **the moderator** turned to the topic of artificial intelligence (AI) and technology in education and lifelong learning. She asked Ms Janahi how to ensure every child was able to benefit from advancements in technology and AI.

In response, **Ms Janahi** touched upon the great importance that AI would hold in the future, and the necessity for humans to remain stimulated despite its impact. She outlined how the right to education needed to be supplemented by a right for every individual to benefit from technological advancements in the field.

Mr Takeushi, addressing the same question, discussed how the quality of education would be an important factor in the impact of AI, especially as it pertained to reaching more students. He then expanded upon the need for students to retain their curiosity and inspiration in the face of an evolving AI technology. Finally, he mentioned how humans were competing with AI, but the future would need creativity in how the technology was harnessed to be effective.

The moderator then turned to the important factor of technology. She asked how the potential of technology, including AI, could be harnessed to promote education and skills development and ensure that every child and individual was able to contribute to, and gain from, technological advancements in a fair, equitable and just manner.

Ms Dashti noted that it was important that programmers and coders were aware and engaged with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Coders and engineers needed to be informed by the Sustainable Development Goals and trained in a way that encouraged them to use their talents to address global challenges. Member States should seek to implement measures that addressed the digital divide, and created equal access to the internet, by increasing investment in digital infrastructure.

The moderator followed up by asking if the COVID-19 pandemic had effectively acted as a wake-up call to address the digital divide and guarantee equal access to digital technologies and the internet.

Ms Dashti said that there were good examples during the pandemic that might inspire other countries. She drew attention to the cases of Egypt and Morocco, which had benefited greatly from a highly digitalized social protection system. She highlighted the fact that besides structural investment there needed to be investment in digital skills, particularly of teaching staff, who were sometimes less digital-ready than students.

Turning to the relevance of education and training for work, **the moderator** asked how education, skills and lifelong learning systems could be improved to facilitate the school-to-work transition, especially in the digital and green economies. She wanted to know what policies were needed that could ensure that investments in education, skills and lifelong learning could really benefit individuals and communities, leveraging capacities, talents and aptitudes.

Ms Alcalde Luján emphasized that despite a general need to provide new skills, different local realities correspond to different skills needs. She provided the example of Mexico, where in the northern regions information technology needs were more intense, whereas in the southern regions there was a need to develop skills that supported hubs for industrial

development. She mentioned examples of national policies being undertaken to develop the tourism sector across several regions and the creation of a network of universities in underserved areas, focused on local development needs such as support to agroforestry in the Chiapas or to mining in Chihuahua. She underlined the need to have a medium to long-term perspective in skills development to allow young people to be employable. It was important to establish development poles. In the south, the Government was promoting a railway to connect the Mayan area for tourism development, where trained people were needed. A network of universities was being established for young people who had not had access before.

Mr O'Connor stated that despite the novelty in digital transformation, technological change and economic disruption were not new, and provided the example of the industrial revolution and its impact on skills needs, division of labour and income. He highlighted, however, that digital technology and AI should not erode values or degrade access to decent work. He noted that a knowledgeable and skilled workforce was key to investment and promoted economic growth and a fairer, more peaceful society. Inequalities were linked to violence and conflicts, and he emphasized that human, economic and democratic rights should be at the core of government, business, and trade union actions and principles. He stressed that skills development was important to allow workers to adapt to change. Skills systems needed to become more innovative, flexible and sensitive to changing labour market needs, with better integration of learning in workplaces. That way workers could continue to learn throughout their working lives.

The moderator turned to the role of social dialogue in education and training. She asked how inclusive social dialogue, with respect to freedom of association and collective bargaining rights, could contribute to achieving policy priorities and ensuring equitable access to quality education, skills development, and lifelong learning for all.

Ms Losi affirmed that to ensure that technology benefited everyone, social dialogue was crucial, including collective bargaining. To ensure that the needs of workers were addressed through technology, a two-way conversation was needed in lieu of a top-down approach. She agreed with Ms Dashti that investment in digital infrastructure was important, especially to include the rural economy in development.

Addressing the same question, **Mr Schmit** underlined that the European Union was based on the social market economy, which implied social dialogue, including collective bargaining. Smooth transition in a number of domains meant that societies needed to accept change, and workers needed to reskill and upskill. This basic acceptance of change could only be achieved through social dialogue. Emerging technologies could create enormous productivity gains in coming years, and social dialogue and collective bargaining were critical for managing the distribution of the profits of these productivity gains. Social dialogue was key to a cohesive society in a time of transitions.

The moderator noted the clear need for more coordinated efforts on social justice to bring about equitable education, lifelong learning and skills development. Each panellist needed to indicate what was missing today in the quest for social justice, particularly in respect to education, lifelong learning, and skills development. She asked how the global community could better foster equal opportunities for every person, everywhere, and full, freely chosen and productive employment, by working better together. Were there any specific commitments that countries or organizations could make in helping to advance social justice in the international debate and on the ground?

Ms Dashti responded by saying that policymakers needed to engage more critically with technology, which should be used to promote social justice goals, such as providing tools for small enterprises to scale up business, and to provide for digitalized skills services as well as skills intelligence, allowing learners and businesses to explore skills anticipation and skills development paths.

Mr Takeuchi said the OECD would strengthen procedures to share important information on skills, such as the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), the Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) and the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC).

Ms Losi stated that what was missing was a clear compact between government and businesses to invest in workers to address skills shortages. Inclusive social dialogue was key to making sure skills development matched labour and social need. Her organization was part of South Africa's National Economic Development and Labour Council (NEDLAC), which was committed to identifying challenges and solutions through social dialogue.

Ms Alcalde Luján stated that leaders needed to address the future of work, to ensure that transitions and use of technology led to human dignity and opportunity. We could not afford to make the mistakes of the past and let such developments leave people behind. This meant ensuring inclusion in social security schemes of groups such as self-employed workers, including domestic workers, and eradicating discrimination, including on the basis of sexual orientation.

Mr O'Connor underlined that concrete measures were needed to implement policy decisions. The recent ratification by his country of the Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190), would be an empty gesture if it were not followed up by domestic investment and policies to address situations of domestic family violence, promote collective bargaining, provide affordable childcare and paid parental leave for 26 weeks, and address the gap in employment participation for women. Such policies were not only good for workers, but good for the country.

Ms Janahi said there was an urgent need to address the poverty of knowledge. Agencies should focus less on politics and ensure the basic human right of knowledge and education.

Mr Schmit stressed that change was accelerating. As a result, the challenge of education and skills development needed to be addressed through the wider approach of social justice. Policies on education and lifelong learning needed to be situated in the continued fight against child labour, the construction of greater international solidarity and the fight against poverty.

The moderator thanked the panellists for their contributions.

(The Conference adjourned at 6.10 p.m.)

Thursday, 15 June 2023, 9.50 a.m.
President: Mr bin Samikh Al Marri

The President

It is my great privilege to open this second day of the World of Work Summit of the 111th Session of the International Labour Conference, on the theme “Social justice for all”.

This morning, we will be honoured by a visit from five more high-level dignitaries. We shall also hold the third panel discussion of the Summit.

High-level statements

Mr Rajoelina
President of Madagascar
(Original French)

Please allow me, first of all, to thank the ILO and the Director-General for welcoming me and for organizing this Conference.

The ILO is an organization that is indispensable for promoting the legal framework needed to apply the fundamentals of decent work. The theme of this session – combating inequality and promoting social justice – is perfectly in tune with my own personal convictions and my country’s commitments. That is why I was determined to be here with you myself for this 111th Session of the International Labour Conference. These two subjects are key to the achievement of the *velirano*, or commitments, that my administration and I are implementing for the sustainable development of Madagascar.

Promoting decent work for all is central to the priorities of the Malagasy State. We have been working tirelessly on this for more than four years now, through significant measures.

In addition, my country has made considerable progress and has already transposed all ratified ILO Conventions into national law. Wholly in keeping with my attendance here in 2019, today I am pleased to announce that we have ratified four more Conventions: the Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155); the Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187); the Occupational Health Services Convention, 1985 (No. 161); and the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, as amended.

Therefore, I can proudly announce that Madagascar has now ratified all the fundamental Conventions of the ILO. Moreover, by being the fifth country to ratify all these Conventions, Madagascar is a pioneer in the pursuit of a social justice framework for labour laws.

Today I would like to speak for those who are no longer heard and speak up for the right of everyone to have an equal opportunity, so that the living conditions of the most vulnerable can be improved. In that regard, every leader must ensure that every working citizen is offered decent employment. To achieve this, there will need to be a vision that is translated into action, as well as strong and consistent political will, because social justice and employment for all are the conditions that rebuild trust between leaders and citizens.

My presence here confirms, and affirms, Madagascar’s commitment to ensuring social justice in service of decent jobs for all. This involves guaranteeing everybody access to health, employment, food and, of course, education. That is why Madagascar has chosen education as the foundation of its policy, so that every citizen has the basics to tackle daily life. It is precisely for these reasons that, since the start of my mandate, we have built 4,200 classrooms

where 200,000 students and schoolchildren are provided with an education, as well as nine university campuses distributed throughout the regions. Our wish is to strengthen State presence and put education at the heart of Madagascar's development.

When it comes to the rural population, which represents 80 per cent of Malagasy people, we have supported agricultural workers in order to preserve their cherished identity linked to the land, through a title deeds programme aimed at securing their lands and helping them in their professional development. Our objective is to distribute 2 million land titles, thereby covering up to 40 per cent of the Malagasy population by 2023. This is a considerable effort that is transforming the face of agriculture in Madagascar.

With regard to the green economy, we have also created the Titre Vert [green title] programme, which involves granting one-hectare parcels of land to young farmers. This includes the use of a cowshed and a dairy cow to rear, farming equipment and a drip-feeding irrigation system for cultivated farmland, with a view to ensuring a comfortable income for these young farmers.

With regard to the blue economy, with our 5,600 kilometres of coastline where more than 3 million Malagasy people – or 15 per cent of the population – live and make their living from the sea, it is crucial to us to speed up the creation of decent jobs, which drive sustainable growth.

Lastly, with regard to the digital economy, connectivity raises barriers, boosts productivity and thereby encourages job creation and entrepreneurship. Digital technology is a way to change the paradigm towards rapid and inclusive growth, a sector that has enabled us to create 30,000 jobs in just three years.

Combating labour inequalities must be done through stronger international cooperation. I therefore appeal for mobilization at the international level to support efforts to boost sustainable growth. It is our duty to show solidarity so that social justice can become a reality and decent work can be a right accessible to all generations, present and future. Together, we can create a better world where every individual has the chance to work in dignity and contribute to their own well-being, that of their family, their community and, of course, their country.

Mr Ruto President of Kenya

I am privileged to have this opportunity to participate in this critical event, which exhibits the power of social dialogue at work on a global scale, as we convene to address the defining issues of our time from the extremely important standpoint of social justice for all. Kenya appreciates your invitation, welcome and hospitality, and I am honoured to have this opportunity to provide my input into this Summit.

At the onset, I must express Kenya's appreciation of the function and role of the labour movement in the advancement of freedom, social justice, fundamental rights, equity, fairness and equal opportunity for all. Labour movement leaders and organizers are among the valiant freedom fighters who not only recognized that colonial domination and exploitation was unjust but also did something about it.

As a result, the Kenyan people joined the global community of free people and Kenya emerged as a sovereign republic. The values imparted by the labour movement during the freedom struggle defined our early days of nation-building and have fundamentally influenced our national spirit to date. We have benefited tremendously from having a social, political and

economic system defined by work and the contribution of workers. At the heart of our progressive Constitution are national values and principles of governance, with social justice and all its dimensions firmly at the core.

As Kenyans, we find no problem whatsoever in accepting that social justice provides solutions for the most urgent and pressing issues of our time.

I am delighted to note that this Summit has not been shy to confront even uncomfortable subjects, including the need to make significant progress in democratizing the International Labour Organization, as part of enhancing social justice all the way from the workplace to international relations, as well as the urgent matter of just transition, to give the world a better chance of actualizing the global aspiration of a better future of work. I commend you for recognizing the importance of these matters and addressing them in a committed, serious and solution-oriented manner. It is on this note that I stand to add a few thoughts.

The social dialogue envisaged by the ILO framework, and which we are relying upon to deliver equitable, sustainable solutions to challenges we face, is based on the traditional engagement to apportion rights, obligations and a share of output of production between workers – to the extent of the conversation on what is a fair wage; employers – as they think about profit; and governments – as they work on taxes and public goods. Much progress has been made under this model of social justice.

I suggest, however, that the time has come to reconsider our model of social dialogue in order to enhance its capacity to achieve social justice in its processes as well as in its outcomes. The ILO system is worker-oriented, in that it primarily represents workers' interests. Yet, labour rights are affected by both employment and unemployment. It should concern us very deeply that unemployment rates in Africa are some of the world's highest, with many countries reporting that between a quarter and a third of their populations are not engaged in secure and productive employment.

As we speak about matters pertaining to work, we must also speak about the millions of jobless people whose voices cannot be heard at conferences like this. The aspirations of the unemployed matter, and should be seen to matter, especially for the ILO. Social justice for all makes it imperative to expand the social dialogue from the tripartite model, I suggest, to a four-sided forum of workers, the unemployed, employers and government.

Governments, employers and workers must be equally concerned about the unemployment crisis and be committed to finding sustainable solutions to it, in order to bring the majority of the world's population into the ILO's traditional constituency. A majority of the world's unemployed people live in the global South, and especially in the continent that I come from.

On average, Africa invests 30 per cent of its annual budget, or US\$150 billion, on educating and training its youth and workforce. Only 30 per cent of them join the workforce, and up to 70 per cent stay unemployed. What a waste! This perennial waste of human capital and productive opportunity must squarely form part of the most urgent concerns of workers, employers and governments.

Traditionally, it has always been a concern of the unemployed and government. I believe we will score serious breakthroughs when we incorporate unemployment and the unemployed into the social dialogue, and therefore I suggest that for social justice to become a reality, and for this World of Work Summit to live up to its description, we must expand the scope of social dialogue to bring these millions of jobless people to work.

An immediate advantage of including the unemployed in the social dialogue paradigm is that it defines the most critical contemporary crisis facing workers and work, technological change and the future of work. In particular, automation has disrupted the employment market, rendering many people jobless and eliciting profound concern that machines are going to drive humanity out of work and possibly into poverty.

We have to find clarity on the question of whether technology promotes or undermines employment and job creation. We must exploit the opportunity of social dialogue to deepen and enrich our collective understanding on this matter, and to reconcile our diverse positions on the implications of technological disruption in the workplace.

In this regard, this forum provides the perfect platform to mobilize the best ideas into the development of policies and programmes that promote new occupations and for entire jobs in the digital ecosystem. I would like to illustrate the immensity of the promise of this second social dialogue moment by using the example of Kenya.

To implement our bottom-up economic transformation agenda, we have committed significant investment to develop 100,000 kilometres of last-mile fibre optic connectivity under our digital superhighway pillar. Additionally, we have entered a partnership to develop the necessary infrastructure to provide 25,000 Wi-Fi hotspots at market centres throughout Kenya. Furthermore, we are in the process of constructing 1,450 information and communications technology hubs, so that every county assembly in Kenya will become a centre of digital learning, business transaction, commerce and work. We are committed to empowering Kenyans to tap into the emerging opportunities of the digital economy, and to connect and engage globally, while enjoying the comfort of their villages.

Faced with an increasingly uncertain future, which unfolds with relentless complexity, it is our duty as governments and employers to do all we can to increase the number of people represented in conferences like this as workers. Social justice for all is never going to be free of charge or famously cheap. And we happen to have settled the most important unasked question of this Summit: who bears the burden of social justice for all?

The answer is that for social justice for all to translate into a meaningful transformation of the conditions of work and for the World of Work Summit to fully articulate the aspirations of the constituencies represented here, we have to urgently invest in ambitious ways of getting millions of unemployed people, especially in the global South, to work and to take bold institutional measures to deliberately create opportunities for them.

Let me give you an example. In Kenya we are currently having a robust conversation. Many working people are asking me, "How is it our business to contribute so that others can find work?" And the stock answer I have always given them is that it is the taxes of those who do not work that pay our salaries. And it is not too much to ask us to pay so that those who do not work can find work.

In Africa we are now making serious moves in precisely this very direction. As matters stands, Africa contributes only 3 per cent to world trade even though it is home to 17 per cent of the world's population. Intra-African trade presently stands at only 15 per cent. Our continent's trading profile suggests that we have not started performing at a scale and level commensurate with our potential, and this undermines our capacity to actualize the African Union's Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals.

At the same time, it is abundantly clear to all of us in this room that our continent has a vast opportunity for radically transforming economic productivity, thereby creating employment on an unprecedented scale.

The most visible doorway to this opportunity is continental economic integration. We are consolidating the African market through the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area to be the world's largest free trade area with a population of 1.4 billion. The objective is to increase intra-African trade to between 40 and 50 per cent and enhance our contribution to global trade to a level commensurate with greater productivity of our population.

In answering the question of how governments and employers bear the burden of social justice for all, it is important to note that, in many cases, the most effective interventions take the form of economic dimensions of national, regional and multinational policy. The drive towards African economic integration is a fundamental social justice intervention insofar as it increases access and inclusion in terms of productive opportunities by which more people become more eligible for representation at ILO forums like this as workers. I hope that I have persuaded you that there lies a tremendous social justice for all moment in Africa's continental economic integration.

It gives me no pleasure to set off the alarm bells. However, it is important for each one of us in this place to remain mindful of the fact that, as matters presently stand, not only are our dearest values and most cherished aspirations in grave jeopardy, but human existence itself is also under immense threat from a new, disruptive and universal variable.

The magnitude and frequency of devastation arising worldwide owing to extreme weather events is unprecedented. It can no longer be denied that these events are evidence of climate change caused by rising global temperatures, primarily driven by the emission of greenhouse gases. Since the industrial revolution, global temperatures have been rising. The fastest rise, however, occurred after 1970, with two thirds of global warming taking place after 1975. And the ensuing climate change has unleashed adverse weather phenomena to wreak havoc in different parts of the world on a biblical scale.

An average of 189 million people annually are affected by extreme weather-related events in developing countries. The latest report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change indicates that the daily lives of at least 3.3 billion people are considered to be highly vulnerable to climate change. People are now 15 times more likely to die from extreme weather than in years past. There could be, according to data from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 1.2 billion climate refugees by the year 2050.

Floods, storms, wildfires and extreme temperatures have become more frequent and more widespread. Parts of Western Europe, including Germany, Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands, received up to two months of rainfall in only two days, resulting in catastrophic flooding in 2021. Hundreds of people were killed, trapped or went missing in the disaster.

Earlier this year, a single event, Tropical Cyclone Freddy wreaked havoc throughout Southern Africa, leading to floods which killed hundreds of people and displaced thousands of people in Malawi, Mozambique and South Africa, in our continent. In West Africa, floods affected 3.5 million people, with 800 deaths, and destroyed over 600 hectares of farmland.

In the Horn of Africa, where I come from, drought of unprecedented intensity following five consecutive seasons of failed rain led to extreme food scarcity and water stress which caused the deaths of millions of livestock and wildlife, seriously setting back economic growth in our region.

Social justice for all as an ideal, and even the very possibility of convening summits like this in the future, are therefore under serious danger from climate emergency, which constitutes a grave existential threat to all humankind, whether from the global North or the

global South, employed or unemployed, wealthy or poor. This is a time for the entire world to implement solutions to climate change with radical determination on a global scale. It is time to seriously invest in mechanisms to mitigate the adverse impact of climate change and build resilience in vulnerable communities, economies and regions.

Climate change offers us extremely limited choices, making it urgent for humanity to reconfigure global production and consumption technologies. In so doing, it also provides us with a singular opportunity to chart a new path of global productivity and build a new momentum for global development and growth.

Without a doubt, we must now retire for good the old toxic conversation and confrontation between the global North and the global South and embrace new approaches to climate change. The blame game, pity and charity and hegemonic dynamics, which do nothing to address urgent problems, must finally give way to a new win-win, clean, green, development paradigm.

The global South, and Africa in particular, is endowed with renewable energy assets that can drive global growth on an unprecedented scale while decarbonizing global manufacturing and greening global industrialization as a pathway to sustainable development and the net zero global goal.

What I am saying here is that it is no longer tenable for us to continue the toxic conversation of the North or the South. Who did what? Who contributed, who did not contribute? Who is suffering, who is not suffering? Who is suffering more, who is suffering less? That conversation is no longer helpful. We are in this existential threat together. The global South, as much as the global North, is in trouble. On this matter of climate change, there is no developing and developed countries. We are all developing. In the global South, we have renewable assets that can be useful to the global North. In the global North, you have technology and financing that can be useful in unlocking the potential of green energy, green industrialization, green manufacturing from the global South. Working together in a win-win arrangement is what will get us the solutions we are looking for, for climate change.

Efficiency demands that global production under a net zero-conscious paradigm must shift to Africa and the global South. This also offers us the irresistible opportunity to reverse the climate emergency and make Africa the green factory of the world, transforming the world's largest unemployed population into highly productive constituents of the ILO movement. This is the conversation we shall be having next week during the global stocktake, in June 2023, at the Paris Summit for a New Global Financing Pact, with the Prime Minister of Barbados, Ms Mia Amor Mottley. It is the discussion that we will be having in Nairobi during the African Climate Summit in September 2023. And, hopefully, it is the discourse that we shall finally conclude – and I emphasize the word “conclude” – at the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP28) in Dubai, in the United Arab Emirates, in December 2023.

To actualize the new paradigm shift in global growth and development, a new development financing architecture is an imperative. It is not tenable and, in fact, I dare say, it is fairly absurd, to confront a threat of the magnitude of climate change without a financial mechanism that directs resources on a scale and with the urgency and consistency and speed demanded by this existential moment. We can, and must, realign our international financing framework to provide us with a strong fighting chance in the war against climate change.

What I propose is neither wishful nor unheard of in terms of nature, scope or speed of necessary change. The existing international multilateral financial system – which has been in

place for 78 years – was crafted out of series of meetings that took place in a small town called Bretton Woods in the United States of America over the course of only one month. It took just one month, in July 1945, for us to come up with the financial architecture that exists today.

Let me give you another example. In 1989, after the fall of the Berlin Wall, it took European leaders only six months to set up the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

More recently, another example, in June 2022 less than four months after the beginning of the war in Ukraine, Germany modified its fundamental law to enable it to raise US\$110 billion to strengthen its defence in a matter of days. These serious crises were addressed through quick, resolute action by determined leaders. This is evidence of what can be done when stakes are high enough. The stakes have never been higher now, in the existential crisis that is climate change. There is no reason why setting up appropriate financial mechanisms should take any longer.

Between now and COP28, we have more time than we need to design and implement a new architecture of international development financing institutions that is responsive to the urgent needs of our moment. Effective climate action, which depends on decarbonizing global manufacturing and greening global industrialization which, in turn, also relies on the actualization of a greater role for global South and Africa, is a social justice moment that must not be wasted.

I encourage us to remain focused and to be more determined and inspired to use this momentous forum for social dialogue to make social justice for all a reality, by making our existential crisis, the unrepresented regions of the world and the entire community of the unemployed visible and relevant to our discussions. Social justice for all is a matter that we cannot afford to neglect, underrate or avoid.

On this grand global stage, at this momentous Summit, we are at the right place at the right time. What remains is for us to rally strong and make a collective resolution to do the right thing for this moment; “right” refers to our decision, its timing and its expeditious implementation. The right decision must effectively respond to the existential emergency confronting us and must fully take into account the five social justice moments I have outlined: namely unemployment and the unemployed; opportunities in just transition; a new age digital economy; climate action; and the overdue reform of international financial architecture.

Ms Mottley **Prime Minister of Barbados**

I believe that the world is at a moment of inflection. This must be one of those moments in humanity’s story when there are so many opportunities to excite us, yet there are so many threats that will scare us. The opportunities are mind-blowing: innovations like precision medicine, green hydrogen, space tourism, the metaverse, and flying cars that we saw only in the cartoons of the Jetsons when we were growing up. All of a sudden, these things are part of our reality. Much of this has been, in our minds, science fiction, yet they are here. It is an exciting time to be alive.

Unfortunately, there is also so much to worry about: the proliferation of cybersecurity attacks, fake news, food insecurity and water insecurity, war, disease and, of course, the state of our planet’s biodiversity and its climate. Each of these in their own right could be considered an existential threat. Unregulated artificial intelligence. And when we tally all of these, we now begin to understand why the world is feeling so much on edge. More importantly, no wonder people are so anxious and want to hearken back to a time past.

For me, at the core to finding solutions for so many of these crises in our world now is that we must face the need for a simple concept, one that is known to our children: it is just called fairness. Fairness: another word for social justice.

Fairness will help us understand that the polluters, and not the victims of pollution, should pay the price for pollution. Fairness helps us understand that a person's religion, skin colour, gender, orientation, place of birth or class does not make them any less of a person.

Ironically, it is the ILO's core congregation – workers – that understand this concept of fairness maybe better than most other adult groups on the planet. Workers understand the value of space and workers value leaders that truly value fairness. Workers produce when they feel that their leaders understand fairness. Fairness is not just how they are paid, not just how they are engaged, not just how they are treated, not just how they are valued, but, indeed, how they are enfranchised. For ownership matters, as you will continue to hear me say.

Fairness will determine how smoothly we manage the impact on all who are displaced in this awful transition that we are now seeing in today's world, of which my dear brother, President Ruto, spoke. People who worry about displacement as a result of artificial intelligence and robots and software. We must work tirelessly as governments to provide the environment within which jobs can be created for our people, because without that basic dignity, our people will be at the mercy of others.

Fairness will be determined by who owns the robots and who owns the enterprises. As I said when I addressed this body on its Centenary: ownership matters.

Fairness will also determine how we smoothly manage global migration and afford people their human right of fair movement. Why should capital move and not people, especially where there are parts of the world where, clearly, people are needed to be an engine of growth? We have seen the horror as it unfolds off Greece as we meet here this morning, for yet hundreds more passing from this mortal earth. When will enough be enough to motivate action?

Fairness will determine how we leverage advanced technologies and policies to ensure that people engaged in the gig economy and remote work will have access to high-quality social protection wherever they may be. That the modalities have changed does not mean that the values that underpin all that we stand for should be ignored. Fairness matters in the gig economy.

Fairness will help us to understand that the countries of the global North should not have access to better financing options than countries in the global South just because those in the North colonized those in the South and continue to shape a world order in their own image almost eight decades after the Charter of the United Nations was settled. A simple word: fairness.

It is for this reason that we have brought the Bridgetown Initiative, a collection of views reflective not only of our own countries but of those of other countries across the world and institutions and academia, gathering in one space our views and sentiments that we hope will propel a movement towards fairness.

A Bridgetown Initiative that seeks to find the financing that will allow us to save our planet by facilitating the private sector through lowering and levelling the cost of debt between those who work in the global North and the global South. Not to have announcements in Glasgow like the Just Energy Transition Partnership, made with great ceremony and celebration but unable to get off the ground because the cost of capital in South Africa is significantly higher than the cost of capital in Europe.

A Bridgetown Initiative that therefore will allow the private sector to play its part in helping us to reach 1.5 degrees, because mitigation matters wherever it takes place on this earth. While we seek to adapt, governments need partnerships to be able to bring about a just transition, particularly with the mitigation necessary to contain the temperatures within that 1.5 degree target.

A Bridgetown Initiative that allows us to adapt and make ourselves and our circumstances more comfortable and more resilient to meet these multiple crises, to meet these floods and these wildfires and these hurricanes and the sargassum seaweed that threatens so many coastal economies. And the hurricanes, the heart attack of the climate crisis. As we see those in the Asian subcontinent brace for yet another typhoon to come on shore, what will tomorrow's headlines be as a result of that episode?

A Bridgetown Initiative that is also about recognizing that there needs to be a relaxation of the debt anchors that, by their very ambitions and stiff trajectory, meet the needs of academia and institutional bureaucrats but do not protect our vulnerable people and do not protect the institutions that are necessary to fuel growth.

A Bridgetown Initiative that is about securing truly, truly long-term money, not the 10- and 20-year money that we are expected to meet the Sustainable Development Goals with, but cannot stretch sufficiently to be able to provide education or healthcare or decencies to the people who depend on us the most.

A Bridgetown Initiative that underscores global, moral, strategic leadership for fair and balanced growth and for opportunities between, yes, the North and South together, not adversarially, to ensure that we can propel our people through this poly-crisis moment.

A Bridgetown Initiative that understands that the route to Paris next week to discuss a new global financial path starts here today in Geneva at the World of Work Summit, when we discuss social justice for all before settling on the accounting mechanisms.

In the case of Barbados, our creed has been simple: "Share the burden, share the bounty." "Many hands make light work." And, of course, that golden rule: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." Simple, simple precepts that, if we follow them, would promote fairness and social justice, solidarity and caring. For whether it is among children, as I have said, or among adults, in the public sphere, or in the workplace, these are the principles that must respect the dignity of each human being, regardless of the circumstances, and that must be the absolute imperative upon which we build, if we are to give opportunity and hope to our people.

These are matters that we feel strongly about, because in Barbados and in the Caribbean, we come from a history and a place where labour and human development was born out of unfairness and the most horrific treatment of human beings – not for a decade or half a decade, but for centuries.

That is why we have been the place that has produced in the region so many outstanding pioneers and stalwarts of social justice over the last century. And that is why, here today, I stand proud, because two of my own Members of Parliament have played, and continue to play, a critical role in these discussions this week: my Minister of Labour, the Honourable Colin Jordan, and the General Secretary of the Barbados Workers' Union, the Honourable Toni Moore. They have spent the weekend, until as recently as 1 o'clock this morning, formulating the conclusions concerning a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all, which, I trust, this Conference will adopt tomorrow.

I give you that context because this is a small country, of 166 square miles, that says these things, but lives by these things. And we continue to make a difference because we believe that this is how our journey across independent statehood should be shaped: seeing people, hearing people and feeling people. We deeply understand systematic and systemic unfairness, and we deeply understand the need for social justice.

That is why I salute the mission and work of the Director-General of this institution. I am in full agreement with the call for partnership within and outside the multilateral system to ensure that those in the global South not only have access to the tools, but also the requisite skills and capacity to take advantage of opportunities in the future of work. Failing that, what will be the result? Deeper inequalities, more calls for persons to hold on to things that are familiar but that may well be discriminatory, as we are seeing across all sides of the Atlantic and all parts of the world.

This work of social justice, within the relationship between the global North and the global South, is also work that must be done. And who better to anchor this than the ILO, the only institution that has tripartite membership globally in the UN system? And I say so from a country whose governance model is anchored in the social partnership – a tripartite model – and this year celebrated 30 years of that approach to governance to secure our own stability and progress. The need, therefore, to expedite progress, across the global community and within countries, for fairness and a level playing field, especially in the global South, may be a century too late, but that must not daunt our perseverance to secure it, to fight for it.

And that is why I support a Global Coalition for Social Justice. There is a deep recognition that to make this world a better place there is no one topic, no one organization, and no one leader who can allow it to happen. To make our world a better, fairer place, we need a coalition of the willing to work together each and every day. We need many hands to make light work. We need to share the burden and share the bounty, and we need to treat each other as we would want to be treated.

I know that for many everyday people – workers in shops or in offices, or in fields or in factories, going about their everyday lives – these big problems may seem outside the scope of what you are facing; between the difficulty of raising, in some instances with limited food and the stress of keeping together a family, and all of the other things that keep you preoccupied.

But if we do not do our part, what seems intolerable to you now will become completely unbearable for you tomorrow. And that is why we come here today, to make that difference, to allow people to sleep easier each and every night. And I tell you that there is no more noble pursuit than that. No more noble pursuit.

On the first of May of this year, in Barbados, we came together – workers, the private sector and the Government, in our social partnership – to declare that we shall work hand in glove to implement Mission Barbados, which is really six missions to transform our nation. And, yes, ambitiously to become world class in all that we do and all that we say. Those missions extend to playing our role in saving our planet by promoting sustainable behaviour to prioritize the blue and green activities in all that we do.

Because one by one we make a difference, not just in large announcements and pronouncements from stages. We come together to seek to keep our country safe and healthy, because if our people are not safe, and if they are not healthy, the journey will not be made. We come together to ensure that our people do not suffer from food and water insecurity, because day by day, it is through bread and water that life shall be secured. And we come

together in the mission of reinforcing national identity and boosting confidence, because for centuries we were told that everything black is nefarious and evil, and everything white is pure and good. The dismantling of that ideological brainwashing will not happen purely by the changing of laws, but only through mental emancipation, as Marcus Mosiah Garvey taught us almost a century ago. And we come together to place priority on the enfranchisement and empowerment of our workers, because it is not governments that grow; while enterprises claim the honour of growth, it is labour that fuels the path of growth for enterprises. We come together equally in that mission to recognize that we cannot run an analogue country or government in the twenty-first century, and that the digitization of all that we do, while being anchored in the ethical values of our time, will help give us the balance to move forward, recognizing that perhaps the greatest evil of the digital revolution is anonymity and lack of accountability. And, if we can alter that, then technology will truly be a tool of empowerment and not a platform for the destruction of humanity.

When we set a common mission in our country, we have the experience of being successful. We achieve it. The evidence for us has been clear. When we came to office five years ago, we had less than four weeks' foreign reserves and the value of our dollar was at risk. We came together – workers, the private sector and the Government – with a single mission. Today, our dollar is way out of threat of being devalued and our people are protected from that horrendous spectacle of devaluation after devaluation after devaluation. For devaluation is not only of currency, but of lives and the quality of lives when it happens.

Similarly, we came together to fight something not of our own making: a pandemic that literally decimated this world, after a century of not knowing what that could be. The last experience being the Spanish flu, when none of us, I suspect, in this room was alive. And even during the pandemic, in coming together, we continued to see, hear and feel people, for in our own country, in spite of the difficulties that we faced, in spite of being in an International Monetary Fund programme, we appointed thousands of public servants as of right, who had been acting in positions for three years or more. We introduced a minimum wage when others said it would destroy our economy if we did so. And two, three years later, we are still standing, as you can see.

We came together to fight the battles of our time. And my Government and country, Barbados, are ready today to put in the hard work, yet and yet again, to make this world fairer and to make our country fairer. Above all else, it is urgent. Fairness, trust and accountability will be the currency needed, within and across our countries globally, to make that defining difference at this inflection point. As we just heard from my dear brother, President Ruto, we must summon the will and the determination and know that it is possible because others before us were equal to the challenge, equal to the time. Those of us who have been given more than any other generation in humanity must not now believe that it is time to just be dilatory and to wait for somebody else to make that defining difference.

Social justice in whatever we do must be our core driver. We tell our children to treat each other fairly because we know the consequences for them if they do not do so. I say simply to us today, we just need to do it. We have no other choice for the sake of humanity.

Mr Rashid
President of Iraq
(Original Arabic)

The theme of this Summit, Social Justice for All, is not only important, but also a noble theme. Without resolving social justice issues in our communities, in our countries, in our nations, progress will be delayed. Social justice is key not only to improving the standard of living but to leading us to a better life. This Summit has important humanitarian, cultural, political and economic goals; I am hopeful that we will achieve results that rise to the levels of these motivations, which are increasingly necessary in our world today.

The absence or weakness of social security is the source of numerous problems worldwide. These are ancient problems that emerged with the dawn of the history of societies and humankind in general. Wars, conflicts, migration and even the destruction of nature are, for the most part, merely manifestations of the absence of social justice.

There is nothing more wretched in life than the sense of injustice; if such feelings are exacerbated by the absence of social justice, armed conflicts and wars are the direct result. This occurs when injustice on the part of the authorities and dominant forces in a given society increases and when there is an absence of freedoms or a monopoly of wealth and prosperity and corruption is rampant. Ancient and contemporary history afford us many examples of societies and states that have fallen victim to the oppression of tyrannical rulers, which leads to a lack of justice in terms of opportunities, inequalities in rights and obligations and, potentially, to worsening conflicts and violence within a given society.

This also sometimes occurs in conflicts between neighbouring countries, when strong countries abandon their reason to their growing ambitions over the rights, property and wealth of weak countries. This also occurs at the regional and at the global level. As you know, contemporary history offers many examples of increasing conflicts between countries. Our world is going through a critical moment in history that requires, first and foremost, action to achieve social justice within societies and to develop it in the context of relations between societies, countries and regions and at the global level.

We should treat one another fairly as individuals, as societies, as neighbouring countries and as one global family. We should increase our sense of responsibility, the responsibility of the rich towards the poorest of the poor, in order to achieve equal rights and justice. This can easily be achieved if we work together to take effective, collective international action that sets out strategies and plans for sustainable development at the country and the global level, with a view to achieving genuine progress in social justice.

Iraq has gone through a difficult period for long decades during which it has suffered wars, terrorism and a decline in security and stability which have led directly to the absence of, or weakened, social justice. However, in Iraq today, the Government is developing a labour and social welfare programme in order to achieve its goals of protecting citizens and the family by including them in government strategies, plans and future policies for social justice, with a view to setting in place an integrated social protection system consisting of social security networks, social insurance and labour market policies to provide effective social protection for the poor. In addition, the State is encouraging the establishment of individual income-generating projects for families and the Government is financing small projects and ensuring skills development training to develop the skills and capacities of poor people with low incomes and to help persons with disabilities and special needs. Moreover, a new law on social security, compatible with the present situation and consistent with the requirements of

the Constitution, has been approved that will lead to the adoption of a fair method of wealth distribution and allow equality of opportunity for all. The new law is also compliant with the relevant international laws and Conventions.

We support the idea of establishing a global coalition for social justice at various levels. In striving to achieve this noble humanitarian objective, we reaffirm our belief in the need to call upon countries to adopt the language of dialogue and understanding with one another and, with the help of the United Nations, to protect the environment, stop the spread of desertification and guarantee the fair distribution of water between riparian countries. We also emphasize the importance of working at two levels to strengthen social justice. Joint international action is needed to help achieve justice between peoples and offer poorer countries the possibility of achieving social justice for their peoples, which will also contribute to reducing economic, social and cultural disparities within individual countries and to strengthening global security and stability and help protect the environment.

I wish you much success in these endeavours; let us work together to create a fairer world, protect peace and preserve human dignity.

Mr Dlamini
Prime Minister of Eswatini

Please allow me at the outset to convey greetings from His Majesty King Mswati III and Ingwenyama of the people of Eswatini, on whose blessings I have the privilege and honour to stand here today and deliver these remarks.

The Kingdom of Eswatini welcomes the initiative to strengthen partnerships and to enhance collaboration and cooperation between the ILO and its tripartite constituents, on the one hand, and the wider United Nations multilateral system and other allied partners, on the other, in order to promote policy coherence in the quest for social justice for all.

Eswatini is aligned to the perspective that coherence among multilateral actors is a key objective of this initiative when it comes to fighting inequalities through the protection of workers' rights and with particular attention being paid to the most vulnerable and marginalized individuals. For this reason, the Global Coalition for Social Justice (the Coalition) should be structured around the strategic objectives of the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization and the seven thematic areas contained in the resolution concerning inequalities and the world of work adopted by the International Labour Conference at its 109th Session (2021). The Coalition provides a human-centred approach to addressing increasing social unrest and growing inequalities within the framework of multilateralism. We therefore welcome the inclusion of a thematic area on addressing inequality, discrimination and exclusion, and combating violence and harassment, since this remains essential to achieving social justice.

The Coalition should seek to elevate the ILO's normative standards as well as social dialogue, which is the ILO's comparative advantage in relation to the entire multilateral system. It is true that the quest for social justice goes beyond the world of work to involve progress towards greater human development and dignity, with a focus on human rights and gender equality and inclusiveness. It must focus on activities with direct national impact and its scope must encompass the needs of employment promotion through job creation, particularly by providing support to micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, and address youth unemployment and women's economic empowerment.

The Coalition should adopt a human-centred philosophy aimed at improving well-being and supporting vulnerable groups, enhancing social cohesion and promoting development, and it should effectively protect the rights of workers by enhancing multilateral coordination to address global problems facing the world of work. The Coalition should boost support for initiatives to ensure wage security; better implement rights at work in all sectors and in enterprises of all sizes; reinforce measures that support workers, communities and enterprises undergoing transition linked to climate change; create quality opportunities for women and girls in the labour market and equal pay for work of equal value; and develop programmes and frameworks that are meant to combat various forms of inequality.

We note that the Coalition also offers an opportunity to strengthen the ILO's role in the implementation of the UN Secretary-General's *Our Common Agenda*. The Agenda has a strong focus on youth, the future and global public goods, on a UN system that is adapted to the challenges ahead, and on networked multilateralism.

The Coalition would seek to address the growing inequalities within and between countries and advance social justice. We underscore the point that has been made by Africa and other regions many times, and that is contained in the ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work (the Centenary Declaration), that the success of the Coalition would require full, equal and democratic participation in ILO governance; policy coherence with the multilateral system; strong tripartism; and global solidarity.

The Centenary Declaration, adopted by the Conference in 2019, decreed that "social justice can be achieved in all regions of the world and ... the full contribution of the ILO's constituents to this endeavour can be assured only through their full, equal and democratic participation in its tripartite governance". An ILO that leads the Global Coalition must reflect the ideals of democratic governance so that it is able to stimulate discussion to reverse and eliminate inequalities within and among countries.

Therefore, the ratification of the 1986 Instrument of Amendment to the ILO Constitution remains pending in this Organization's efforts to position it well among other institutions of similar stature, particularly taking into account its virtues and respect for equality, fairness and social justice. We are appealing to those Member States that have not ratified this Amendment to do so.

We have been made aware that consultations are still ongoing with regard to a number of critical questions that have been raised pertaining to the governance, resourcing, secretariat and other practical functionalities of the Coalition. These consultations should also pay attention to areas that might create overlaps or duplication between the Coalition and other existing UN structures, such as the Voluntary National Reviews and the SDG Investment Fair, which in turn feed into the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council.

As I conclude, we join the Director-General's vision of a Coalition with the broadest number of relevant participants from Governments, employers' and workers' organizations, international organizations, members of the multilateral system, including international financial institutions, and other stakeholders. Their involvement will be a strong manifestation of global solidarity, which we believe is an indispensable cornerstone of the Coalition.

That said, please allow me to reiterate the words that were said by His Majesty King Mswati III when addressing this august house in June 2019, when he said: "As a member country with an identity founded on strong cultural practices, Eswatini upholds best labour

practices while blending her traditions with modernity in order to ensure that our values live on for the benefit of future generations”.

Supported efforts to strengthen policy coherence and promote collaboration on social justice present an important opportunity to better integrate tripartism and social dialogue into multilateral cooperation and national cultural practices. Any developments should be contextualized as opposed to being treated as a one-size-fits-all situation.

With these remarks, the Kingdom of Eswatini endorses the Director-General's efforts to pursue multilateral coherence by establishing a Global Coalition for Social Justice.

Thursday, 15 June 2023, 10:40 a.m.

President: Mr bin Samikh Al Marri

The President

Let us now watch a video together in which young people from around the world share their view of social justice with us. Following the video, we will all have the privilege of attending the third high-level panel discussion of the Summit, on the theme “Jobs and social protection for just transitions”.

For this purpose, it is my pleasure to hand over the chairing of this sitting to Ms Sharanjit Leyl, international moderator, broadcaster and friend of the ILO, so that she may moderate the panel discussion as soon as the video is over.

(A video is shown.)

High-level panel discussion on jobs and social protection for just transitions: Summary

Moderator

- Ms Sharanjit Leyl

Panellists

- Mr Hubertus Heil, Federal Minister of Labour and Social Affairs, Germany
- Ms Tanzila Narbaeva, Chairperson of the Senate, Uzbekistan
- Ms Rosa Santos Fernández, Director of Industrial Relations, Employment and Diversity, Spanish Confederation of Business Organizations (CEOE)
- Ms Leída Marcela León, Independent Trade Union Alliance, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela
- Ms Ligia Noronha, Assistant Secretary-General, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
- Mr Robert Powell, Special Representative to the United Nations, International Monetary Fund (IMF)

The moderator explained that the panel would address jobs and social protection for just transitions, hearing commitments from the multilateral system and from governments, employers, and workers on how to respond to the many challenges for social justice.

Referring to the COVID-19 pandemic and the need for a human-centred recovery, the moderator asked Mr Heil and Ms Narbaeva how governments, together with social partners, could move towards a new paradigm, investing more in the creation of decent work and in social protection measures to foster just transitions for all.

Ms Narbaeva emphasized that Uzbekistan was a young developing State with a strong socially oriented policy which aimed to ensure social protection for its population. As the biggest State in Central Asia with a population of over 36 million, of which 60 per cent were youth, the creation of decent jobs and social protection for all was one of the main priorities. Uzbekistan had completely overhauled its policy through its new Constitution and national strategy, taking into consideration social issues including eliminating child labour and forced labour and the passing of over 40 normative Acts with continuous support from the ILO. The current Government's priorities were social protection, youth employment and gender equality. She underscored that the policies and priorities set out by the Government for social justice and development were fully aligned with the objectives of the Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions. Uzbekistan would thus be greatly honoured to join the Global Accelerator as a pathfinder country, as it would provide an ambitious yet necessary platform not only for Uzbekistan but for all countries at varying levels of development.

Mr Heil iterated some of the ways in which the German Government had invested in the creation of decent work and social protection, including through strengthening collective bargaining for just transitions, working with social partners on developing a skilled labour force, strengthening and modernizing the welfare state and promoting occupational safety and health, including mental health. He highlighted the importance of a multilateral approach, such as joint action to build fair trade agreements that were "win-win" for economic success, and that social justice was paramount for a just transition. Germany had enacted a new Supply Chain Due Diligence Act that emphasized the joint responsibility for decent work of the State and the private sector. Due diligence was crucial, beyond mere corporate responsibility, to fight effectively against child labour, forced labour and human trafficking and address the climate crisis. He noted that Germany's support to the Global Accelerator was two-fold: through its political support, notably the German G7 presidency, as well as financial support. More broadly, he stated that Germany believed the Global Accelerator and the Global Coalition for Social Justice to be important platforms for stronger multilateral cooperation, including with the IMF, the ILO, the World Trade Organization (WTO), and the World Bank, for a holistic approach to social justice and just transitions. There would be no economically successful transition without social justice.

The moderator underlined the need to work with other agencies as mentioned by Minister Heil and asked Ms Noronha how UNEP was working towards coordinated policies that promoted decent employment and universal social protection.

Ms Noronha highlighted that many of the issues at hand were interconnected: social justice needed to factor in environmental and economic injustices. The depletion of natural capital, which was important for jobs and security, and inequality around consumption meant that social justice needed to include an understanding of natural resources and environmental injustices. Coordinated policies required five key enablers: firstly, a change in the economic narrative away from the "a few taking all" approach towards how to make things work for the benefit of all. This included changing the narrative regarding women and other vulnerable groups, away from being victims of transitions and towards being seen as agents of change. Secondly, there needed to be an understanding of how consumption and production choices influenced the economy, and how environmental and social considerations were connected,

taking into account the aspirational consumption of the developing world. Thirdly, institutions should be reshaped to enable collective voices and action, including across UN agencies. There had to be investment in infrastructure that enabled capabilities (for example education), and connected and protected infrastructure (for example transport and the digital economy) to support collective voices and ecological resilience. Fourthly, economic and development practices needed to support circular economies, to think beyond discount rates and gross domestic product (GDP), to address allocation of finance and capital, and to use fiscal and tax policies to enable both flexibility in work and provision of social security. Finally, drawing on Mariana Mazzucato's work, post-COVID-19 the concept of public value had to be brought into industrial strategies to share risks and rewards across the board.

The moderator asked Mr Powell how the IMF supported countries with limited fiscal space to protect the social spending necessary to ensure inclusive growth, just transitions and social justice.

Mr Powell emphasized that the IMF, as a specialized UN agency with its own mandate on financial and monetary stability and sustainable long-term growth, supported its members to work towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and recognized that growth must be inclusive, that inflation hurts the poor and that inequality and gender inequity can hurt growth and stability. It is crucial to have policies in place to protect the poor and vulnerable, especially during crises. During the pandemic, the IMF had enhanced its disbursements and advice to protect the vulnerable populations who suffered most. The IMF provided surveillance and policy advice, including analysis of inequality and gender issues, as well as capacity-building to support SDG and gender budgeting, domestic revenue mobilization through progressive taxation which was core for all countries working towards the SDGs, financial inclusion, and lending to protect social spending, especially in countries undergoing fiscal consolidation.

Moving to the social partners, **the moderator** asked how coordinated employment and social protection policies could contribute to just transitions, and what role inclusive social dialogue could play.

Ms León emphasized that the international union movement believed that just transition and changes of consumption and production models had an impact on employment and social protection and were key determinants for joining the Global Coalition for Social Justice. Countries' adherence to the Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952 (No. 102), and the Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202), was very important. In Latin America, in a context of precarious work and discrimination, a development platform had been constructed with labour unions to address environmental, political, and social dimensions. Achieving SDG 8, supporting the extension of social protection and promoting inclusive social dialogue, were fundamental issues to realize social justice. Referring to job losses and lack of social protection, Ms León underlined the importance of social dialogue, the Global Accelerator and the Global Coalition. Trade unions in the Americas were usually not consulted on countries' commitments on emissions reductions and future-of-work questions across sectors. A good practice from the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela was the social dialogue forum set up two years previously to address world-of-work questions. Unions were also involved in a political dialogue mediated by Norway. Universal social protection was of vital importance, as the trend towards privatization of social security was a concern. Finally, as Latin America was the region most affected by transitions, political commitment and multilateral cooperation were key determinants in ensuring that investment yielded socio-economic dividends and could lift people out of poverty.

Ms Santos Fernández stated that for enterprises and individuals, just transition was an opportunity, but also involved risks, especially in difficult political times with stronger polarization. As most businesses globally were small or microenterprises, a stable balance between employment protection and the creation of an environment in which small enterprises could survive and grow was important, as highlighted in the International Labour Conference Committee on just transition, especially since 80 per cent of employment worldwide was provided by the private sector. In Spain, 16 tripartite agreements had been concluded to improve working conditions and, at the same time, strengthen the competitiveness of companies, both of which were key for lasting impact, as were active employment policies that improved workers' skills in the context of digital, ecological, demographic and social challenges. There was no economic growth without social progress, and no social progress without economic growth. This balance was guaranteed by tripartism, the key means of governance of the ILO. There was a risk of imbalance, which would lead to the loss of small businesses and prejudice employment. Both initiatives therefore had to support tripartism. In Spain, a wide-ranging agreement had been reached on employment and collective bargaining which will run until 2026, to address inflation and provide a road map for increasing wages, boosting employment and raising purchasing power, with more than 120 collective bargaining agreements concluded within one month. Collective bargaining and collaboration between workers and employers were essential to ensure the justice of those transitions.

Underlining the need for balance to achieve lasting reforms, **the moderator** asked Ms Noronha how UNEP worked in tandem with other international organizations to move towards greener economies.

Ms Noronha highlighted that UNEP had been working with the ILO and others for over a decade on the Partnership for Action on Green Economy (PAGE) in 28 countries, aimed at creating sustainable economies and green jobs with a focus on integrating employment and environmental policies. PAGE had been very successful in generating both green and economic gains and offered valuable lessons which could be brought forward into the Global Accelerator's approach. The more recent Green Jobs for Youth Pact, in partnership with the ILO and UNICEF, aimed at upskilling young people and putting intergenerational equity into action, and at facilitating access to training, education and entrepreneurship for youth to prepare them for a just green transition. Another initiative focused on global supply chains, in particular on critical minerals for energy and digital transitions, often located in specific geographies and generating burdens on local communities, with a view to exploring opportunities for access to global supply chains of low carbon technologies. UN agencies had been working closely together to push this agenda forward, which was well aligned with the Global Accelerator. Together with support to national financing frameworks, these had been a cornerstone of UNEP's partnerships to move towards greener economies.

The moderator asked Mr Powell whether he saw potential for stronger action from the multilateral system, especially the IMF, to bring social justice to people.

Mr Powell emphasized the critical role of collaboration among multilateral institutions, especially specialized agencies. At a time of fear of geopolitical fragmentation and "globalization in reverse" that would hurt the poor, many international public goods (including the fight against climate change, ensuring a human-centric digitalization, pandemic preparedness, trade, addressing food crises, and coordination of taxation) required agencies to work together. The IMF had been working closely with the World Food Programme and the World Health Organization during the pandemic, with the World Bank on climate topics, and with the ILO on pilot projects on pensions and social security in Uzbekistan, Iraq, Togo, and

Mozambique in the last year. Such projects had been useful for both sides, also facilitating the participation of employers and unions in dialogue with the IMF. Multilateralism was needed for the adaptation of debt strategies and to strengthen multilateral development banks, potentially using their resources to support the fight against climate change more effectively. As a result, he considered targeted interagency collaboration to be very important.

The moderator invited the Minister of Employment and Social Protection of Côte d'Ivoire, Mr Kamara, to explain how younger people could be included.

Mr Kamara explained how social justice enabled fair and equitable distribution of resources, which was at the heart of the policy implemented by the President. A governmental programme had been developed as a response to structural changes and to facilitate access of the most vulnerable to healthcare and electricity.

The moderator invited panellists to reflect on the importance of coordinated employment and social protection policies for just transitions. Specifically, she asked what role the Global Accelerator could play in supporting countries.

Ms Santos Fernández stressed that the Global Accelerator and the proposed Global Coalition were key factors in achieving the common objective of increased decent jobs and the expansion of social protection in an interdependent world, including better protecting millions of workers. In addition to social protection, she emphasized the need to guarantee the sustainability of enterprises and their capacity to survive and thrive in the midst of changing contexts. She highlighted some key pillars for achieving common objectives, including tripartism, public-private cooperation, training and the need to fully recognize contributions of enterprises to social security. She stressed the importance of fighting against informality globally, as high levels of informality constituted a challenge for those in the formal sector contributing to social security. Ensuring a good balance in financing social protection was thus fundamental to avoid undue burdens on businesses, which could be detrimental to employment. With regard to due diligence, she pointed to the need to improve labour markets through active employment policies, as well as to reforms of pension systems, where increased employer contributions could have negative impacts on enterprises, especially micro and small enterprises.

Ms Narbaeva highlighted that the Global Accelerator would have a positive impact on the creation of decent jobs and the expansion of social protection in Uzbekistan, as the country had ambitious policies including on youth employment, aiming to create 2 million decent jobs in the coming five years, on improving the business environment and on skills development for both workers and employers, as well as on social protection and gender equality. Emphasizing the need for a systemic transition, she emphasized the joint implementation of policies, close cooperation with social partners, attracting support from international financial institutions and other international organizations, and involving civil society and the media, as set forward in the Global Accelerator's approach. She reaffirmed the need for an effective social dialogue to achieve the country's ambitious objectives and to constantly adjust the country's strategies and plans of action in light of the changing contexts.

Mr Heil highlighted the case of Uzbekistan as a good example where integrated policies had yielded positive results with support from the ILO to eliminate child labour in the cotton fields. He referred to a recent visit to Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana with the ILO Director-General, where they had witnessed polluting waste from the textile industry from the global North but also saw the opportunities offered by a young population, with an average age of 18 years (compared to 49 years in Germany). Referring to the Global Accelerator, he emphasized the importance of fair trade, decent work, adherence to the ILO core labour standards and

environmental sustainability standards, due diligence ensuring responsibility of the private sector, as well as cooperation in the multilateral system and with social partners. One of the lessons learned in Germany from the pandemic and the repercussions of the war against Ukraine was that strengthening social protection coverage, social dialogue and partnerships was essential to withstand the impacts of these crises. Therefore it was essential to further support social dialogue in all countries, supporting employers and workers to find workable solutions. For example, ensuring fair wages for adults and social protection was critical for tackling child labour. Germany had committed to supporting both the Global Accelerator and the Global Coalition both financially and politically. He expressed his satisfaction to see that multilateralism had been underlined as key to solving these problems and to have a joint mission-oriented approach through the Global Accelerator.

To close the panel, **the moderator** asked each panellist what they would recommend as the single most important measure or commitment to push forward the quest for social justice.

Ms Noronha stated that the most important element for the Global Coalition was to enhance capacities and capabilities to reduce asymmetries of power.

Ms Santos Fernández explained that employers were committed to the improvement of social justice. Most importantly, public-private cooperation should not place burdens on enterprises.

Ms Narbaeva emphasized expediting social dialogue, working with different partners, timely financing, renewing financial strategies, taking development levels into account, and involving other international organizations besides the ILO in this global movement.

Mr Heil agreed with previous panellists and added strong minimum wages and fair wages through collective bargaining and social partnership, as well as investment in youth and their training and education.

Ms León stated that the union movement would continue to promote the Global Accelerator and the Global Coalition, to strive for decent work, social protection and a more just world and emphasized the importance of workers' voices.

Mr Powell focused on recommitting to domestic revenue mobilization, which was core for many developing countries to finance the policies which are part of their social justice agenda, and creating the right policy environment for carbon pricing to cover additional financing needs for the green transition, to set incentives for green investment and the green transition.

The moderator wrapped up the panel by emphasizing that the cornerstone for achieving social justice, as described by panellists, was more collaboration between all the multilateral agencies, and between governments, workers and employers. She concluded that the Global Coalition for Social Justice was needed to create a platform for this collaboration to move ahead.

(The Conference adjourned at 12.50 p.m.)

Thursday, 15 June 2023, 3.10 p.m.
President: Mr bin Samikh Al Marri

The President

I am pleased to declare open this last sitting of the World of Work Summit of the 111th Session of the International Labour Conference.

We shall start with the fourth high-level panel discussion on the theme “Trade, employment and sustainable development: Advancing human and labour rights”.

For this purpose, it is my pleasure to hand over the chairing of this sitting once again to Ms Sharanjit Leyl, so that she may moderate the panel discussion.

Later, we will have the honour of welcoming our last high-level guest, who will contribute to our deliberations.

High-level panel discussion on trade, employment and sustainable development: Advancing human and labour rights: Summary

Moderator

- Ms Sharanjit Leyl

Panellists

- Mr Younes Sekkouri, Minister of Economic Inclusion, Small Business, Employment and Skills, Morocco
- Ms Thea Lee, Deputy Undersecretary for International Affairs, United States of America
- Mr Cas Coovadia, Executive Director, Business Unity South Africa (BUSA)
- Ms Michele O'Neil, President, Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU)
- Ms Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, Director-General, World Trade Organization (WTO)
- Mr Volker Türk, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR)
- Ms Rebeca Grynspan, Secretary-General, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)
- Ms Pamela Coke-Hamilton, Executive Director, International Trade Centre (ITC)

The moderator opened the discussion by asking panellists about promising approaches to develop the social dimension of trade, including through trade and investment arrangements that advance respect for labour rights, human rights and decent work. She invited panellists to reflect on what had worked in their experience.

Ms Lee said the discussion between the international organizations that were present to talk about the social dimensions of trade together with the social partners and governments was significant and consequential. She highlighted that using trade and investment tools for advancing respect for labour rights, human rights and decent work was about harnessing the power of trade to change the terms of global competition, to bring shared prosperity to

workers and to create equitable opportunities, among other issues. Her Government was committed to a worker-centred trade policy that encouraged a race to the top and included social partners in its conception, development and implementation. She provided the example of the United States-Mexico-Canada trade agreement (USMCA), which contained the strongest labour provisions in a trade agreement to date, including all fundamental principles and rights at work, protections for migrants, and joint commitments against imported goods produced with forced labour. The agreement's dispute settlement mechanism had proven effective in allowing targeted interventions at the plant level for alleged workers' rights violations. She commended the partnership and commitment of the Mexican Government in this experience, which showed that the labour chapter in the trade agreement could be a catalyst for accountability and transparency.

Ms O'Neil noted that it was not possible to talk about the promising approaches to trade and social justice without looking at where it had gone wrong. She argued that some trade agreements had led to thousands of workers losing their jobs in her country, or moving from the formal to the informal economy resulting in a reduction of labour rights and basic safety requirements. She mentioned the tragedy of Rana Plaza as an example of the result of competitiveness based solely on low wages. She stressed that there was a clear need for new rules of trade built on justice and fairness, that worked against a race to bottom and to the benefit of people, workers and communities. As a positive example, she referred to Australia's recent policy decision to cease including investor-state dispute settlement mechanisms in new trade agreements. Such mechanisms had been used by corporations to erode government policies, for example in the field of public health.

Mr Türk observed that too often there was a separation of economic and social issues from human rights issues. Likewise, it was forgotten that the origins of the human rights movement were in the labour movement. He referred to Articles 22–25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which clearly described economic, social, and cultural rights, including rights related to work consistent with international labour standards. He noted that in his experience, attempts to attract and retain investment had led to trade-offs, such as the sidelining of human rights, but that human rights obligations had to be taken into account in economic policy and in designing trade and investment agreements. He identified two central issues: inclusivity – considering the potential impacts of economic decisions, particularly on vulnerable groups – and accountability for both States and businesses. His agency was working on the concept of the human rights economy, which would include looking at investment and trade decisions from a human rights due diligence perspective. He suggested that in some cases this could lead to a renegotiation of existing agreements to better promote a more equitable distribution of wealth.

The moderator recalled that many disadvantaged groups, including women, often worked in the informal economy or in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), which themselves faced many challenges with respect to competitiveness and market access. She asked panellists to share their perspectives on this issue.

Ms Okonjo-Iweala recalled that the preamble to the Marrakesh Agreement establishing the WTO's purpose as enhancing living standards, creating employment, and supporting sustainable development, was all about labour and people. Over time, many had forgotten about this original purpose, which she wished to bring back to the organization. She believed that the multilateral trading system had generally delivered on its promise, for example in lifting a billion people out of poverty. It had also always been clear that trade would create winners and losers. For that reason, trade agreements were supposed to be accompanied by active labour market and other social policies to ensure workers were not left behind. In most

cases, that had not happened, and social spending remained very low. However, to blame it all on trade instead of on the lack of the necessary policies, was not a correct response; these policy deficiencies should have been addressed long ago. There was a need to remedy this for those who were excluded, such as micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), comprising 95 per cent of employment in the world. She stated that digitalization and supply chain restructuring offered an opportunity to attract supply chains to those regions and countries that had been left behind in the first wave of globalization – what the WTO commonly referred to as “re-globalization” – and to address trade cost barriers. To that end, digital trade required clear rules to underpin it or MSMEs would continue to be uncompetitive.

Mr Sekkouri said that there was a continued need for action by multilateral organizations to push the frontiers from what were technical and normative to what was political. He recognized that it had often been difficult for governments to craft policies that balanced societal and market demands. He stated that in his country, more than 75 per cent of the total workforce was employed by SMEs. He pointed to three challenges and reform needs: first, digitalization and its costs, including their distribution between governments and businesses; second, skills, since SMEs only had limited resources to invest in upskilling and reskilling of the labour force; and third, the need to connect SMEs to larger enterprises through trade. Finally, he stressed the importance of social dialogue and collective bargaining.

Mr Coovadia reflected on the broader issues and highlighted that a series of recent transitions related to COVID-19, artificial intelligence and digitalization, had led to an urgent need for businesses in his country to look at their long-term sustainability, which should include human rights and encourage a constructive relationship between capital and labour to work together to grow businesses and societies. He stated that trade was not just about the movement of goods and services, but about the movement of people, and therefore the issue of human rights had to be at the centre. On SMEs, he stated that governments needed to ensure that there was a regulatory environment, including labour market policies, that fostered SME growth and enabled them to afford and sustain labour. He urged corporations to ensure linkages of SMEs to their supply chains and to invest in their upskilling and development.

Ms Coke-Hamilton agreed with previous speakers that the debate on trade and labour had come a long way. She stated that trade had always been a connector and had never been incompatible with development or human rights. The difficulty arose when trade rules were considered to have primacy over development, whereas trade was to serve human development. Referring to SMEs, which were the businesses most likely to be inclusive of marginalized groups such as women, she noted that digitalization was the single largest change taking place. She described her agency's work to help businesses enter the digital age to be competitive, access markets and be part of regional supply chains, pointing to the challenge of affordability. She pointed to the green transition and the role of the international community to support businesses in meeting the related requirements.

The moderator turned to Ms Grynspan, asking about how crucial it was to have environmental, social and governance (ESG) ratings in order to achieve social justice.

Ms Grynspan started by agreeing with previous speakers that trade needed to be considered a part of any development strategy, as were active labour market and industrial policies. She noted that it was important to foster a fair-trade system where rules protected countries' respective development strategies, rather than imposing standards unilaterally. With regard to the ESG scheme, she argued that it had yielded some positive results, such as reducing the gender pay gap and increasing transparency regarding pay structures, and could

be a mechanism to change behavioural patterns in the private sector. She stated that ESG dimensions needed to be genuine and properly measured, and that overly complicated ESG requirements could be challenging for SMEs. Another challenge related to the application of ESG criteria in financing decisions, as this could adversely affect developing countries. She posited that it was necessary to capacitate developing countries to comply with the relevant ESG requirements.

The moderator asked panellists to elaborate on the main opportunities and challenges presented by transformations in trade and in the world of work, and on the role that inclusive trade could play to advance sustainable development.

Ms Okonjo-Iweala noted several challenges in light of the multiple ongoing crises, including the vulnerabilities of supply chains and the war in Ukraine. She spoke about the need to deconcentrate and diversify supply chains, noting the opportunity to build resilience by integrating previously excluded countries into supply chains, and underlined the opportunities presented by digital trade and digitalization, particularly for women, youth and MSMEs. Digitally delivered services could be harnessed to expand inclusiveness, including by closing the digital divide.

Mr Türk asserted that trade framed by a human-centred economy approach and combined with human rights could be a powerful vehicle for transformation. He explained that this went beyond the current paradigm and involved challenging the current international financial architecture. He emphasized the challenges to social spending that developing countries faced as a result of debt repayments. The foundational documents of the UN system could provide a basis to reorient the current multilateral framework.

The moderator raised the question of the role of social dialogue in ensuring every member of society could reap the benefits of international trade and investment.

Mr Sekkouri suggested that social dialogue should be reframed according to the new challenges the world was facing. The tripartite partners needed to agree on the stakes of social dialogue and move beyond a strict bargaining dynamic. In his country, the Government had signed a new agreement with workers and employers after framing social dialogue as a common national endeavour, structured around proximity to lived experiences, to address concrete issues and solve social conflicts. The agreement had helped identify priority reforms for which resources would be dedicated, namely education and health systems reforms.

Ms Lee affirmed her Government's commitment to the multilateral trading system, notwithstanding the achievements that her Government saw in the bilateral space. The process of social dialogue was important not only for the establishment of policies that enabled inclusive and equitable growth, but for their implementation. She provided the example of Honduras, which had established a tripartite commission to address labour issues whose regular meetings enabled continuous dialogue.

Ms O'Neil asserted that trade was not the only driver of the continued growth in inequality today, but that it played a role. For workers and unions, the concept of fair trade referred to creating good, decent jobs, addressing inequality, a more sustainable environment, and embedding labour rights. For this to happen, social dialogue was crucial. At the ILO, it was understood that social dialogue relied on the ability to realize rights – in particular the capacity of workers to use their collective voice. She insisted that trade unions should have a key role in trade negotiations, which should be conducted transparently.

Mr Coovadia noted his country took social dialogue very seriously. From a business point of view, his experience was that social dialogue was most productive when it had specific

objectives and was time-bound. He stressed that government needed to play a role in social dialogue, listen, and then take decisions.

The moderator asked the panellists about their thoughts on synergies at the multilateral level.

Ms Grynspar referred to the need to bring organizations together and ensure collaboration at all levels, and stressed the potential for synergies among organizations. She pointed to weakened trade unions and social dialogue as factors in rising inequalities, driven by asymmetries of power. She identified social dialogue and trade rules as necessary to address them.

Mr Türk highlighted the need to have a marriage of different areas of governance – economic policies, trade policies, social movements, with human rights as a transversal issue that underpinned everything. He stated his hope to have a strategic dialogue with the ILO in that regard and invited all organizations, Member States, social partners and civil society actors to reaffirm their commitment to human rights.

Ms Coke-Hamilton explained that her agency worked directly with its two parent institutions, the WTO and UNCTAD, including on gender equality, and described its important partnership with the ILO, which included gathering data on the social, digital and trade divide.

Ms Okonjo-Iweala said that her organization worked closely with the International Trade Centre, addressing supply side challenges that trade rules could not address. She mentioned the WTO's collaboration with the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and other international organizations, and highlighted the establishment of a new advisory body to her office which included trade unions and civil society.

The moderator concluded by asking the panellists what was missing to achieve social dialogue, inclusive trade and growth.

Ms Grynspar highlighted the need for trust between countries and sectors and for the exchange of views, building bridges without overshadowing different perspectives.

Ms Coke-Hamilton identified a need for deliberate and strategic approaches, especially in terms of gender equality and inclusion, noting a lack of deliberate intent to incorporate gender equality into national policies and laws.

Mr Coovadia raised the need to address broader geopolitical challenges and their significant impact on trade and on social dialogue.

Ms Lee stressed the need for coherence and for ensuring that workers' rights were not an afterthought.

Ms O'Neil stated that workers' voices needed to be heard and to have a seat at the table, but also that there was need for a change in trade rules.

Ms Okonjo-Iweala summarized that what was missing was a common platform, trust and patience.

The moderator thanked the panellists for their contributions.

High-level statement

Mr Correia e Silva

Prime Minister of Cabo Verde

I would like to thank you for the invitation to participate in this high-level Summit. I am especially grateful for the pertinence and the high value of the theme of the Summit: Social Justice for All.

(The speaker continues in Portuguese.)

The fact that several million people around the world are currently living in poverty, below the level of human dignity, means that an increased focus on social justice is warranted at both the country and the global levels. We share the ILO's belief that we need a global agenda that is oriented towards social justice.

The high levels of poverty and inequalities and the lack of prospects for millions of children and young people are genuine global threats that increase instability, migration, populism and extremism.

Issues such as international trade, diversification of economies, and the risks of and conditions for financing development and the private sector, particularly for developing countries, all affect the rate of economic growth, particularly that of the least developed economies. And the objectives of social justice are dependent on the economy.

Matters such as stability, good governance and combating corruption affect the environment of trust and individual, social and economic entrepreneurship among citizens and enterprises. And social justice needs political, economic and social environments that are conducive to its development.

Addressing these matters requires not only a global agenda focused on social justice but also a strong commitment from each country to take action on the different internal variables that determine social justice, such as stability, good governance, a low level of corruption, and economic freedom; monetary and fiscal policies, and policies on income and on prices; active employment policies and policies on social security and social protection; and policies on access to education, to health, to basic goods and to housing with running water, sanitary facilities and electricity.

The issue of social justice is particularly acute for the working poor, who do not earn enough to cover the basic needs of their families and to live a decent life. The same goes for those with precarious working conditions and precarious income, particularly informal workers in business, farming and fishing. So too for unemployed people, particularly young people. All of these circumstances contribute to poverty and exacerbate inequalities.

That is why I want to focus my message today on policies to reduce absolute poverty and eliminate extreme poverty and to share with you the path that Cabo Verde has taken.

Cabo Verde is on a positive trajectory in combating poverty and inequality. Taking the threshold of US\$2.15 a day, extreme poverty fell from 28.2 per cent in 2015 to 14.6 per cent in 2022. According to data from 2020, social protection coverage has reached 51.4 per cent of the population.

Our ambition focuses on the objective of eradicating extreme poverty and significantly reducing absolute poverty by 2026. The Strategy on the Reduction of Absolute Poverty and the Eradication of Extreme Poverty is based on an integrated and coherent policy approach,

encompassing: policies on sustainable economic growth, active employment policies, policies on inclusion and social protection, policies on gender equality and equity, and policies on territorial cohesion. This approach is based not on handouts but on the economic and social empowerment of families living in poverty so that they can become autonomous and lift themselves out of poverty.

We have implemented a number of sustainable economic growth policies to increase decent employment opportunities in an environment of low inflation (not taking into consideration, of course, the current global inflation crisis that has resulted from the war in Ukraine).

We have implemented active employment policies on empowerment, particularly for young people and women, through a series of measures such as: vocational training that is accessible to all and certification of occupations, through entrepreneurship and productive inclusion, to the certification, organization and formalization of informal activities to increase income and give access to social security.

We have also implemented inclusion and social protection policies, such as policies for social empowerment through education. We now have universal preschool places for 4- and 5-year-olds and have free primary and secondary education. Another example is the social inclusion income for families living in poverty, which is a temporary measure to ensure that people have an income until they can get into work. We also have a non-contributory pension system for senior citizens who have worked for the State. We provide the poorest people with access to health and medical assistance and medication. We have set up housing policies involving the restoration of housing, provision of access to domestic water and sanitation, and subsidization of water and energy consumption through social tariffs. We are very aware that poverty exists within people's homes.

Our policies on gender equality and equity are used to bridge the opportunity gap between men and women and to improve the performance of human capital.

We also have territorial cohesion policies to combat regional economic and social inequalities and to create opportunities for development in all regions of the country.

We have set up a Single Social Registry so that social policies on income, productive inclusion, education, healthcare, social care and housing are based on rules and indicators that are focused on the poorest families and indexed to the objectives of reducing absolute poverty and eradicating extreme poverty. It is through these policies that we are aiming to reduce absolute poverty and eradicate extreme poverty by 2026, thus contributing to increased social justice.

Once again, I would like to affirm my conviction that we can, and must, eliminate extreme poverty and reduce absolute poverty and inequalities. This will have a positive impact on human dignity, security, the productivity of the economy, freedom and democracy. Cooperation for development and financing conditions for the least developed countries, be that in the public or in the private sector, are absolutely essential, alongside national efforts, so that we may drive the necessary transformations to achieve greater social justice for all.

Closing of the World of Work Summit

The President

That brings us to the end of this year's World of Work Summit. Before closing, I would like to give the floor to the Director-General of the ILO, who wishes to make some closing remarks.

Mr Hounghbo

Director-General of the International Labour Office and Secretary-General
of the Conference
(Original French)

Allow me to thank you sincerely for the inspiring messages, priorities and vision that you have shared during this Summit. Your contributions have been, and remain, essential to shaping our collective understanding of social justice issues and, most importantly, to defining the way forward in the weeks and months to come.

A number of points and reflections have been put on the table; I will not judge them, but I should like to return to certain points in particular.

First, I shall start with the fact that, by placing social justice at the heart of our agenda, we will respond to people's legitimate expectations and strengthen our commitment to a more equitable and inclusive world order. That seems to me to be one point that emerged, whether through the statements made by heads of state and government or during the panel discussions.

Growing inequalities, persistent poverty, informality, inequality of opportunities, these are complex challenges that require renewed solidarity and concerted and coordinated action by the entire international community. I believe that my colleague Winnie Byanyima, Executive Director of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, illustrated this perfectly in her statement at one of the panel discussions. Access to opportunities cannot be achieved without a strong ambition to promote education, training, lifelong training of course, and skills development for women, young people and the most vulnerable populations. This was also underlined at the panel discussion yesterday afternoon by all participants, with two salient examples introduced, if I recall correctly, by the Employer representative, Sonya Janahi from the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

The second point to which I would like to return, although it may seem almost tautological – but the point must be emphasized – is the fact that we must act together. We must act in a coherent manner, and we must act in a complementary manner. The social and economic problems that we face are interconnected and transcend national borders. It is therefore essential for us to strengthen our cooperation and coordination in order to maximize the impact of the various actions undertaken and to be undertaken.

The Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions was often cited as an example during the panel discussion this morning with unwavering advocacy by several governments, including that of the Federal Minister of Labour and Social Affairs of Germany, Mr Heil, and of the President of the Senate of Uzbekistan, Ms Tanzila Narbaeva, who returned to this point with great poignancy.

My third thought is that it is crucial that we structure our action. We must make this case together at the national, regional and global levels. The need to do so was particularly highlighted during the panel discussion that has just ended. It stands at the crossroads where

trade agendas, employment agendas and access to rights for inclusive, sustainable and just development converge. It was also most interesting to take due account of the opening statement by Ms Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, Director-General of the World Trade Organization.

I must also say that it is reassuring to note that at all times, everywhere and, above all, on every topic, social dialogue emerges not only as our collective trademark but also as a guarantee of success. I think it reassuring, although it would have been grave indeed had it not been so, that most actors returned to the importance of social dialogue in everything that we are going to do to further the cause of social justice. Naturally, it is no surprise that the Workers' delegate, Mr Plamen Dimitrov, returned fairly precisely to this point.

In conclusion, I wish to express my sincere gratitude for your participation. It has been two – I would not say long, but two quite intense days and the sustained presence of you all is most sincerely appreciated. From the end of July, in one and a half months from now, the Office will hold another tripartite consultation, but we will also organize working sessions with colleagues from the United Nations system agencies and the Bretton Woods institutions in order to begin to chart the course, to articulate the themes on which we will focus, in addition to the advocacy that we all carry out, and I know that I can count on you to maintain this dynamic of advocacy, which has only just begun. This will lead us to present a document and a report to the Governing Body next November setting out the various themes that we intend to address in the context of the implementation of the budget that was approved yesterday.

The President

Many thanks, Mr Hounbo, for your remarks on what has been a most enriching and inspiring Summit. Likewise, our heartfelt thanks go to all the distinguished representatives from all three constituent benches, who shared their concerns and aspirations and their ideas on how to achieve greater social justice in a world affected by multiple crises. It has been a privilege to listen to the exchanges. The views expressed during this Summit will no doubt guide us in our collective efforts to build a world of work with decent work and social justice for all. I declare that the 2023 World of Work Summit on social justice for all is now closed.

(The Conference continued its work in plenary.)