111th Session of the International Labour Conference, 2023

Transcript of the discussion of the Reports of the Director-General and the Chairpersons of the Governing Body

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Tuesday, 6 June 2023

Mr Ali bin Samikh Al Marri

President (Qatar)

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. It is my great pleasure to declare open the second sitting of the 111th Session of the International Labour Conference. With your indulgence, I have a brief announcement to make before we begin our business for this morning. The secretariat of the Conference has been notified that the Employers' group wishes to slightly modify the list of the Employer regular and deputy members of the General Affairs Committee. The revised list will be published on the dedicated website of the committee. May I take it that the plenary takes note of the Employers' group's request and endorses the publication of the revised list of Employer regular and deputy members of the General Affairs Committee? I think it is okay. Thank you. This morning we shall begin the general discussion of the Report of the Chairperson of the Governing Body, Report 1B, and the Report of the Director-General, 'Advancing social justice'. The report reflects the aspiration of millions of people to decent work and a decent life. It builds a momentum to place social justice at the core of national and international policies at a time of compounding crises. In the appendix to his report, the Director-General addresses the situation of workers of the occupied Arab territories. These two reports and appendix were presented in the plenary yesterday. For the rest of the plenary programme over the days to come, you will find full details in the Conference guide and the Daily Bulletin, both of which are available online and the distribution desks and via the ILO event app. We shall now begin the discussion of the reports of the Chairperson of the Governing Body and the Director-General just presented. We have 34 registered speakers today. Before giving the floor to the first one, I should like to make a call on all those who will speak on this report to do so with both openness and dignity that are appropriate to the highest international body in the realm of social and labour related matters. Freedom of expression is a vital feature of the International Labour Organization. To exercise the freedom in a spirit of mutual respect, it is essential that all delegates respect the accepted procedure, use parliamentary language, refer only to that item under discussion and avoid raising any question foreign to these matters. The respect of the principle is necessary if we want our work to be effective and successful. May I remind you that the duration of speech has been limited to five minutes only. This time limit will be strictly applied. It is therefore strongly recommended that delegates reduce [vgr INAUDIBLE 4:39] to a minimum. For the sake of transparency and because of respect for the time, keeping a collective responsibility, the countdown will be on display on the screen for all the interventions. This will also enable delegates speaking further down the list to see how fast progress is being made and prepare themselves for making their presentation. Delegates who wish to raise a point of order or request the right of reply in the plenary should approach the podium and inform the clerk team of this, clearly indicating the intervention in respect of which the right of reply is sought. In the event of the right of reply, please be reminded that it should refer only to the matter in question. It should not exceed two minutes, and it should be delivered in respectful parliamentary language. Please keep in mind that it is not a practice in our organization to allow a right to reply to a reply. May I also say that it is the firm agreement of the part of the officer beginning our sitting strictly on time. It is only in this way that we manage to complete the debate within the time scheduled. Without further ado we shall now open the discussion on the reports of the Chairperson of the Governing Body and the Director-General. We will be following the speakers list displayed in the room and

published in the Daily Bulletin. I am now pleased to move to the first distinguished speakers and invite the Chairpersons of the Employers' and Workers' groups to the Conference to deliver their opening statements. They will put forward their group's views and on the work ahead towards social justice in the context of the multiple crises. We shall now begin with the Employers' group.

Ms Renate Hornung-Draus

Employer (Germany)

Dear Chair, dear Director-General, dear observers, guests, ladies and gentlemen. On behalf of the Employers' group, I would like to begin by thanking you, Director-General, for providing us with a document that offers a detailed review of the dimensions of social justice, and it also includes an assessment of its current situation and areas of action. We observe with interest that while the report does not provide a concise definition of social justice it does offer a list of what it should include, namely fairness, equity and having a voice in the agency to shape our lives and by stressing that social justice enables societies and economies to function more cohesively. Director-General, the Employers could not agree more with such an aspiration. Moreover, we strongly believe in these elements as key to responding to global social and employment demands. In this context, we once again express our strong support for the Centenary Declaration which underscores the relevance of tripartite efforts to achieve social justice and the need to reinvigorate the International Labour Organization to shape a world of work that realizes social justice as its founding vision. Dear colleagues, social justice is the cornerstone of the ILO, but it is crucial that the ILO better integrates and defends the critical contributions that employers and business have made and that it is making to social justice. The report does, to some extent, draw attention to the importance and relevance of sustainable enterprises, but unfortunately it fails to develop properly the argument by including information on both the contributions of sustainable enterprises of all sizes and of their regulatory and policy needs which companies have to grow and develop so that they can actually provide decent work and full and productive employment, as is quoted in the Sustainable Development Goals. Private enterprises are the leaders and drivers of employment creation in most countries. This is especially true in developing countries where over 90% of employment is in the private sector. Despite the multiple constraints and challenges related to sustainable enterprise development, employers, through their efforts, create significant economic and moral value for communities and societies. Decent and productive employment opportunities are essential for achieving social justice and sustainable economic and social development. The ILO needs to highlight and promote this role. We also request that there be more details on the role of productivity in promoting social justice, and we commend the Director-General for looking at productivity with much more attention and detail than has been done in the past years. The Centenary Declaration clearly recognizes that improving productivity creates employment opportunities and improves the standard of living of individuals and of communities. Increased productivity can lead to higher wages and better working conditions as well as reduced informality, and this all can help to reduce poverty and inequality. Every effort by the ILO to advance social justice needs to take on board productivity and a proper strategy for its promotion as a key element. Another topic lacking proper detail is the interconnection between the private sector contribution toward skill development and social justice. Ensuring equal access to education, training and other opportunities to develop skills and talents will enhance the capacity of individuals to find decent employment opportunities and enjoy social

justice. The ambition of the Centenary Declaration and the call for action on skills remain relevant and should have been adequately transposed in this report, so there is room for improvement in this field. In addition, the collaboration between companies and educational and vocational training institutions has never been so critical. In many countries this collaboration is far from optimal, to the detriment of young people and the most vulnerable. Employers are key players in identifying skills needs that meet labour market demands. Impactful educational and skills policies need the active involvement of employers. There are other aspects that we believe were overlooked when looking at the contributions of enterprises to social justice, such as the key role they play in sustainable social protection schemes. Robust and adequate social protection floors are essential to achieve social justice, but this requires sizeable private sector contributions. Employers' contributions are by far the most significant share of all contributions in the majority of social protection schemes. Public-private sector partnerships are also a cornerstone of social justice actions, and we would have appreciated to see more information on its importance. Innovation and entrepreneurship can also play a vital role in promoting social justice by creating new opportunities for economic and social empowerment. It becomes increasingly clear that those countries without a proper environment for individuals and companies to develop their ideas and projects lag in innovation and creativity. It would be useful to further develop this point in the further works on this report. But, of course, respect for human rights, one of the four dimensions of social justice listed in the ILO's report, requires business engagement. Companies, by adopting policies and practices that prevent and mitigate human rights violations in their operations and supply chains, are contributing to more just and equitable societies within their own field of competencies. Again this contribution will diminish or stop with policies discouraging private-sector presence and investment. So the challenge we have is to make sure that all the policies do not lead to a cut-and-run attitude of companies but to a stay-and-improve attitude where there are problems. Employers remain fully committed to advancing social justice and will continue to engage in a constructive manner in the tailoring of policies that are fit to advance social justice worldwide. Realizing social justice needs, however, requires to properly integrate the values and the needs of enterprises. Dear Director-General, dear Chair and colleagues, the Employers will, of course, continue to engage to develop the social justice coalition, an initiative of the ILO Director-General, and we have to make sure that tripartism and social dialogue must be the backbone that drives this forward. Tripartism is the unique quality of the International Labour Organization, and without tripartism this coalition risks being just another good idea or another forum that is remembered for what it did not achieve rather than for its potential to transform the ILO and, more importantly, the UN system and the global community altogether. The coalition's structure, governance and membership needs to integrate this tripartism as a leading and driving force. Dear Director-General, in your report you also refer to the occupied Arab territories. Let me say a couple of words before closing. As we mark the 30th anniversary of the Oslo Accords we wished, and I quote your preface, to, "Bring a message of hope to the Conference – justified hope that peace will prevail, that social justice will be established and that decent work will become a reality." Like you, we are afraid that such a message, "Would be out of tune with the realities on the ground", as described in detail in the report. In its concluding observations the report states that, "Social justice requires equality, freedom and dignity". These values are built upon international labour standards and are totally undermined by increasing violence across the occupied Arab territories. In this context, we are also concerned that decent work appears to be ever more elusive. As employers, we remain strongly committed to play our role globally and on the ground while recalling that States have the prime

responsibility to stand for the relevant UN resolutions, as well as the implementation of ILO Conventions. Thank you very much.

Ms Catelene Passchier

Worker (Netherlands)

President and Vice-Presidents of the Conference, Secretary-General, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen. I speak today on the Director-General's report, 'Advancing social justice'. But of course I want to first welcome also the other DG's report on the workers in the occupied Arab territories, showing the urgent need to address social justice also for them, and maybe in particular for them, and I already addressed that report in my opening statement yesterday. On behalf of the Workers' group in the ILO, I thank the Director-General for choosing the topic of advancing social justice for both his report to this Conference as well as his initiative for a new global coalition. The topic of social justice is critical in times of a multifaceted crisis and is the very essence of the ILO's mandate since it was founded on the ruins of the First World War. Times of crisis and conflict demonstrate the added value of the ILO with its minimum global labour standards and tripartite engagement for the peaceful resolution of conflict. Today we are once again faced with conflict, pandemics, hunger and inequality. And again rising totalitarianism seems to increasingly be the response. It is therefore important that the ILO does some soul searching and goes back to its roots. We very much welcome the Director-General's strong and audacious vision statement and endorse the report as a solid basis for his Global Coalition for Social Justice. And let us all be inspired and get out of our comfort zones to build bridges to each other and towards a more sustainable future. We share the DG's diagnosis as to why the world's economy is ill, and we agree with the cure. The report starts by clarifying what we mean by social justice with reference to the Philadelphia Declaration, our own constitution, which continues to be the beating heart of the ILO and should guide us in all the ILO's work, including in the Global Coalition for Social Justice. The report describes four interrelated and interdependent dimensions to social justice: human rights and capabilities, equal access to what we understand to be decent work opportunities, fair distribution, taking into account power imbalances, and just transitions. All these dimensions offer major opportunities for the ILO and its constituents to more effectively realize social justice. The four strategic objectives of the social justice Declaration and its implementation methods indeed offer further tools for the ILO and constituents to promote and implement the Decent Work Agenda and recognize the links with healthcare and quality education as a broader common agenda with related areas of governance. The report paints a bleak picture of the current state of social justice. A compounding crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic, rising prices, extreme weather events, war and geopolitical instability is confronting national governments that seem unable to find the right answers. Disaffection and loss of trust in governments is the result. The world needs a new social contract now or these crises will continue to grow in scale and frequency while governments' ability to master them, let alone anticipate them with just transitions, will continue to decline. As confirmed in the report, any effective social contract needs to be premised on the recognition of freedom of association as a means, a key enabling right, to achieve decent work for all. Chapter 3 of the report adds the human-centred approach to the future of work which puts workers' rights and needs at the heart of economic, social and environmental policies, as stated in the Centenary Declaration. It focuses on a rights-based approach for inclusive and effective governance of work and the rule of law in the economy and for a human control over blind market forces, global and untransparent supply chains

and artificial intelligence. We welcome the strong reference to our constitutional mission statement that includes promoting full employment through macroeconomic transformative policies to create decent work through investment in care, education and training, among others. The section on revitalizing labour market institutions for fair outcomes contains the important caveat that labour market institutions must be inclusive and allow workers to negotiate living wages and other conditions, including maximum hours of work, in order to effectively reduce inequalities. Targeted initiatives of the ILO and its constituents are long overdue. The report, when emphasizing the need to achieve universal access to comprehensive and sustainable social protection, rightfully refers to the elephant in the room: the expansion of fiscal space and closing the funding gap and the necessary policy coherence based on ILO standards with other institutions. We reiterate once again our strong support for the Global Coalition for Social Justice and wish to emphasize that the report before us is the best basis to frame its work that we have seen so far. Mobilizing tripartism should indeed be the main vehicle for the coalition's work to promote social justice on the basis of international labour standards. If we get things right, the coalition should be one of the UN's high-impact initiatives for the attainment of the SDGs through intensified international multilateral and tripartite cooperation. While we can agree with a transparent structure of the coalition including multiple stakeholders, its backbone needs to remain tripartite. The reference to the Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions, with the ILO as leading agency, can indeed serve to further extend the reach of the Organization and the Office. There is a clear convergence in ambitions that should facilitate synergies. Similarly, we remain committed to the High-Level Panel on the Teaching Profession and the Equal Pay Coalition, with a key role for Education International which is the global union that represents teachers worldwide. We, including the International Union of Food Workers, IUF, do have concerns about how the UN Food Systems Summit was organized and wonder why the ILO would have to join an external alliance to work on wages in food systems. This issue is part of the core mandate of the ILO, and without social dialogue through tripartite constituents, such a multistakeholder initiative can never deliver. It is very worrying that any UN agency that is part of the coalition can develop parallel labour standards to the ones of the ILO without any measures to ensure coherence. In January 2021 UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, Michael Fakhri, shared his concerns. In an open letter he wrote, "The Summit still appears to be heavily skewed in favour of one type of approach to food systems, namely market-based solutions. Ever since the 2008 food crisis, there remains a concern that depending on financiers and entrepreneurs to dominate food systems leads to more instability. A human-rights based approach to food systems, however, puts people before profit. Human rights ensure that markets serve social needs and oblige States to provide people with adequate social protection. The challenge is not just about eliminating hunger and malnutrition. Our duty to ourselves and future generations is to change food systems in a way that ensures that everyone on the planet lives with dignity. There will be no real solutions if we focus on science and technology, profits and markets, without also addressing fundamental questions of equality, accountability and governance." And this is the end of a long quote, but we think it is very relevant for a much wider area of issues than just the food system. Indeed, there is an urgent need to revisit trade policies and agreements in order to minimize the negative impacts of globalization by ensuring a labour protection competition floor across all supply chains, including through mandatory due diligence. Human dignity, through fundamental principles and rights at work, minimum wages and maximum hours of work, as per the Centenary Declaration, cannot be subject to economic competition. Similarly, social justice cannot not be realized if the international financial institutions and the WTO continue to undermine labour rights

and decent work rather than establishing human and labour rights with an economic and social floor for both commercial competition and development. The coalition will need to streamline or create better and clearer operational tools to implement ILO standards through multilateral initiatives. The DG's report rightly suggests high-level engagement with the institutions, which we certainly need in the run up to the Summit of the Future and the World Social Summit. And we also certainly welcome the ambition of closer engagement on social safeguards, ILO-IMF pilots to expand fiscal space for full employment and the establishment of a social protection floor, tripartite dialogue on debt restructuring, work with the World Bank to establish rights-based social protection systems, and partnerships on anti-crisis frameworks with the World Bank and the IMF. All of that needs to be happening. In the geopolitical context of today, what we are still missing, however, is a more explicit focus on the link with peace and the need for social justice for lasting peace and vice versa. The involvement of social partners in peace negotiations and reconstruction initiatives is key. Labour diplomacy has proved its merits in contributing to peace in Europe in the last century, and in several countries in the Americas more recently. In addition, there is an important role to play in what could be called 'just conversion' through social partnership and tripartite transition plans to get us back on track towards a more peaceful society and transform the massive investment in military infrastructure and war into just transitions for peace and resilience. We would invite the Office to still integrate this element more prominently into the work of the coalition. Our ambition indeed needs to be commensurate to the challenges before us. Making the coalition effective will require bold action and political courage from all tripartite social partners. We have a shared responsibility. Let us put our collective shoulders under the Global Coalition for Social Justice and start building towards a new social contract for the benefit of all today. The Summit of the Future in 2024 and the World Social Summit in 2025 are historic opportunities to deliver the required paradigm shift in global governance for social justice. We cannot and shall not miss it. Thank you.

Mr Keith Bell

Government (Bahamas)

Mr Secretary-General, Mr President, Vice-Presidents, delegates, Bahamians, good morning. On behalf of the Government and people of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas, I wish to congratulate you, Mr President, and your vice-presidents on your election as Chairman and Vice-Chairmen, respectively, of this 111th Conference. Mr Director-General, I am certain that colleague ministers are extremely pleased to greet you in your first International Labour Conference as Director-General. We are very gratified that in your initial report you have set your vision for advancing social justice and promoting decent work by examining some of the stark realities facing the world of work today, including the persistent injustices, inequalities and insecurities on which we, as Member States, must now act. I am confident that with your leadership we will indeed act, and we anticipate a most productive session. Since being appointed as Minister of Labour and Immigration in September of last year, my government has moved swiftly to restore trust and confidence and rebuild the relationship between the Bahamian social partners to reflect the spirit and intent of ILO Convention 144. Since our participation in the 110th Session, the Bahamian Government has taken deliberate steps to improve the standard of living of the citizens and residents through The Bahamas Decent Work Country Programme 2021-2026. Mr Director-General, as your report establishes four pillars for a positive impact on the international call for social justice on a world-wide level, The Bahamas has also implemented a number of key

initiatives aligned with the spirit and intent underlining the concept of social justice. These initiatives include, but not are limited to, the ratification of ILO Convention 190 on the elimination of violence and harassment in the world of work and Convention 159 on vocational rehabilitation and employment of persons with disabilities; the deployment of a national apprenticeship programme task force which will review the legislation and supporting policies on apprenticeship; the increase in the national minimum wage with effect from January 1st, 2023; directing the National Tripartite Council to submit recommendations on the enactment of legislation to establish a liveable wage; increasing employment opportunities to the public in notable projects called Labour on the Blocks; implementing a programme to mentor and guide high-school students in areas that have been highlighted within the skills gaps and others through initiatives called Labour on the Campus; and supporting and endorsing The National Training Agency of The Bahamas' job readiness training and development programmes that have provided many Bahamians with the skills needed to attain and retain job opportunities. Mr President and distinguished Vice-Presidents, my government looks forward to the deepening of the relationship with our social partners and further collaboration by providing new and exciting opportunities for the funding of entrepreneurship through the Access Accelerator, Small Business Development Centre, which is an initiative that advocates for and supports the evolution of micro, small and medium-sized businesses. Access Accelerator has also established initiatives designed for supporting women entrepreneurs. Mr Director-General, your definition of social justice as the aspiration that all human beings, irrespective of race, creed or sex, have the right to pursue both their material wellbeing and their spiritual development in conditions of freedom and dignity, of economic security and equal opportunity is reflective of the position held by my government, the Government of The Bahamas, and we remain committed to working with the ILO and other Member States to ensure the four pillars outlined in your report are efficiently and effectively implemented. Mr President and Distinguished Vice-President, on behalf of my government, I wish to express my thanks and appreciation to the Caribbean Office of the ILO for their unwavering support and assistance in providing technical and other support to make all components of the Second Generation Bahamas Decent Work Country Programme a reality. May God continue to bless the ILO and may God continue the good Commonwealth of The Bahamas. Thank you very much.

Mr Tsvetan Simeonov

Employer (Bulgaria)

President, allow me to convey, on behalf of the Bulgarian employers, my congratulations on your appointment to this important position and wish you and your deputies success at the 111th Session of the International Labour Conference. It is a pleasure to attend the International Labour Conference in person and be back to our customary work format. The crisis in the health sector, the war in Ukraine and its negative impact on the economies across the world have further aggravated the situation in the social sector where inflation is straining social dialogue. Not only the businesses but the world as a whole will be facing serious challenges regarding the preservation of the environment and the control of global warming. With globalization and digitalization advancing at a rapid pace in every sphere and changing the whole world, it is the appropriate time to have a proactive and comprehensive discussion on social justice, which is in the centre of this year's first Report of the Director-General. But, as representatives of the employers, it is essential for us to prevent labour relations from becoming political, achieving at the same time a balance between the

efforts to bolster the economy and the improvement of living conditions. Apprenticeship is important to us, and we encourage extensive discussions and consider ideas of developing special programmes on the subject on the basis of the leading achievements and good practices in countries such as Switzerland and Germany, for example. The fair and just transition and social protection are somewhat erroneously interpreted by our social partners as providing funds without the input of sufficient quantity and quality of decent work by able-bodied people of working age. The Bulgarian employers took active part in social dialogue as a vital element of the commitment to create conditions for the stability of the Bulgarian economy. Bulgaria will soon join the Eurozone, and it is our belief that such an event will favourably affect the climate and give a new impetus to entrepreneurship interest in the country. The legal framework and social achievements of Western Europe and the EU Member States stand out as good examples, but the excessive ambitions of the populists should definitely not disturb the economic balance in the countries. The Conventions and Recommendations of the ILO should serve as the right reference point for achieving this balance as this is the result of the most distinguished international organization's work on them, with exceptional competence on industrial dialogue. The accession of Bulgaria to the Schengen area and the OECD are among the national priorities of the Association of the Organizations of Bulgarian Employers too. As representatives of the employers, we are seriously concerned about the long-term effect of the amendments to the national labour legislation proposed recently, which are contrary to Directive (EU) 2022/2041 of the European Parliament and the Council of 19th October 2022, on the adequate minimum wages in the European Union. They do not create a basis for the implementation of Minimum Wage Fixing Convention No.131 of the ILO, which provides not for numbers but for a mechanism for determining the amount of the minimum wage. I would like to conclude by assuring you that the Bulgarian employers are strongly believing the agenda and the endeavours of the International Labour Conference and the International Labour Organization to achieve the above-mentioned goals. Thank you for the opportunity to speak at this outstanding forum and for your attention.

Mr Abdulqader Shehab

Worker (Bahrain)

Mr President of the Conference, Excellencies, Director-General, dear delegates. First of all, Mr President, allow me to congratulate you on your election at the head of this body, and I would like to wish you every success in the leading of this Conference. I also congratulate you, Mr President, on the work done by Qatar in 2022. The entire world saw this success, and that is why I am convinced that you will do just as good a job in leading this Conference. I am also just as delighted to thank the Director-General of the ILO for having done an outstanding job in organizing this Conference, and I would like to wish him every success in his work in the service of the international community. Ladies and gentlemen, from this rostrum I invite the Government of my country, the Kingdom of Bahrain, to ratify all the Conventions in the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. And we have only ratified five, whereas the rest of the text are the most important ones. They are protecting the most important principles of international labour law, providing a foundation to protect labour and to ensure the completion of economic processes. From this august rostrum I also would call for a spread of protection to migrant workers because in our region we have many such migrant workers. They play a vital role in the economic development of the region, so it is high time to spread this coverage of social protection to them to show

our recognition to their contribution to the development of the region. From this rostrum I want to tell you that our international union of Bahrain has introduced a reform on social insurance programmes to take into account the interests of all the parties involved in production, and this with a view to redressing imbalances. This has been presented to the Government, and I hope it will be implemented because the purpose of it is to redress the shortcomings in our pension funds but also to improve the balances in our labour market. And we think that we need to have human equality in order to have a just society, and we think that any deviation from this balance is going to lead to the destruction of human society and of humanity and human beings. And this is taking us away from our mission because we are part of the construction of humanity. We want men and women to continue to build society to move humanity forward. Ladies and gentlemen, I take this opportunity to express our full solidarity with the Palestinian people, a brethren people which is an icon for the global fight for dignity and freedom. It is the slogan for a world of rights. It is the cry of the oppressed. In this hard struggle we know that it will lead to an inevitable and very strong victory so that it can recover all the Arab occupied territories. So I want to wish you all every success in this Conference, and I hope we will be successful for a better future for all of humanity. May the peace of God be upon you.

Mr Ahmad Suliman Aalrajhi

Government (Saudi Arabia)

Mr President of the ILO, Mr Director-General of the ILO, honourable delegates, may the peace of God be upon you. I have the pleasure of working in the 111th Session of the ILC and, Mr President, I would like to congratulate you on your election as president of our conference. I congratulate the Vice-Presidents and wish them every success in their work. I also would like to thank His Excellency the Director-General of the Organization for his efforts to promote the actions of this organization and on his report submitted at the end of this year as well as his relevant choice pertaining to the promotion of social justice and reinforcing decent jobs, highlighting the challenges we face today. We recall what was mentioned by the report. Namely, needing to strengthen dialogue and cooperation and synergy at the international level in order to attain social justice, to create jobs, to improve living standards, guarantee people's dignity, to fight poverty and to fight inequality. We hail the extraordinary efforts of the Organization to attain the aspirations of humanity in many areas and the proponent role of this organization which supports the international community to face all of its challenges. Namely, in the area of human rights and prosperity. Ladies and gentlemen, within the framework of the efforts of our kingdom for justice and individual freedoms, we have developed some programmes to support researchers for social programmes as well as programmes to support people who have constant need and assistance to build a stable and balanced society. Likewise, we also want to ensure continuity of social prosperity for citizens and residents. We have increased jobs in a certain number of sectors, which has made it possible to reduce unemployment in 2022, and it has reached 4.8% which is a record in our country. Likewise, political decisions, policies and the labour market have been able to achieve unprecedented results. This has also made it possible for 500,000 citizens to join the labour market since 2019. Currently, 2.2 million Saudis are working in the public sector. Our programmes have made it possible to increase job rates and attract the best managers in specialized fields. Empowerment of women is a priority within the framework of our policies because we are aware of the importance of women's participation in efforts at development. The participation rate of women in the economy has reached 36% at the end of 2022 and

their contribution to the labour market has reached 33.6%. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is committing to implement the Conventions on equality among individuals, and Saudi Arabia is today one of the implementing countries in terms of the best results for the equal pay for equal work index to reduce gaps between women and men in terms of equal pay for equal work. We want to protect children from all forms of negligence, discrimination and exploitation, which underpins efforts to fight child labour. We have also adopted a programme to fight harassment of children, something children face, in order to protect the rights of citizens and residents. Since its creation, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has been very active as a humanitarian player, providing humanitarian assistance. We grant loans at favourable rates without any discrimination to all States. We are one of the top ten in providing humanitarian assistance as humanitarian assistance is provided to displaced persons from Syria or Yemen. And we give them the opportunity to work in Saudi Arabia, and this thanks to a document which opens up the labour market to them for a determined period. Now in terms of environmental, social and economic policies, synergy at the international level is a prerequisite to develop high-calibre initiatives. We have to support governments within the framework of an economic recovery and to have greater resilience in order to face challenges and rise to them, and we need synergy in order to carry out socio-economic dimensions of sustainable development plans between now and 2030. In conclusion, I simply want to wish you every success throughout this Conference. Thank you.

Mr Bienvenido Laguesma

Government (Philippines)

Excellencies, distinguished delegates from the government, worker and employer sectors, ladies and gentlemen. On behalf of the Government of the Republic of the Philippines, let me express our appreciation to the Director-General for his illuminating report to this Conference. Let me also congratulate Your Excellency Ali bin Samikh Al Marri, Qatar Minister of Labour, on your election as Conference President. With your guiding hand, I am sure that we will have efficient and productive discussions on the report. The report paints a picture of our world confronted by multiple crises, especially over the last three years. Emphasizing the need for coherent national and international responses, the report calls for the establishment of a Global Coalition for Social Justice. Mr President, as the Philippines observes its 75th year of ILO membership it also affirms its commitment to social justice. Our response to the crises is embodied in the socio-economic agenda of President Ferdinand Marcos Junior, as articulated in the Philippine medium-term Development Plan 2023-2028 adopted last December and in a companion plan on labour and employment presently being finalized. The goals of our development plans are aligned with the four dimensions of social justice identified in the Director-General's report. Our human resource development policies and programmes are being progressively oriented toward anticipating and building competencies required in the twenty-first century world of work. The Philippine Qualification Framework is now in operation. It will support the country's thrust to accelerate industrialization and bring our educational systems at par with international standards. In this regard, we welcome the formulation of an international instrument on apprenticeship as a modality for the development of a highly skilled workforce. Complementing this is TVET for Social Equity, which aims to upskill lower-skilled workers to expand their work opportunities. The Philippines has several substantive laws promoting equality of access and treatment in occupation, as well as protecting workers against various forms of discrimination. A particular challenge lies in the area

of labour migration. As a country which has a significant number of overseas migrant workers, many of whom are in the lower-skilled categories, the Philippines strongly supports skills training, international action on fair labour migration, including non-discrimination, ethical recruitment, portability of social protection and reintegration. Philippine labour laws provide for minimum standards on working conditions, including wages, occupational safety and health, and social security. On top of these, the Philippines continues to respect, protect and promote freedom of association and the rights to self-organization and collective bargaining. In this regard, the present government has been addressing the longstanding issues arising from the country's implementation of Convention 87. In January this year it received the High-Level Tripartite Mission created during the 107th ILC in 2019. Within a very short span of time, the present government has taken concrete actions on the recommendations of the mission. Last April Executive Order No. 23 was issued by the President of the Philippines, creating an inter-agency committee to protect freedom of association and the right to organize. It is currently engaging the social partners in the formulation of a road map to further address the issues raised. The Government assures this Conference that it will always give due respect and consideration to the recommendations of the ILO supervisory bodies. But let two things be clear. One, supervisory bodies have the [vgr INAUDIBLE 4:17] and responsibility to ensure that their recommendations are feasible within the country's institutions, laws and jurisprudence. And second, the social partners, not just government, have a shared responsibility in helping [vgr INAUDIBLE 4:31] not only in words but more importantly to their own concrete actions. The Philippines upholds tripartism as an important mechanism in the implementation and formulation of responsive and equitable economic and social policies. We have made sure that sectoral representation in tripartite mechanisms is genuine and accepted. Since July last year all newly-appointed worker and employer representatives have come from the nominees of social partners themselves. In the medium term, government is committed to using tripartite mechanisms in reviewing and possibly reforming market governance institutions. The Philippine Government approved last April the national framework on the social protection floor. The framework strengthens coordination among agencies involved in implementing social protection programmes, and this includes provision of accessible health, education and other basic services and welfare assistance for the young, the elderly and the vulnerable sectors of society. Finally, Mr President, from the experience of the Philippines as a member of the ILO, we know that social justice and human-centred development are inseparable goals. These cannot be realized overnight with quick fixes, grandiose plans or ceremonial events. Social justice and human development are manifested in a series of sustainably progressive outcomes, accomplished through the collective efforts of governments and the social partners in the context of each country's circumstances. No country can reach a perfect state at any time. Nevertheless, Mr President, we in the Philippine Government remain firmly committed to our duty to strive for social justice and human-centred development at all times. Thank you so much and a pleasant good morning to all.

Mr Özgür Burak Akkol

Employer (Türkiye)

Dear President and Vice-Presidents of the Conference, dear Director-General and distinguished delegates, I respectfully greet you on behalf of the Turkish Confederation of Employer Associations and myself. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the ILO and constituents. Their efforts to organize this Conference are invaluable. It

has always been an honour to be a part of this community committed to peace, prosperity and progress. Dear colleagues, the challenges we face on the global stage are immense. This requires collaborative action, as the Director-General states in his report. Despite recent signs of improvement, recovery is expected to be fragile. We have to recognize that this has far-reaching implications for the world of work. We must target inclusive and sustainable recovery, and we must remain committed to the human-centred and rights-based approach of the ILO. Ladies and gentlemen, we always believe that social dialogue is the cornerstone of a just and inclusive society, so let us take this opportunity here to shape the future of work. Let us make it more inclusive, sustainable and decent for all. Dear colleagues, in February two major earthquakes struck 11 provinces and 15 million people in Türkiye. Right from the first day, we have mobilized all available resources to help. We continue to work hard to ensure a sustainable, social and economic life in the region. I would like to thank all nations that have provided valuable support to my country. Ladies and gentlemen, the labour market in the affected region consists of nearly 4 million workers. We are working to provide decent job opportunities for all. We have extended our upskilling and reskilling programmes for the region. We have also considered existing green and digital skills needs in the labour market. As always, we are paying special attention to women and youth. Dear colleagues, we have sustained our work in other focus areas in strong dialogue with our government and trade union stakeholders. A collaboration we are proud of is the White Flag certification programme launched recently with our ministry. With this programme our ministry will support companies fulfilling social security obligations. Besides, organized labour will also be encouraged. Companies complying with occupational safety and health standards will be rewarded. As you know, last year occupational safety and health has been adopted as the fifth fundamental principle and right at work. With our journey to zero accident project we are promoting the use of artificial intelligence to minimize work accidents. We are providing technology support to our businesses. We aim to reach more than 500,000 employees each year. Dear ladies and gentlemen, these national efforts are very important, but we need to join our forces to tackle global challenges. Each year the outcomes of this Conference carry us a step further for a better future. I deeply appreciate the guidance of the ILO, both global and Türkiye offices. I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to our minister and President of TÜRK-İŞ, Mr Ergün Atalay for continuous collaboration. And finally, thanks to all delegates for their valuable contributions.

Mr Yousef Al-Shamali

Government (Jordan)

In the name of God, Most Merciful. Your Excellency President of the ILC, Your Excellency Director-General, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, may the peace and grace of God be upon you all. I would like to start by addressing my congratulations to His Excellency Ali Al Marri, the Minister of Labour from Qatar, for his election as president of this International Labour Conference. I would also like to address my congratulations to our colleagues from Norway and from Pakistan, as well as to Ms Corina from Moldova. I would like to congratulate you all on your election as vice-chairpersons. It is an honour for me to be with you here today at this International Labour Conference. During this Conference we will be addressing a number of very important topics, including the just transition as well as quality apprenticeship and labour protection. All of these topics are very important, especially in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic and the economic challenges that we are facing in its

aftermath. These are important topics, also given climate change and the wars and conflicts that we are facing in various parts of the world. Over these past few years, we in Jordan have worked relentlessly in order to achieve these aims: a just transition, labour protection and quality apprenticeship. We have worked in order to strengthen our economy in a comprehensive and sustainable manner, in a way that would unleash the potential of our population and that would harness our resources, in a manner that would help us achieve a just and sustainable economy. We have set the necessary legislative and regulative measures conducive to production. We have attracted investments and we have entered in a number of partnerships on the regional, local and world levels. In Jordan we have also adopted a vision, the Economic Modernization Vision, that was launched recently under the auspices and with guidance from His Majesty The King of Jordan. This vision focuses on accommodating more than 1 million young females and males in the labour markets of Jordan. It also focuses on increasing income per capita by an average of 3% per year, and it aims at doubling the percentage of Jordanians who are working and who are living and who have an improved quality of life. This vision aims at attracting investments and harnessing the capabilities and capacities of all Jordanians. We believe that one of the key topics that is handled by this Conference, that is to say a just transition towards environmental sustainability for all, this topic goes hand in hand with the various objectives that are sought by our Economic Modernization Vision. In Jordan we work hard in order to ensure a more green production, in order to promote green trade, in order to promote an efficient use of energy and to reduce production costs. All this will help us ensure a smooth transition towards sustainable production. Of course, we understand that to guarantee sustainability what we need is workers, workers who are highly qualified and who believe in themselves and who enjoy their rights fully. Of course this requires us to provide them with training, and we have made sure that all training institutions focus on sustainability in their different training programmes provided to Jordanians. In Jordan we have also strengthened our labour protection system. We have launched the National Employment Programme in the private sector, which aims at providing more job opportunities to Jordanians and to curb unemployment, unemployment which was on the rise in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. More than 1,000 Jordanian companies have joined this National Employment Programme. The Government has also provided support and funding to private companies in order for them to be able to retain their staff during the pandemic. We have also amended our labour law in Jordan in order to improve it and to better optimize relations between employers and workers. We have abolished restrictions on women. We have enabled women to choose the work that they deem appropriate for them and to be able to exercise that work. We have eliminated all forms of gender discrimination. Moreover, we have adopted legislation in order to provide an appropriate working environment for persons with disabilities and for those who work at night. We have supervised our various enterprises, especially in terms of their respect of occupational safety and health. We believe that promoting the issues of workers is a work in progress. It is a continuous process that requires continuous and joint efforts. That is why we look forward to the discussions that will take place during this Conference. The ILO has provided us with this forum and with the various topics that it is going to deal with in order to facilitate this task. I would like to address my thanks to the Director-General and to this organization and all those who work in it. Thank you very much.

Mr Mohd Syukri Ahmad Sudari

Employer (Malaysia)

Dear Presidents of the Conference, delegates, advisers and observers. Today, I stand before you as the representative of the Malaysian Employers Federation, MEF, to address some crucial issues and initiatives that we have undertaken. First and foremost, MEF organized the National Summit on Women - Leadership, Empowerment, Equity and Protection on March 13 this year in conjunction with International Women's Day. This event aimed to raise awareness about the need to empower women, recognize their leadership achievements and highlight their critical contributions to our nation-building efforts. We are committed to creating a diverse, equitable, inclusive world, as demonstrated by the theme of International Women's Day. Moving forward, MEF will continue to acknowledge invaluable contributions of women leaders, engage in discussions on women's rights and strive to foster a more inclusive and supportive workplace environment. In line with our commitment to skills development, Malaysia is dedicated to achieving the fourth United Nations Sustainable Development Goal. By 2030 we aim to substantially increase the number of workers with relevant skills. To address the gap between skill supply and demand, the Government has established the National TVET Council in which MEF actively participates. Together we collaborate to equip Malaysian workers with comprehensive skillsets and enhance productivity and competitiveness. In today's rapidly evolving labour markets, reskilling and upskilling have become essential for Malaysian workers to adapt to changing demand and technological advancement. A sustainable social protection system is crucial for the well-being of all workers, irrespective of their sector or employment status. MEF fully supports the Government initiatives to provide inclusive social protection schemes. To ensure equal treatment, migrant workers are now covered by the employment injury scheme, similar to local workers. Domestic maids and gig workers also benefit from the social security protection. Moreover, we encourage self-employed and own account workers to contribute voluntarily to all [vgr INAUDIBLE 2:30]. To empower workers in managing their retirement savings, MEF urges the authorities to conduct financial literacy training. We also call for the extension of social security coverage in Malaysia to retirees. Presently, private sector employees lose their medical benefit after retirement. It is crucial to find ways to support employees who have contributed during their prime working years. MEF urges the social security authorities to address this pressing issue and explore initiatives that offer assistance to the insured persons post-retirement. Additionally, MEF collaborates closely with the UNHCR Kuala Lumpur office to advocate for refugees in Malaysia. We firmly believe that refugees should have legal access to work opportunities in the formal sector. By supporting this cause we aim to improve the lives and livelihoods of over 180,000 refugees in Malaysia. Our efforts align with the Tent Partnership for Refugees wherein 20 multinational corporations in Malaysia have also made a commitment to this cause. Lastly, I am delighted to report that MEF has partnered with the ILO's Safe and Fair programme. Together, we have developed valuable knowledge tools in three key areas. First, advanced investigation guidelines related to workplace violence and harassment. Second, company policy templates for eliminating discrimination. Third, company policy templates for flexible working arrangements. These resources will be published in three languages, English, Malay and Mandarin, accompanied by animated videos. MEF members and private sector employers can access these tools through our social media and digital platforms. MEF is immensely grateful for the assistance rendered by the ILO and IOE in strengthening our capacity and raising awareness of international standards to guide private sector employers in

Malaysia, particularly in addressing issues related to forced labour. Thank you for your attention. Together let us strive towards a more empowered, inclusive and prosperous future for all. Thank you very much.

Mr Gregoire Owona

Government (Cameroon)

Thank you for giving me the floor, Mr President. Mr President, Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, it is a genuine pleasure for me to take the floor at this podium and to take this opportunity to congratulate you, Mr President, on your election as well as for the very able leadership that you have brought to this Conference. As well, my congratulations go to the other Vice-Presidents of the bureau surrounding you. Cameroon has a pleasant memory of your country, sir, after the World Cup a few months ago. It is with great pleasure that the Government of Cameroon took note of the Director-General's report entitled 'Advancing social justice'. Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, for my country social justice is the key that enables those who are as yet unable to do so to make their voices heard and to enjoy their rights and to share equally in our wealth. And this is evident in the DG's report that social justice is key to peace, stability and intergenerational solidarity to the extent that it releases and frees up the country's production potential while reducing poverty and inequalities, which is a sine qua non for inclusive and sustainable growth. Mr Director-General, the Government of the Republic of Cameroon, while reiterating its congratulations to you on the dynamic leadership you have brought to the ILO, is, like you, of the view that it is time for all policymakers to take social justice into account in implementing public policy. And it is in this vein that we are continuing our action through our social justice perspective, which you quite rightly touched on. Therefore, relying on universal human rights, our Head of State, Paul Biya, has set up policies and projects that will enable our people to access education, healthcare as well as the right to organize. These guidelines were recently reflected in a higher minimum wage and creating universal institutions for our country's leadership. Regarding healthcare and access to healthcare, our hospitals have been upgraded and we have extended social security to as many people as possible. With respect to access to food, through the Ministry of Trade the Government has taken action to reduce the price structure for basic food products so that they can be affordable for all pockets. Regarding equality of access to the labour market and productive activities, apart from a recruiting exercise in the public sector, our government has set up facilities for promoters of SMEs through a law to promote SMEs. Despite these significant strides, we still have security and health challenges and sometimes, because of them, it is hard for anyone to perceive the strides we are actually making. Mr President, Cameroon reiterates its commitment to advance social justice, and it is our desire to see that this will lead to inclusive dialogue at all levels, more in-depth consultations with all stakeholders as well as those who can advocate for the involvement of our national or international partners. It is now time for us to make sure that this is a key objective, if not the core, of all policies and decision-making at the national and international levels. I would like to thank you for your kind attention.

Ms Neeza Imad

Government (Maldives)

Bismillahirrahmanirrahim. Conference Chair, Director-General, distinguished delegates, Assalamu alaikum . Warm greetings from Maldives. Promoting social justice and the welfare of workers are some of the key principles that drive policies to achieve sustainable development goals. During the past year, the Government of Maldives has taken a consistent and concerted effort to implement labour standards and fundamental rights by proactively engaging with local constituents, particularly workers and employer associations as well as multilateral agencies. As a key milestone for the Maldives, the first national minimum wage was implemented in 2022, which is estimated to bring positive benefit to almost a third of the existing workforce. As we speak, the Industrial Relations Bill and Occupational Health and Safety Bill have been submitted to parliament. In parallel, setting up a national unemployment benefit scheme was initiated last year and is expected to be operationalized by the end of this year. Additionally, to further consolidate efforts to strengthen the job market, a national job centre was constituted ...

Mr Bihi Iman Mp Egeh

Government (Somalia)

Bismillahirrahmanirrahim. Assalamu alaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh. Mr President, Vice-Presidents, Director-General, esteemed delegates, ladies and gentlemen. Mr President, let me begin by congratulating you, Minister Ali Al Marri, and the Vice-Presidents for being elected to preside over this 111th Session of the ILC. I am delighted to address the session on behalf of the Government and the people of Somalia. This Conference has been a crucial platform for dialogue, collaboration and sharing ideas between nations, social partners and other stakeholders. Somalia is honoured to continue to participate in these meaningful discussions. I would also like to recognize and commend the tireless efforts of the ILO in advancing the principles of social justice and decent work worldwide. We welcome the Director-General's report which charts a path towards achieving social justice, a path along which decent work, inclusive growth and equal access to opportunities are key milestones. This report has immense value for our nation and we will be sure to take its recommendations into account. Mr President, Somalia is a country with untapped human potential and natural resources. However, it is also a nation that has been plagued by challenges and setbacks ranging from conflict and political instability to severe economic hardships. Recurrent climatic shocks have also had a devastating impact on the productivity and livelihoods of millions of Somalis. Somalia is a youthful nation where an estimated 70% of the population are under the age of 30. Regrettably, the majority of young people of working age have yet to be absorbed into the labour market. This can largely be attributed to some of the challenges that I have mentioned, compounded by the limited diversification of the economy and the labour market. But our vibrant and growing youth population is an incredible asset. The Government of Somalia recognizes that the future of our country is in the hands of our young people, and consequently, we are working towards investments in education and skills development to empower them and unlock their potential. Mr President, the Somali people have always demonstrated the resilience and the determination to overcome any challenges that face them. As a government, we have embarked on some important reforms over the recent years that prioritize the interests of our people.

These reforms are designed to eradicate poverty, promote human development, ensure decent work, enhance economic growth and open up new opportunities for employment. As a developing country and burgeoning democracy, the goals of justice and equity are paramount if we are to ensure sustainable peace and prosperity for generations to come. Mr President, social justice is integral to our democratic process. Our constitution is founded on the principles of justice and equality and guarantees special measures for vulnerable segments of our society. As we remain true to our commitment to respect the spirit of tripartism and the institutionalization of social dialogue, we continue to work on implementing and absorbing the international labour Conventions that we have ratified into our legal frameworks and policies. Mr President, in conclusion, Somalia fully acknowledges the critical significance of advancing decent work and social justice for every Somali citizen. As a government, we are resolute in our determination to create an empowering policy framework that fosters inclusive growth and development. This commitment entails enhancing access to high-quality education and vocational training, advancing labour rights, nurturing constructive social dialogue, expanding social protection measures and actively promoting equitable access to new and existing opportunities. With continued support from our fellow Member States and our partnership with international bodies such as the ILO, we can work hand in hand to create a future built on the principles of social justice, economic empowerment and shared prosperity, a future in which our citizens enjoy their rights, have access to decent work and contribute to sustainable development for our countries. With these short remarks, I thank you for your attention and I look forward to a fruitful Conference. Thank you.

Mr Adbulghani Bakur A Alsayegh

Employer (Saudi Arabia)

In the name of God, the Merciful, the All Powerful, the prophets of God, all the prophets that he has sent. Secretary-General of the ILO, Excellencies, heads of delegations, ladies and gentlemen, may the peace and grace of God be with you. On behalf of the Employers' delegation of Saudi Arabia, it is a great pleasure for us to be here at this very important international event. And I would be remiss if I were not to thank the Director-General and the Vice-Presidents on their election here, and we wish them every success. And I have to thank the Director-General and his team and congratulate him on the excellent report on the occupied Arab territories which coincides with the 75th anniversary of the Palestinian Nakba. So it is showing solidarity with our colleagues, our counterparts. The choice of the topic, advancing social justice, shows that the challenges we face are ever more demanding, and COVID only served to exacerbate this. Throughout the world, inequalities increase. There is also climate change we have to face, political crises, and throughout the world we have seen food supply chains being interrupted. There are changes in ICT, and we see that all this has impacted the labour market. Statistics show, as we see in the report, that we need a world alliance, as the report says, to advance social justice based on pooled efforts of the three parties. So, clearly I want to say and express what our Employers' group says. The role of employers is not sufficiently described. They are striving to find solutions and rise to the challenges so that the labour market can be a pillar of social justice. Within the ILO, our participation as employers from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, between now and 2030 we have a vision under the banner of a human-centred approach, and we want to play a leading role. So the Government is going to be working very hard to focus on two main things. Work in the future, having promising methodologies, meeting the market's labour needs, and then also working from the

bottom up to manage crises. And we have several initiatives contributing to improving the quality of life, including our human capacity development programme, reducing unemployment, increasing women's participation in the labour market and correlating training and education programmes and the market needs, improving programmes to improve contracts and relations between employees and employers, and work on better managing crises such as COVID. Ladies and gentlemen, what we are facing in terms of great changes makes us realize what changes are yet to come. And the definition of vulnerable people during the work of the 2019 ILC shows one of the roles that the organization will have to play. And this, indeed, will affect our capacity to deal with crises. So, in this respect, I call upon all of you to focus on work that will help us overcome crises and focus on what has already been mentioned by the tripartite structure. We have to ensure that the Organization is not prevented from attaining its goal and that it cannot afford to have its credibility affected. In conclusion, I would like to express my wish for every success in this event. Thank you.

Ms Aoua Paul Diawara Diallo

Government (Mali)

Mr President of the Conference, ladies and gentlemen members of the bureau, ladies and gentlemen. Consideration of the report 'Advancing social justice' is at the heart of the actions of the International Labour Organization and contributes to the very mission of this organization in a human-centred world. Without social justice, professional relations will definitely suffer. When we adopted the Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work in 2019 the main goal was to advance social justice based on fairness and equality of rights. We agree that the challenges hitting the working world are characterized, inter alia, by persisting injustices, pervasive insecurity on the labour market, increasing inequalities, compounding crises and a breakdown of the social contract. The matter of matching jobs and training is the key to the development strategy of my country, Mali, and you can see this by the validation of professional skills through apprenticeships in 13 trades. Within the framework of implementation of action plans of policies in employment and professional training, significant projects and programmes have been carried out and affected 55,367 youth, women and men, both in urban centres and rural areas. This is the project for development of skills and employment of youth, the project called 'Professional training and support to entrepreneurship of rural youth', and 'Contribution to professional integration and enhancing resilience of youth in rural areas in the centre of Mali', which have ended their initial cycle and have now been renewed. The President of the Transition has placed transition under the banner of radical reform of the state. Thus, the National Forum for Radical Reform was organized in December 2021 to assess the priority recommendations set up, and a first report was issued in May 2023. To strengthen social dialogue, a social conference on labour was organized between 17 and 22 October 2022 with 139 recommendations, among which figure, for example, priority of the question of the organization of elections for representativeness, creation of a national council of social dialogue and adoption of a pact for social stability and growth. This is something that is already being drafted by a tripartite export group with the Government, employers and workers for the period 2023-2027. Inclusive protection of workers in an ever-changing working world is an opportunity to make protection of workers a central element of social justice and decent work and to put it at the heart of global concerns and increased protection in the area of occupational health and safety as a fundamental right at work. The national Policy for Occupational Health and Safety 2023-2027 will be adopted very soon. Within the framework of the

protection of workers, the Government passed the law 2018-074 on 31 December 2018 to institutionalize the universal healthcare regime. And now we have committed to implementing it in 2023 in order to ensure gradual coverage of the entire population for health risks in order to attain more social justice. Right now the coverage of health risk is 22% for over 21 million people. The significant challenge is coverage of a significant segment of the population, 78% working in agriculture and the informal sector, to make a transition of this informal economy toward the formal sector. Thank you for your kind attention.

Mr Mohamed Ali Janah

Employer (Maldives)

Bismillahirrahmanirrahim. President of the International Labour Conference, His Excellency Minister Al Marri, allow me to congratulate you, Excellency, for taking the presidency of the ILC. The Vice-Presidents, the Director-General, Excellencies, distinguished delegates, guests, observers, ladies and gentlemen. Assalamu alaikum and a very good morning. Last month's declaration by the World Health Organization that COVID-19 is no longer a public health emergency of international concern but is rather an established and ongoing health issue marks a significant milestone for the world. Our experience of the past few years has highlighted how the world remains deeply interconnected and how shifts in one area or country has cross-border, cross-sector consequences. These complex, multifaceted crises and opportunities before us require our collective attention and action. Excellencies, delegates, Mr President, the critical importance of building a resilient and sustainable future has never been clearer, a future which recognizes that the well-being of people and planet are interdependent and where social justice is the core of sustainable development and growth. We welcome the Director-General's report with its focus on advancing social justice. The report draws attention to the interconnected crises the world faces at a critical juncture and highlights the need for our ongoing commitment to social justice as a global policy imperative. Social justice is the keystone of sustainable, inclusive development. The issues are front of mind in the Maldives. As a small developing state, almost half of our country's population and more than 70% of our critical infrastructure lie within 100 metres of the shoreline, the beautiful beaches. Within the Maldives' archipelago nation setting, the abundance of our marine environmental resources forms the basis of two of our most important economic activities: fisheries and tourism. Yet both these industries are ones that will certainly be affected by climate change over the coming years, and in fact are already seeing those impacts. Against these crosswinds there are opportunities. Action in the Maldives and globally to improve environmental health, ecosystem vitality and adapt to climate, all have the potential to create decent jobs, to green economic growth and to encourage innovation. Social justice is the foundation on which this important work can be built. We welcome the Organization's work programme on achieving a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all and the report prepared by the Office as a basis for discussion on this important topic. As the Maldives progresses on its sustainable development journey, construction is a key engine of our country's economic activity. The construction industry has close interlinkages with the tourism sector and has a crucial role in meeting the demands of our growing population, driven by the natural population growth and labour migration. In South Asia, the Maldives is the only labour importing country. Migrant workers account for the majority of the workforce in the construction industry and the tourism industry and one third of the overall Maldives workforce. Social dialogue, which includes social partners and the employers'

organization such as ours, the National Federation of Maldivian Employers, which I head, are critical collaborators and drivers of the change and common effort needed to embed social justice in the labour force. Such dialogue is fundamental for developing and implementing active national employment and labour market policies that embed social justice. Taking labour migration as an example, employers have an important stake in expanding the labour pool and bringing diversity and much needed skills, especially in sectors and industries where it is difficult to retain or access local talent, as seen in the Maldives' labour force. As a social partner, the NFME sees dialogue across the public and private sectors, both within the Maldives, regionally and globally, as crucial for ensuring that migration policy benefits all stakeholders and contributes to sustainable development and just transition. As an employers' organization, the NFME recognizes that a transformative agenda for gender equality is a crucial facet of social justice. Pay harmonization has been a key focus in the Maldives over the past few years. Employers' organizations such as NFME have a strategic role in proactively driving the change. Excellencies, delegates, inclusive social dialogue on policies and joint solutions lie at the heart of our ability to tackle the collective challenges that lie ahead with all stakeholders at the discussion table, including governments and employers' and workers' organizations. Thank you very much. Assalamu alaikum.

Mr Juan Gustavo Minaya Goñy

Worker (Peru)

Mr Director-General of the ILO, Mr President of the International Labour Conference, Your Excellencies, representatives to this Conference. On behalf of the combative General Confederation of Peruvian Workers, CGTP, and as a chapter of the World Federation of Trade Unions and the Peruvian Trade Unions Association, we greet each and every one of you. We denounce the current regime in Peru for the deaths of approximately 70 of our citizens who were taking part in social protests against the regime and against its allies in the Congress of the Republic. These are right-wing elements who lost the elections in 2021 and are now the de facto government, usurping state institutions such as the Public Prosecutor's Office, the Constitutional Court, private and state-owned media. And their aim is to guarantee control of the central government, enjoy impunity and escape justice. Such were the findings of United Nations representatives, the Organization of American States, organizations such as Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, international observer delegations and national human rights institutions who have pinpointed in Peru crimes against human rights, excessive use of force and extrajudicial executions. We demand justice and for the material and political perpetrators of these crimes to be given life sentences. We will make sure that social justice is respected. With respect to labour relations, when we talk about labour relations we are talking about politics because this has an impact on national politics. And we will have, as workers, to do politics. In Peru the COVID-19 pandemic exposed the lies about the so-called success of the capitalist system and its neoliberal model that was imposed on us which, like in other countries of the world, has destroyed our economies and national industry, leading to extreme poverty and trafficking in cheap labour. And all of this for the purpose of lining the pockets of national and transnational small sectors of economic power. Peru has the dubious distinction of having the world's highest number of deaths per million inhabitants during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, it was the business sectors that benefitted the most from tens of billions of dollars from the government coffers while the working class scraped by with whatever funds they could find.

Capitalism has turned us into a commodities exporting country without national industrial capacity, with 75% of our workforce engaged in the informal sector. And it is our regions from which most of our mineral wealth is extracted that have the highest rate of informality, and I am talking about Apurímac, Puno, Cajamarca, because these are the regions that have the highest rate of monetary poverty. Exploitation of workers is worsening as we see the entrenchment of labour regimes offering precarious jobs in the following sectors: agroindustry, non-traditional exports, domestic help, private sector, the government services contracts and public sector outsourcing contracts. The private sector, for the most part, has been refusing to bargain collectively on a sectoral basis, and they employ workers without applying their fundamental rights. And here I wish to single out for special mention the construction sector where members of the Peruvian Chamber of Construction and the historic Federation of Civil Construction Workers of Peru have been bargaining collectively for more than 20 years with positive results. In 2022, under President Pedro Castillo we saw the inception of centralized collective bargaining in the government sector, resulting in an agreement that benefitted 580,000 workers. However, in 2023 the Government is about to leave 600,000 workers in the lurch by adopting an intractable stance, knowing that the 30th of June is the deadline. We call on the bureau of this important International Labour Conference to strongly urge the Peruvian Government to come to the bargaining table with concrete solutions. It is only through dignified and decent work that roots out unemployment and informality that we can eradicate poverty, child labour, forced labour and so on. Our solidarity with socialist Cuba against the criminal economic blockade remains. We demand liberation for the Palestinian territories, and we reject those wars that jeopardize world peace, and especially the war promoted by the United States and NATO in Ukraine. We reject the boycott promoted by the United States against China to prevent its expansion and investment in countries of the third world. Comrades, colleagues, capitalism in its perverse expression will ultimately destroy our world if we do not take action now. The class war is ramping up, and most evident in the gulf between the rich of this world, who are a minority, and the huge masses of the working class. Let us take action and take it now. Thank you.

Mr Ali Al-Abid Al-Ridha Abuazum

Government (Libya)

May the grace and peace of God be with you. The peace and salvation of God be upon you as well, Your Excellencies, Mr President of the ILO Conference, Vice-Presidents of the International Labour Conference, Mr Director-General of our august organization. At the outset, let me say it is an honour for me to convey to you the greetings of His Excellency, head of our national unity government, Mr Abdul Hamid Dbeibeh, who wishes every success to us in our session, and I congratulate you on the confidence that has been entrusted to you by participants at the Conference. Ladies and gentlemen, the Director-General's report to this Conference is a very important one because it takes up fundamental issues, namely advancing social justice. The Government of the national union has a genuine will to advance social justice, and we have adopted mechanisms linked to reforming the structure of wages and we have made gains thanks to reforms of the productive sector. And we have also undertaken reforms through a law on wages in the public sector and laws that will enable us to provide revenue sources for those seeking employment. We also have mechanisms in place to ensure that workers' rights are respected and those with lower wages, and we also have laws to protect the rights of pensioners. Sir, the Decent Work Agenda and the ILO's commitment and the commitment of its bodies to a just transition should

drive our action. We need sustainable businesses and social protection for everyone. We need to strengthen and promote skills for all workers, taking into consideration new trends in the labour market. And here we wish to recall the importance that we attach to the role of the ILO in coming up with sustainable protection systems and systems to tackle poverty. Mr President, distinguished delegations, our government is in the process of setting up a higher council for education and vocational training which will be tasked with implementing education and training programmes. And this higher council will roll out a strategic plan that was devised by a group of experts. The Ministry of Labour, for its part, came up with a vocational training framework for inside Libya and for Libyans abroad. We also launched an initiative known as mobile training workshops which can make their way through all of our territory. Distinguished delegates, we renew our commitment to support the people of the Palestinian territories, a kindred people, and for them to recover their legitimate rights. We would like to thank you for your attention and wish all Member States of the world a continued commitment to advancing social justice. We support the continued work of this organization. We thank the ILO for its laudable efforts to organize this Conference and to ensure that we can indeed advance social justice and achieve more sustainable social protection. Thank you.

Mr Nasr Al Hosni

Government (Oman)

In the name of God, Your Excellency Ali bin Samikh Al Marri, President of this ILC, Your Excellencies Vice-Chairpersons, Your Excellency the Director-General of the ILO, ladies and gentlemen heads of delegation, ladies and gentlemen. It is an honour for me to take the floor before you today on behalf of the Gulf Cooperation Council and its six Member States. Those Member States are the United Arab Emirates, the Kingdom of Bahrain, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Sultanate of Oman, Qatar and Kuwait. I would like to start by addressing my thanks and appreciation to His Excellency the President of the Conference. We would like to congratulate the State of Qatar for being elected as president of this Conference, and we wish Qatar all success. My congratulations also go to the two vice-chairpersons, and I would like to pay tribute to the DG for the excellent work that he has been doing as Director-General and wish him all success. Excellencies, we have read the report prepared by the Director-General that is entitled 'Advancing social justice'. This report has provided us with a diagnosis of the social and economic conditions prevailing in most parts of the world. We believe that the diagnosis that is portrayed in this report is quite worrisome, and it reminds us that we must redouble our efforts in order to shoulder our responsibilities to be able to overcome the challenges that are awaiting us and awaiting the future of work. There has been a lot of progress made in many domains. Unfortunately, this progress comes hand in hand with increasing inequalities and uncertainties throughout the world. It is no longer possible for us to apply old approaches in order to address the shortcomings that we are facing in the world of labour. Countries and international organizations are overburdened by a number of crises and by the number of issues that must be addressed. In the GCC, we understand that there are deep inequalities in our labour markets, and we know that everybody is suffering from these deep inequalities in one way or another. We are also suffering from a number of other challenges, including climate change and the economic restructuring that is needed, demographic challenges, artificial intelligence and the fact that we might lose jobs to this artificial intelligence. We also are suffering from a number of crises that have led to displacement, to child labour, to forced labour. There is an increasing public debt crisis

in a number of countries which has a deep impact on our standards of living and on decent livelihoods. We must all shoulder our responsibilities and make difficult choices in order to achieve decent work and social justice and in order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. In the GCC we are taking great strides and we are committed to ensuring decent work to all. We are also working to promote the future of work. We are investing huge human and financial resources in order to ensure a smooth transition from schools and universities to the world of work. We are focussing on skills and on upskilling and promoting skills in order for our workers to be able to work in these new forms of work that we are seeing. We also believe in learning throughout life and in the need to adapt to the various changes that we are facing. We must all understand that employers and workers play a major role as our partners. They will help us draft the necessary policies and adopt and build the necessary training institutions. They will help us make the right decisions because we all believe that good governance is the only way before us in order to overcome challenges and to ensure a better future of work. Ladies and gentlemen, the report has launched the idea of a Global Coalition for Social Justice. We believe that such a coalition comes in a timely manner and its discussion here during this Conference is a good idea. We look forward to all the discussions that will take place regarding this global coalition so that it will become more like a road map to us that we can use alongside other international conventions and rules. Ladies and gentlemen, Mr President, we believe that the ILO plays a pivotal role in the world of work. We believe in the importance of this role and in the importance of promoting it and enhancing it through partnerships and through more cooperation. We are worried by the move towards including certain terms or wording in ILC documents that have not been agreed on by all Member States, by all member regions or by all social partners and that lack a legal definition in international law or in international labour standards. The inclusion of such terms or wording will impact the vital role played by this organization and its inclusiveness. We would like to underline the need to provide protection to all workers based on the definitions that have been adopted in UN agreed-upon treaties and conventions and that have been agreed upon in international labour standards. We must build on the consensual wording that has been agreed upon during past Conferences in order to reach agreement on the definition of vulnerable groups. We are against the inclusion of terms or any wording that are not consensual and that do not take into account the social and cultural dimensions that are important to a number of Member States. At the end of my speech, please allow me to again thank the Director-General, especially for his report on the situation of workers in the occupied Arab territories. And we call upon the ILO to redouble its efforts in order to put an end to the suffering of workers in these occupied territories and to push towards the implementation of all international resolutions that would enable the economy to grow and to provide more jobs and would put an end to the occupation. Thank you for your attention. May the peace and grace of God be upon you all.

Ms Corina Ajder

Government Vice-President (Republic of Moldova)

That concludes our list of speakers for this sitting. But before closing our sitting, I would like to take a moment to remind participants that the ILO Communications Department will broadcast its first World of Work Show today. The show will feature a mix of interviews will ILO technical experts, videos that highlight world of work issues and ILO projects and programmes on the ground. Each day will focus on a different theme linked to the Conference, and today’s show will focus on the start of the

Conference and the issue of just transition. The show will be broadcast live at 2 pm Geneva time on the same webpage as the plenary sittings and on the ILO's LinkedIn account. It will also be available on the ILO live platform for replay, with simultaneous interpretation in English, French and Spanish. So I thank you all for your contributions to today's proceedings, and the sitting is now closed.

Mr Henrik Munthe

Employer Vice-President (Norway)

Good afternoon, distinguished delegates. I am honoured to declare open the third sitting of the 111th Session of the International Labour Conference. This afternoon we shall continue with the general discussion on the Report of the Chairperson of the Governing Body, the Report of the Director-General and its appendix. We have a long list of speakers for this afternoon, so I suggest we begin with our business without any delay. So it is a great pleasure for me to give the floor to the first speaker this afternoon.

Mr Ergün Atalay

Worker (Türkiye)

Ladies and gentlemen, as a worker of the delegation of Türkiye, I would like to wish you all a warm welcome to this meeting. On the 6th of February 2023 we experienced an earthquake in my country which has been called the disaster of the century. In this earthquake 50,000 people lost their lives and more than 100,000 people were injured. First of all, I wish God's mercy to our citizens who lost their lives in this earthquake. I appreciate the efforts deployed by our colleagues who rushed to the region to help us, and they are working today to rebuild our cities. I should also like to thank all of the international organizations, the UN and the ILO in particular. The search and rescue teams from all over the world came to our aid and they provided relief in the earthquake zone. Ladies and gentlemen, workers across the entire world are facing issues such as unemployment, informality, poverty and de-unionization policies, especially in developing countries. Income injustice, inequalities and precarious employment are increasing all over the world. Many more problems such as subcontracting and fatal workplace accidents require solutions. Wage increases are becoming meaningless in a short time and this is due to inflation. New technologies are leading to new forms of labour and also leading to new problems. Ladies and gentlemen, especially in SMEs, dismissals and anti-union activities continue to be a problem. Some multinational enterprises, MNEs, such as well-known automotive companies in our country, do not respect trade union rights in developing countries. As emphasized by the Director-General, decent work is the foundation of sustainable development. The transformation process in the economy necessitates a strong trade union fight in order to prevent widespread injustice. Act No. 4688 regulating the trade union rights of civil servants needs to be updated in terms of collective agreement, the Board of Arbitration and the other social dialogue mechanisms that exist in accordance with the ILO norms. This must be done immediately. Ladies and gentlemen, presidential and parliamentary general elections were held in our country over the last few weeks with a high rate of voter turnout corresponding to 85%. That is to say 55 million voters turned out, and this demonstrates that the voting process is completed in a spirit of openness and transparency. As the result of the election, despite the behaviour of some countries, President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan was re-elected with the free will of citizens and with renewed confidence. However, when we look at the

distribution in the Turkish Grand National Assembly, we see a picture in which employer representatives are in the majority. In many countries, including my own country, wage earners account for more than 60% of the population but are represented by only a few people in the parliaments. In this way it is not possible to produce permanent solutions to problems of working life. Today, many people do not have access to fresh water and sufficient food. On the other hand, a happy few continue to exploit the resources of the world. Terrorism and wars continue in many regions. As we have seen in the war in Ukraine involving Russia, the only winners of war and terrorism are arms dealers. Some countries that support terrorism and host terrorists have imposed arms embargoes on our country in the past. As a result of nationalization, the success of the national defence industry can be seen explicitly. Thousands of trained and qualified workers work in this sector. Today we are experiencing a similar attitude regarding visas. The countries ignoring the burning of holy books in their territories and tolerating terrorist activities are now trying to become members of NATO. On the other hand, Türkiye has been facing unfair obstacles to EU membership for many years. The parties that consider Türkiye as a defence shield against the migrant flow violate multilateral agreements. Five million Turkish nationals live in Europe. The significant part of Turkish people consider that EU countries hinder the visa issuance process. If we want to protect and improve workers' rights and freedoms, then we must first make sure that we respect human beings and democracy. We must make sure that these things prevail in the world regardless of nationality. Today, 75 years after the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the United Nations, I feel that there is a need to remind western countries of human rights as the basis of the work of the UN. Thank you.

Mr Zulpkhar Sarkhad

Government (Mongolia)

Chairperson, distinguished delegates, Excellencies. On behalf of the Government of Mongolia, I would like to extend my sincere greetings to the distinguished delegates to the International Labour Conference. In this session, the Workers', Employers' and the Government delegates from all member countries of the ILO gather again after the COVID-19 pandemic for discussion of the transition to the stable and inclusive economy by solving a wide range of issues such as quality internship, employment and labour protection and designating priorities, roles and participation of social partners. Excellencies, in recent years, due to a global pandemic, economic growth has slowed down and employment opportunities have been reduced which has negatively affected the employment and living standards of the population in our country, just like other countries have faced. For Mongolia, during the difficult times of the COVID-19 pandemic the Government has followed the policy of increasing social protection and intensifying economic recovery, paying special attention to promoting the employment of all, maintaining jobs and preserving the income of citizens. In terms of employment promotion, the formal sector was mild hit by the pandemic, which was the result of the prompt and proper implementation of specific phased measures by the Government of Mongolia in job place preservation and protection. Also, in order to reduce the negative impacts of the pandemic, the Government has taken a number of specific measures towards the disabled, the elderly, children and women. It includes loans with low interest and long term which were granted to the enterprises and citizens; energy, heat, water, water supply and waste charges for all households and enterprises were exempted during the pandemic; one-time financial support was given to every citizen for their livelihood survival; increased the amount of money of monthly

food stamp and expanded its coverage for low-income citizens; the amount of monthly child allowance for aged zero to 18 has been increased by five times compared to previous years; pensions from social welfare fund for children with disabilities, citizens and the elderly were increased by 50%. In 2021 the Parliament has approved the revision of the labour law in accordance with the current state of the labour market, labour relations, international norms and standards with the participation of social partners, in particular the International Labour Organization. This law expands the scope of labour relations, including triple employment relations, part-time work, remote work, forced labour, occupational discrimination, eliminating child labour, long-shift work and has more specific provisions with equal pay of equal value and the employee's salary in considering their skill and qualification level. As of today, Mongolia has ratified eight fundamental Conventions out of total 21 that ensures fundamental rights and principles at work and fulfils its application in harmonizing domestic regulations. It is my great pleasure to express my gratitude for the continuous and stable cooperation with the International Labour Organization. Chairperson, distinguished delegates, during these days of the meeting we will learn from the international experience in the field of employment promotion, poverty reduction and decent jobs, exchange opinions and further implement an active labour market policy in Mongolia. We always welcome learning from all of you and sharing our experience. Thank you for your attention.

Mr Moustafa Bayram

Government (Lebanon)

In the name of God, the most Compassionate, the most Merciful. Ladies and gentlemen, at the beginning I would like to congratulate Qatar for the presidency of the Conference, and I would like to thank the Director-General for the opening statement of yesterday. We came from Lebanon between two minds: hope and hopelessness. There are so many mistakes whose responsibility is undertaken by Lebanese officials. However, the most difficult situation is the siege of our people and the international disinterest in providing aid that can be directly provided to people. We also suffered from a tremendous explosion of the Beirut port, followed by economic decline as well as the decline of the social protection and the social security system, in addition to demonstrations calling for rights as well as the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. This was topped also by a disastrous displacement of the Syrian brothers and sisters who form a third of the population of Lebanon. This is in addition to the growing inequality in the aid that is provided by the international community in comparison to the Lebanese who are also dying at the doorsteps of hospitals because they cannot afford the payment for treatment in foreign currency. They drop out of education and they are left to their fate while the world is watching. Appealing to the human consciousness, and it is also appealing to the feeling of the people of our pain, whereas we do live in our houses and villages and not in camps nor in boats that cross the seas illegally. At the same time we call for the return of those who are displaced to their homes. This is indeed a duty and right. Indeed, after the terrorism has been defeated, those terrorists who came from across the world with great facilities, we have also been able to defeat them in our country, in Lebanon, and protected our people, our schools, our homes, our mosques, our churches from these terrorists. We were able also to preserve this uniqueness of coexistence in Lebanon and in our lands in the east. I should not also forget this disaster of Palestinian displacement with the Palestinian refugees 70 years ago, and we still hold fast to refusing to provide them with nationality. In fact, their poverty in their camps is indeed accounting for 92% of

the residents of the camps. Therefore, it is inevitable that they return to Palestine. I should not also forget to mention the crime against humanity committed by the Israelis in the historic destruction of our plans, our houses, and most dangerously, in the cluster bombs that are created in the form of toys where the children would hold them so that they will explode in their faces tearing their bodies apart together with a farmer here or a worker there and destroying our fields. Because of all of the aforementioned, we turned into forced labour on all levels of the state, even the workers and the blue-collar individuals because of the lack of logistics. And to the extent that we all came from Lebanon, whether as representatives of the State or as representatives of employers or as representatives of workers, on our own expense because we are so mindful of the decline of the treasury and because the state could not afford to send the delegates. Nonetheless, we will not lose hope, and we hold fast to human and ethical principles that were also set by religious and divine messages, whereas our State was indeed the cradle of civilization, and against the backdrop of affinity and affiliation to Lebanon, at the same time embracing diversity. And here I come determined in order to negate any suspicion that Lebanon is indeed practising forced labour. And I am quoting and citing strict and rigorous regulations that are implemented on the ground. And in brief, we have developed a plan and a strategy for the Ministry of Labour between 2022 and 2025 which is also based on volunteer work that is not going to cost the treasury a pence. First we start with digital transformation in collaboration with the ILO office in Lebanon. We also focus on accelerated vocational training, and here we focus on the oil and gas fields that were freed despite all the difficulties we witnessed in Lebanon. And we have provided the needs of the ministry for electricity that is always cut through solar energy as an alternative source of energy and also free of charge through grants that the state did not have to pay one pence. Thus, we were able to guarantee 50% of the needs of the Ministry of Energy. [vgr INTERRUPTION 6:34]. Thus, because of facing the forced labour, I actually worked on that, through rejecting any licensing of an employment agency for foreign workers, in addition to regulating all the work of employment agencies. And as such, despite all the difficulties that we are facing, we are still upholding human rights, and I am keen on the reputation of my country. I will not allow any smearing of this reputation. And here I would like to launch the initiative of the single boat for global collaboration on environmental issues, unemployment, poverty, lack of education, as well as accelerated vocational training for providing the necessary training to youth and for keeping up with the developments on artificial intelligence and digital transformation as well as for the solidarity of peoples. Thank you.

Mr Nasser Abdulaziz Aljaryad

Worker (Saudi Arabia)

In the name of Allah, Excellency President of the Conference, Director-General, ladies and gentlemen, heads of delegations, peace be upon you. It is indeed a pleasure at the beginning of my statement to extend to you, Mr President, my congratulations for your election as the head of the ILC this year. Also, I would like to extend my greetings to the vice-chairs of this Conference. I would like also to commend the Director-General's report under the title 'Advancing social justice'. In this report, the Director-General confirmed the importance of more social justice globally as well as for pathways for the implementation of this justice. He also focussed on the opportunities that are available, both nationally and internationally, in order to support the ILO approach which is human rights centred and it is also centred on human beings. We would like also to point to the efforts for tackling the situation of the Arab

workers in the occupied Palestinian territories. Ladies and gentlemen, the world today is in need for further care and interest concerning the economic and social situation of the workers who need direly to be protected in the workplace, particularly that the world is facing many other crises such as global warming, growing tensions and conflicts which lead to the decline with respect to the key elements for the protection of workers. The protection of workers is indeed very important and relevant for the precautions against crises and for recovery, as well as building resilience in general times. And the protection of workers is indeed the core of social justice and decent work. Ladies and gentlemen, Saudi Arabia is witnessing a great economic boom and a great development, politically and economy as well as socially, in unprecedented times. This is happening in the face of many challenges with respect to the future of work and the provision of job opportunities. Therefore, in our committee we are working hard to work as a tripartite constituency, workers, employers and government, through the tripartite social dialogue for the creation of decent jobs, the protection of workers' rights, the improvement of the labour conditions, the achievement of social justice as well as economic effectiveness. And we have undertaken several legislative as well as political procedures in order to protect workers at the workplace and to protect them from occupational risks as well as occupational illnesses. Ladies and gentlemen, the representatives of workers were able to achieve great developments which led to the provision and the creation of a conducive work environment that is attractive, that is stable and that is also occupationally safe. They were able also to provide decent work opportunities. At the same time, Saudi Arabia has worked on the integration of trade unions across the Gulf country in order to improve the workers' conditions in the region. The national committee is going to work and to pursue the protection of the rights of all of the workers. And finally, we would like to confirm that the explanations of the vulnerable and weak groups should be in line with what was stated in Session 108 of the ILC, as well as Recommendation 206 concerning the overcoming of all forms of violence and harassment in the world of work. And finally, we would like to wish you all the success for the proceedings of the ILC. Thank you.

Mr Ibrah Boukary

Government (Niger)

President of the Conference, Director-General of the ILO, delegates, ladies and gentlemen, all protocols observed, good afternoon to you all. First of all I should like to congratulate you, sir, on your election to the presidency of our work. I should like to reassure you of the collaboration of my delegation in discharging your mandate. I should also like to convey my sincere congratulations to the other officers. President, my country naturally supports the momentum to advance social justice thanks to the promotion of decent work at the heart of the main topic of our general debate on social justice. Indeed, there can be no justice nor equity if the living conditions and standard of living of workers are not decent. There can be no social justice either if the possibilities of resilience of workers are weak, indeed non-existent. Yet, as we all know, the main indicators of decent work in the world have seen a drastic drop, which is expressed in terms of the mass loss of employment and a rise in unemployment levels, exacerbated for certain African countries like mine due to the consequences of armed conflict and other scourges. In additional to the loss of human lives, these situations give rise to the mass displacement of populations, job losses, and they also worsen poverty whilst constituting additional burdens for the host countries and communities who they themselves are in situations of precarity and vulnerability. Therefore, it is important that the ILC adopts relevant resolutions to breathe new life into technical

cooperation and to accompany all of the countries through the implementation of programmes and projects that can help them to build resilience and to foster their development. This prospect, I am sure you will agree with me, is in perfect keeping with the Sustainable Development Goals, SDGs, which we defined under the auspices of the United Nations in a bid to construct a fairer, more prosperous world, leaving nobody behind. President, at this juncture allow me to present my sincere congratulations to the Director-General, Mr Gilbert Houngbo, and thank him for his relevant analysis outlined in his report, and also for the vision to create a global coalition. The aim of this coalition is to achieve a high level of action, action that is more effective at all levels: bilateral, regional or multilateral. My government also supports the conclusions contained therein, particularly the conclusions on breathing new life into tripartism, which is the cornerstone of the work of the ILO, calling for the cultivation of social justice through activities and lobbying and through open dialogue on policies. As for the particular issue of the P&B 2024-2025, my delegation would like to thank the Chair of the GB, Madam Claudia Fuentes Julio for her report and also the DG for the various consultations. We affirm our availability to continue to work with all of the stakeholders in order to achieve consensus on this matter. As for the discussions on the just transition of societies and economies towards sustainability, and also the discussions on lifelong learning, my delegation expresses its support and its aspiration to see these discussions end successfully whilst bearing in mind that no project, no action programme, no cooperation programme can lead to concrete results if we do not have the approval of the target people. Along these lines, my delegation calls for greater justice and solidarity towards the workers of the occupied Arab territories, in particular in the Gaza Strip. By way of conclusion, I should like to underscore the exceptional assistance my country has benefitted from from the ILO. This helped us to significantly advance the implementation of social protection policy. It also helped us to deal with other issues such as job promotion and the fight against child labour, to cite but a few. We reiterate our unwavering support to the Director-General in the accomplishment of his mandate. My delegation would like to thank him for the various forms of assistance that we have received in Niger. Given the relevance of the report submitted to us, I call upon the constituents of the ILO to fully sign up to the proposals of the DG, duly taking into account national priorities defined by each of our respective States. Thank you very much.

Mr Alfonso José Bustamante Canny

Employer (Peru)

Vice-President, representatives of the employers, of governments, of workers and representatives of my country, ladies and gentlemen, good afternoon. We agree with the Director-General's report in the stress that it places on the idea that the transition from the informal to the formal economy is one of the major processes for social transformation and is a necessary condition to reduce poverty and bridge inequalities, as is the increase of productivity and sustainability of enterprise. The micro, small and medium enterprises of Peru account for 99.4% of the entrepreneurial fabric of our country, whereas the rate of labour informality is close to 76%. That means that 13.4 million workers have no social protection or the benefits of productive scaling up, and only 4.3 million enjoy the protection of formal employment, and this level of informality is the highest registered in my country in the last 15 years. However, we would like to focus our efforts on generating the conditions that will enable SMEs to make the transition towards formality and to attract the investment that can generate more and better jobs. Informal and precarious work are directly related to the level of poverty.

Peru had made important steps forward prior to the pandemic and monetary poverty had reduced from close to 70% back down to 20%. However, multidimensional poverty, the measurement of persons' access to basic services was at unacceptable levels, close to 40%. However, inadequate emergency response during the pandemic and the precariousness of our healthcare sector led to Peru having one of the highest per capita mortality rates during the epidemic, according to WHO data. The effects of the pandemic were also followed by a period of political instability which exercised downward pressure on the economy and meant that 4 million of our fellow countrymen who had left a category of poverty fell back into it. We know that only economic growth and good administration can enable the economic conditions of the Peruvian households to improve. Government administration is key to solve the issues that affect people in terms of access to basic services such as water and sanitation, education and health. We are aware of the fact that the entrepreneurial sector must be involved in bridging the social and economic gaps, otherwise economic growth is simply not sustainable nor will growth be able to ensure political stability. We support the ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work and the idea that inclusive and sustainable economic growth and full and productive employment and decent work can be achieved through the implementation of policies that aim at promoting the creation and development of sustainable business. And we, the employers of Peru, reaffirm our commitment to tripartite dialogue and call for a re-establishment of this mechanism in our country and, through this, also rebuild confidence. We recognize the fact that we, the workers and the employers, are the two constituent parts of the enterprise, and that is why it is essential that we build on our relationship. Our country requires private sector investment to create formal jobs, and we deplore the steady attacks from the President of Mexico, Andrés López, and the President of Colombia, Gustavo Pedro, who are attacking the institutional framework of our country, not recognizing the constitutional succession that took place in Peru, thereby putting on hold the work of the Pacific Alliance, which is one of the most important mechanisms to facilitate and promote formal employment, trade of goods and services, and investment among the member countries. We invite the Government of Peru, the Congress and the national authorities to put human beings at the very centre of our national agendas. Thank you.

Mr Narek Mkrtchyan

Government (Armenia)

Excellencies, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen. It is my pleasure to address the 111th Session of the International Labour Conference, which we believe serves as an excellent platform for the representatives of governments and social partners to jointly shape the way for overcoming the growing challenges of the currently evolving global and regional transformations. This year marks the 31st anniversary of our membership to the ILO. During these years the ILO has been a trusted partner of Armenia in enhancing social justice, development of social dialogue, ensuring occupational safety and health, promoting gender equality in the world of work and many other areas. Ladies and gentlemen, the protection of and promotion of labour rights, sustainable employment and decent work for all is at the core of the policy of the Republic of Armenia. A number of measures, including legislative reforms, have been implemented in this direction in the course of the past years. Today, state policy is being adjusted and improved even further to bring in full compliance with our international obligations and commitments to address the evolving challenges. In recognition of the importance of decent work in achieving Sustainable Development

Goals and implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Decent Work Country Programme of the Republic of Armenia for 2019-2023 has been successfully implemented. However, armed conflicts remain as a fundamental challenge to that effort. In particular, as a result of the ongoing blockade of Nagorno-Karabakh by Azerbaijan. For over half a year more than 120,000 people face grave human rights violations. Currently, the people of Nagorno-Karabakh are deprived from their rights to health, work and free movement, which contradicts the internationally accepted norms, in particular the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Declaration concerning the aims and purposes of the International Labour Organization, the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and Follow-up to the Declaration as well as the ILO Constitution. Nevertheless, the Government of Armenia prioritizes continuous implementation of comprehensive reforms. On May 3rd, 2023, the law on amendments and supplements to the Labour Code of the Republic over Armenia was adopted by the National Assembly of Armenia which envisaged large-scale changes in the Labour Code of the Republic of Armenia. Over 120 out of 266 articles of the Code have been amended and supplemented. In the meantime, the Government of Armenia has implemented additional amendments to the Labour Code, defining the term compulsory and forced labour. The Government of Armenia aims to introduce an effective out-of-court settlement of labour disputes in Armenia which will enhance the role of social partners. The purpose of introducing a new system is to investigate labour disputes in the shortest timeframe, free of charge, with the simplest procedures in case of violation of labour rights, by making the organizations representing the interests of employers and employees as participants of these processes. The draft laws on amendments and supplements to the law on trade unions and employers' unions have been developing to foster and deepen social partnership at all levels. Currently, the Government of Armenia is finalizing the employment strategy which aims to conceptualize and provide a comprehensive vision towards the modernization of the labour market in Armenia. The Government is also discussing the opportunity to introduce an unemployment insurance system which will allow establishing a more protected and fair working environment in the country. The Republic of Armenia, being committed to its adopted values, in particular ensuring the realization of individuals' right to decent work, decent working conditions, physical and mental integrity, has initiated a process of ratification of ILO Convention No. 190 on violence and harassment. I am pleased to mention that the ILO Decent Work Technical Support Team and Country Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia has been actively involved in supporting the reform processes in the field of labour and employment in Armenia. Last but not least, let me emphasize that all those measures are called to strengthen and develop social justice in Armenia, which requires even more attention and support in times of global uncertainty and turbulence. To highlight the issue of social justice and to bring more emphasis, the Government of Armenia, in cooperation with the ILO, has planned to hold an international forum devoted to the future of work. To conclude, I sincerely hope that the consistent work and common efforts of all ILO constituents will enable to tackle the current challenges to ensure social justice, decent work and prosperity. Thank you.

Mr Julien Yombouno

Government (Guinea)

President of the Conference, Director-General of the ILO, distinguished delegates, allow me to convey the warm salutations of the President of the National Income Accounts Committee, Head of State and Supreme Commander of the Armies, Colonel

Mamady Doumbouya. I should like to congratulate you on your brilliant election to the presidency of this session and we would like to reassure you of the full support of our tripartite delegation. Ladies and gentlemen, this year, as in previous years, the issues on the agenda reflect the ongoing will of tripartite constituents of the ILO to work in favour of the well-being of workers, despite the various changes that we are seeing in the world of work, especially in developing countries. The report submitted for our consideration calls upon the Member States to think about the issue of social justice. It provides an overwhelming analysis of the realities facing the world of work today, namely the persistence of injustices, inequalities and insecurity. We need to take action on this front. It also looks at the means to advance social justice and to promote decent work. We reiterate our commitment to routine social justice in our efforts and promoting decent work. Ladies and gentlemen, one of the main goals of my government is to improve the living conditions of the population by taking actions which promote social justice, equity, vocational equality and decent work. To do so, particular emphasis has been placed on dialogue between the different components of society to bolster the social contract that has been broken by a spike in inequalities and social crises. Along these lines, we are creating a national social dialogue council, and we are promulgating a law on local content to showcase local expertise and jobs. My government has taken a number of measures to promote social justice. In particular, the full implementation of the protocol of the tripartite agreement signed on the 7th of April 2022 on the monthly payment of retirement pensions and family benefits. We are also improving the revenues for workers who are retired from the public sector. Indeed, the pensions have been increased on average to 70% and family benefits to 300%, the minimum wage 25%. Ladies and gentlemen, we hope that we will be adopting a recommendation at this session to place apprenticeships at the heart of all problems linked to vocational training and employment because vocational training is key for our country. The major reforms undertaken in this field must support actions to create jobs and help to create employability for trainees and must help to develop enterprises. I should like to reiterate that we attach great importance to this problem. We have a national social protection problem which is built around various strategic sectors. Efforts are also being taken to extend social coverage to those who need it the most, in particular those working in the informal sector. In terms of OSH, Guinea is developing a new national policy document and a national programme and also a national action plan to tackle child labour. The revision of the social security code and the development of a social providence code for civil servants are currently being finalized. All of these efforts will help us to strengthen protection when it comes to work. President, ladies and gentlemen, delegates, before concluding, I should like to convey my sincere thanks to all of the partner institutions and bodies that have helped us to put in place programmes and projects and who have helped us to attain our goals in favour of the world of work. I should like to mention the ILO in particular. I hope that this session of the Conference will be a tremendous success. Thank you for listening.

Mr Fernando Castillero Espino

Government (Panama)

President of the Conference, Director-General of the ILO, delegates. I bring you the greetings of my government and my Ministry for Labour of the Republic of Panama, and we salute this 111th meeting of the International Labour Conference, which is very relevant as it is the first that is being held under your leadership, Director-General. Director-General, I would like to congratulate you on the report entitled ‘Advancing social justice’ which invites us to reflect on some of the realities of the

situations that we are facing as administrators in the labour market. And it points out that the ILO and its constituents must take measures to meet this reality through decent work. The report offers us a very positive outlook indicating the means that can help achieve greater social justice on a global scale, highlighting the strategic opportunities that do exist in a human-centred and rights-based focus to achieve an integrated, inter-institutional approach. Ladies and gentlemen, the report stresses the fact that social justice is based on the inherent value of human dignity. As expressed in the founding principle of the ILO, labour is not a commodity. And in this approach it is important to consider your proposal of an inter-institutional, integrated approach working together with countries in the national context with, at their centre, public policies in these countries that aim at achieving integrated growth with social inclusion, and in this way reducing poverty and the inequality in our societies. After the social and economic crisis that we inherited following the COVID-19 pandemic, all of the different sectors of employment were invited to develop an adequate and coherent national strategy for quality employment in alignment with our programme for decent work. And we joined our efforts to create a superior council of labour, a tripartite standing body of a deliberative and consultative nature to contribute to the labour and economic development of our country with an aim at ensuring equality of opportunities, equity, respect for human rights that are based on social justice. And I would like to refer to some of the most important progress we have made. We have ratified Conventions 129 and 183. We have made progress in implementing Conventions 29 and 105, updating our national five-year plan 2022-2027 on human trafficking, and have adopted an internal protocol to identify the possible victims of this social scourge. Regarding Conventions 87 and 88, we have given legal status to 40 different entities and worked on 264 collective conventions recognizing 134 businesses for their accomplishments in terms of good labour practices in the framework of a programme which is entitled 'I comply' and that has benefitted a total of 36,000 plus workers and recognized ten businesses for their work in eradicating child labour and protecting the work of adolescents, launching a network of enterprises. Conventions 100 and 111, here we have a national plan for equality in salaries to promote greater gender equity in labour, to establish new rates for the minimum salary, starting back in December 2021, and to achieve minimum levels of salary differences between regions and between men and women. We also adopted a public policy for employability and labour integration for youth and women in conditions of socio-economic vulnerability in Panama with a plan of action that we are implementing through projects and programmes aiming at this population to achieve their empowerment and integration in the labour market. Conventions 138 and 182, here we are updating our road map for 2022-2024 to make Panama a country that is free of child labour. Convention 181, here we are working together with our private sector employment agencies to provide greater protection to workers, both national and migrants, ensuring equitable collective bargaining processes. We are aligned with the global coalition and are implementing a programme for employment rooted in solidarity, rapid courses for skilling for employment, a project for training in the English language, a programme called 'Orientation to Panama', a programme for vocational reconversion of workers in the maritime sector, and we are strengthening our employment services. Regarding, the tripartite management and social dialogue and conflict resolution, we are working on educational activities of a tripartite nature along with the Interamerican School for Social Dialogue, Tripartism and Conflict Resolution. We are aware that we are facing major challenges in this scenario. We want to continue to work with the ILO and generate the sort of programmes that can receive the technical support, enable our countries to achieve the targets of social inclusion, equality and sustainability to build a better future following the pandemic and assure

that we have the openness and trust that is necessary to be able to work together to address inequality. We reaffirm our commitments to promote decent work policies and meet the new demands that are rising from the labour market. This quest for social justice is the raison d'être of the ILO and its Member States, and I would like to confirm the commitment of our government to pursue this approach and the Coalition for Social Justice. Thank you.

Mr Kerfalla Camara

Employer (Guinea)

President, Vice-President, employers and workers, ladies and gentlemen, distinguished delegates. In my capacity as the Employer delegate of the Republic of Guinea I should like to convey my cordial salutations to you from the private sector of my country. Since the start of the twentieth century the international community has committed, through the ILO, to creating a better world by structuring the relations between men in Conventions, Recommendations and guidelines, all linked with the main goal of achieving social justice. I should like to congratulate the President of this session and also the President of the GB. President, Alfred Sauvy said, "Well informed men are citizens. Poorly informed men become subjects." The employers of Guinea take this opportunity to inform you of the progress that we have made within the framework of social dialogue to implement the key elements of social dialogue within our country. We have embraced social dialogue. We note the report of the DG. I would like to congratulate him on this excellent report. The just transition towards sustainable economies and inclusive economies, high-quality apprentices and the protection of workers are something that we have been concerned about and have led to a social transformation of enterprises in our country. Employers actively have taken part in an inclusive process of exchange between the different stakeholders of our national economy. We have sought to find appropriate solutions to apply all of the Conventions to ensure that social justice is a triumph. In addition, we have also sought to promote multisectoral development by having a mechanism for certification to guarantee the quality of apprenticeships and to make sure that they are in line with the demands of our national economy. This is materialized by the dynamic participation of the private sector in revising the Labour Code and the formulation of a law on local content. Therefore, the transition towards social justice is something that we feel very strongly about. The Social Security Code is currently being revised with the involvement of all stakeholders. These will clearly be important gains for productivity and employment. President, we are very much involved in the completion of tasks that contribute to the just transition towards sustainable and inclusive economies. Allow me, therefore, to appreciate the elements in the speech of the DG when he spoke about human rights, access to jobs and the fair distribution of goods in order to effectively allow social justice to triumph. Based on all of this, we should like to congratulate the President of our country for his great vision when he announced that social dialogue will be a top priority in my country under all circumstances. This commitment, indeed, has been reflected in all of the Government's activities, in particular when it comes to transparency in the granting of public tenders and also the ratification of laws on local content. The mobilization of resources is being done for young people because we feel that we all stand to benefit if we have social justice. Thank you very much.

Mr Amur Alhajry

Gulf Cooperation Council

May the peace of God be with you all. In the name of God, Your Excellency the President of the Conference, Vice-Presidents, President of the Governing Body of the ILO, the Director-General of the ILO, ladies and gentlemen heads of delegations, dear participants, ladies and gentlemen. It is my pleasure to address my thanks and appreciation to the President and the Vice-Presidents who are elected. And we would like to address our thanks and appreciation as well to the Director-General of the ILO for the effort made in the preparation of this year's report, making social justice a priority. It is also a pleasure to express our appreciation for the accurate diagnosis of the challenges, crises and problems in the labour market, notably the widespread inequality, the economic insecurity and the impact of armed conflicts and the geopolitical and climate challenges. These all have a negative impact on the world of work which is barely recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic. Mr President, we should recall the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization, which was updated in 2020 with a view to promote a safe and healthy environment in the framework of the ILO Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. The four strategic objectives therein were and remain an urgent matter. They need to be applied. In spite of all the challenges mentioned in the report, these objectives are interlinked and indivisible. Namely, the promotion of employment, sustainable environment, the promotion of social protection, the promotion of social dialogue and the respect and promotion of fundamental rights at work. In that respect, we would like to highlight the importance of the technology and the increasing AI applications which will have a major impact on the world of work. And these come with associated impacts on social security and social justice in terms of employment. And they will also have an impact on the future equal opportunities, the fair distribution of income and the fair transition. It is worth noting in that respect that the income loss, or in other words income insecurity, is a hurdle towards the future and should be accorded high priority by the ILO to complete its efforts in promoting social justice and social protection in the world of work. Mr President, we in the Executive Office of the Member States of the GCC and in the Council of the Ministers of Labour in the GCC, being a technical regional organization specialized in the matters and topics of work and social protection, we have put into account the challenges, and we regularly carry out studies and revisions to all the legislations in the countries of the Council. We also provide technical services to support the efforts to improve the legislative and regulative frameworks in the region. In the office, we do not work in isolation. We work in full cooperation with the Ministries of Labour in the Gulf countries and in collaboration with the ILO and the Arab Labour Organization. Recently, we conducted two workshops with the Ministries of Labour in the UAE and Qatar with the participation of experts of the ILO in order to improve the social protection systems in the region. This is based on the firm believe that social protection and social justice should be integrated and indivisible. Mr Chair, we in the Member States of the GCC have already expressed support to the initiative of the Director-General for launching a Global Coalition for Social Justice. However, certain aspects remain unclear and require further clarification from the Director-General, like the expected outcomes, the modus operandi of the coalition, its funding and the contributing parties. On the other hand, we believe that the ILO plays a central role in the world of work and has the capacity to look into the future of work and to collaborate with the social partners to put in place the labour standards to be applied everywhere in the world based on human rights and international law. In that respect, we would also need to remind that the organization should work on the consensus achieved

within its constituent bodies and should refrain from the use of terms that may raise sensitivities and create controversy that may deviate this organization from its main track and its main mandate in the world of work. And finally, we do support the diagnosis in the report of the Director-General about the workers in the occupied Arab territories. Thank you.

Mr Marcelo Abi-Ramia Caetano

International Social Security Association

President of the International Labour Conference, Director-General of the ILO, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, it is my great pleasure to convey to all delegates of this session of the International Labour Conference the greetings of the membership of the International Social Security Association. Bringing together 326 member institutions from 164 countries, the ISSA is the unique global organization for social security institutions and government departments. Sharing knowledge and enabling relevant networks, the ISSA's mandate has been to promote the development of social security systems around the world since its creation under the auspice of the ILO in 1927. I wish to congratulate the Director-General on his report to this International Labour Conference and for his leadership to bring together the world of work, national governments and international actors around the crucial priority of social justice. In fact, social justice has been a key underlying principle for the work of the ISSA since its creation. The ISSA has worked side by side with the ILO and other international partners to support the expansion of social security systems around the world. Today, confronted with uncertainty, crises, rising inequalities and persistent social protection coverage gap, we need to redouble our efforts. We need to enhance collaboration to develop innovative policy and implementation approaches. At the same time, we need to ensure that the global and broad vision of social justice is supported by concrete and coordinated action in various sectors. The Director-General's agenda for advancing social justice provides much needed and concrete guidance in this regard. I would like to applaud the emphasis that the Director-General's report gives to the accessibility of rights and to the related essential role of effective public services. Making the dimensions of universal human rights, equal access to opportunities, just transitions and fair distribution a reality for populations worldwide requires appropriate investment in building institutional capacities that can implement policies effectively and efficiently. In addition, I would like to recognize the key role that the report gives to social security. As the report states, social security systems are critical instruments for inclusive, equitable, sustainable and resilient societies and economies. Ladies and gentlemen, the ISSA and its membership of social security institutions from 164 countries are at the forefront of everyday efforts to make social justice a reality through the effective and efficient implementation of social security systems. Providing access to rights-based social security coverage and high-quality services to more than 4 billion people worldwide, the ISSA members are committed to good governance, strengthening access to protection, ensuring the financing of benefits and achieving high service levels. In implementing their mission, our global community of social security professionals is guided by the vision of extending social security coverage to all workers everywhere, a vision that the ISSA has shared with the ILO for decades and that is at the core of the social justice agenda. It is not a coincidence that the following words have guided the ISSA's activities since its creation under the auspices of the ILO. There is no lasting peace without social justice. There is no social justice without social security. To conclude, the ISSA is more than ever committed to stand at the side of the ILO by joining the global alliance for social

justice that has been proposed in such a timely manner by the esteemed Director-General. Thank you very much.

Mr Michail Papanikolaou

Trade Unions International of Workers of the Building, Wood and Building Materials Industries

Dear Chairman of the Conference, dear members of the presidium, esteemed delegates. On behalf of the Trade Unions International of Workers of the Building, Wood and Building Materials Industries, UITBB, an international trade union affiliate of the WFTU, representing millions of workers around the world in the construction industry, we stand before you today to advocate for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all. We live in a very unjust society. The wealth is not distributed evenly. The workers are always paying for the cost of every capitalist crisis, and when there is a change in the world, always in the name of a so-called modernization, it is the poorer strata that they pay the price. A just transition sounds like a very good idea, but we need to focus on the 'for all' part. This transition must really be for all and not just for the few. The construction industry plays an important role in shaping our world but it also contributes to environmental destruction and climate change. UITBB recognizes that we need to solve these problems while protecting the workers, making sure that no one is left behind. More than half of the world's population has no access to basic amenities, food, water and shelter. Such inequalities are unacceptable and we need to make sure that when the developed countries move towards an environmentally viable society the gap does not expand but rather closes. To achieve that, we put forward the following characteristics that a just transition must have. Fair distribution. The benefits of such a shift must be fairly distributed between different social groups and countries, avoiding inequalities and strengthening vulnerable groups such as women, the youth and migrant workers so that they can have equal access to the benefits and opportunities created. Participation. Workers, citizens and social partners must be actively involved in the transition decision-making process. Trade unions, both on a national and an international level, as representatives of workers, must be actively involved in decision-making processes to ensure that the transition is just. By including workers' perspectives we can create policies that satisfy their needs, protect their rights and secure better working and living conditions. Social restructuring. Transition should promote the restructuring of resources and opportunities in the form of creating new green jobs for workers, supporting education and training for the new skills required as well as protecting workers affected by the transition. Transparency. The transition process must be transparent, and decisions must be made on the basis of scientific evidence and after discussions with all interested parties. Political and business leaders must be held answerable to their decisions. International cooperation. The transition to environmentally sustainable economies requires international cooperation, coordination and international solidarity, especially among the weak. Global challenges, such as climate change and the lack of natural resources, require international solutions. Health and safety. Workers need to be protected during the transition period, while issues of health and safety must not be compromised in any way. In conclusion, a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all requires the integration of policies and technology, always keeping in mind the best interests of the workers who are the centre of these changes. By following these guidelines, we can build a future that not only addresses the

environmental challenges but also supports social justice and provides decent livelihoods for all workers. Thank you very much.

Ms Ruth Wilkinson

Institution of Occupational Safety and Health

President of the Conference, delegates, observers. We live in a time of change that is reshaping the dynamics of work and the labour market. As the Director-General's report highlights, the pace of change will accelerate. It may help workers become stronger or widen entrenched inequalities. New risks from artificial intelligence, transformative technologies, data overload, changing workplace demographics and psychosocial pressures combine with the environmental degradation, climate change, economic downturn and geopolitical conflict to challenge existing occupational safety and health priorities. The Institution of Occupational Safety and Health, IOSH, supports promoting decent work as a key component in advancing social justice. When the 110th Session of the Conference adopted a safe and healthy working environment as a fundamental principle and right at work it confirmed most emphatically the intrinsic value of occupational safety and health to decent work. IOSH embedded this principle within our own five-year organizational strategy launched in April. If social justice is to become a reality, safety and health at work must be mobilized as an agent of change. The ILO's constitutional objectives set forth the principle that workers must be protected from sickness, disease and injury arising from their employment. Protecting workers' safety and health must become the lifeblood of universal aspiration for social justice. Yet today over 4 million people lack access to any form of social protection, exacerbating the negative impacts of work-related accidents and disease. With over half of the global workforce working in the informal economy without regulatory protection for health and safety, this remains a critical area for improvement and we all must commit to leaving no one behind. Protecting workers from the devastating impact of occupational accidents and diseases provides a safeguard for communities, businesses and economies. IOSH's Catch the Wave initiative focuses on social sustainability and encourages businesses to adopt a health and safety outlook, not only to manage the risks to their workforces but also to enable long-term prosperity. We believe that large companies have a duty of care to look after their supply chains and to uphold social sustainability from end to end. The resource required to effect positive change is immense, yet the human and economic costs of not acting now will be far greater. IOSH celebrates the recognition of a safe and healthy working environment in the ILO's framework of fundamental principles and rights at work. We believe it strengthens the evidence that occupational safety and health is a driver of social and economic benefits that goes hand in hand with business productivity, inclusive economic growth and social justice. IOSH therefore commends to the 111th Session the inclusion of occupational safety and health as a dimension of policymaking and decision-making in pursuit of social justice and its representation as a necessary element in a future Global Coalition for Social Justice. IOSH echoes the Director-General, recognizing that adopting a fifth category of fundamental principles and rights at work must not remain a privilege for the few but an entitlement for all workers. With that premise, IOSH urges the Conference to devote the greatest possible financial, political, technical and human resource to support the implementation of the forthcoming ILO Global Strategy on Occupational Safety and Health 2024–2030. To these ends, IOSH pledges to make available the accumulated experience and knowledge of the thousands of individual occupational safety and health professionals worldwide whom we represent and to continue to collaborate with the multilateral

system, governments, civil society, employers' and workers' organizations, international financial institutions, bilateral aid agencies and investors. Safer, healthier and more sustainable workplaces are essential in the fight for social justice. We wish you a productive and successful Conference. Thank you.

Ms Betty Lunkuse

HomeNet International

Thank you, Chair, for providing me the opportunity to speak at this plenary. I am Betty Lunkuse. I am a home-based worker representing 1.2 million home-based workers from 33 countries represented by my organization, HomeNet International. I am from Uganda. I work from my home. I make jewellery and weave baskets with natural materials. With my work I have a lower carbon footprint than most of you here. However, I am impacted by climate change more than many of you. In my country the temperature has increased, there are flash floods and sudden showers, and the wetlands have been taken over by large companies. This has led to reduced access to raw materials or increase in the price of raw materials, low work orders, thereby low income. There has also been an increase in health issues leading to increased health expense. COVID-19 has also left its trail behind and our supply chains have been disrupted, and even today we do not have the same quantum of work as before. While the world is moving on and talking about different economic models, we are still struggling to recover. If we are seriously talking about just recovery, we need two key things. One, recognition. Two, protection. What we need is first and foremost to ratify ILO Convention 177, the Home Work Convention, by Members States of the ILO. In my country, I do not have a policy which recognizes me as a worker or protects me as a worker, which is the essence of ILO Convention 177. An ILO study in the year 2019 mentions that there are 260 million home-based workers, and another study mentions that the number almost doubled. It is high time for us to have a policy for home-based workers. And while we are talking about recognizing home-based workers, we also need to understand that home-based workers have two categories: the homeworkers who work in the supply chains but also the own-account home-based workers. The own-account home-based workers, like the street vendors and waste-pickers, are also workers and need protection. There are some common labour protection needs that we would like to access, like maternity protection for all women workers, and a violence-free workplace where our workplaces include homes as well as public spaces. There is an urgent need to ratify ILO Convention 190. I also want to add that homeworkers need to access labour protection, that includes piece rates that match the minimum wage and a grievance mechanism which is accessible to us without any adverse repercussions, or a violence-free work place. This year at the ILC, there is a general discussion on just transition. This issue is very close to my heart, and the transition and the shift to green economies needs to recognize our models of work as green jobs. Additionally, our models of work are the social and solidarity economy models, which need support in the form of policy support, investment and skill training. Also, the just transition needs to be accompanied by universal social protection as adaption mechanism and enable us to face the disruption and transition in the labour market. And we also insist that all this needs to be done with the inclusion of organizations of workers in informal employment through implementation of Recommendation 204 in social dialogue, collective negotiations and have a seat at the table in planning and decision-making processes on the issues that impact us. Thank you so much.

Mr Muhammad Zahoor Awan

Worker Vice-President (Pakistan)

Thank you, brothers and sisters. That concludes our list of speakers for this sitting. I think for today this session it started with the opening statements, that of the workers' and the employers' chairpersons, and then it continued the debate with a lot of speakers, those they were covered in this session. Particularly when I was glancing just the list of the speakers, at least there were around 15 ministers, and equally then importantly with other government delegates, workers' and employers' delegates as well. Thank you very much for having a very rich contribution on the Director-General's report and the Report of the Chairperson of the Governing Body. And with this we conclude the session, and I declare this session to stand as closed.

Ms Corina Ajder

Government Vice-President (Republic of Moldova)

As the Vice-President of the Conference, from Moldova, it is a great honour and pleasure to open the fourth sitting of the 111th Session of the International Labour Conference. This morning we will hear interventions from 22 distinguished speakers discussing the Report of the Chairperson of the Governing Body and the Report of the Director-General. I would like to remind Your Excellencies that interventions are limited to five minutes. Please be reminded also that we have a shared responsibility to use parliamentary language at all times. So I wish us all a productive sitting and will now proceed to the list of speakers. I am pleased to call on the first speaker on the list to the podium this morning.

Mr Omar Faruk Osman Nur

Worker (Somalia)

President of the 111th Session of the International Labour Conference, Vice-Presidents of the Conference, ILO Director-General, heads of delegations and ministers present, honoured guests, ladies and gentlemen. I would like to start by saying, on behalf of the Federation of Somali Trade Unions and the workers of Somalia, that we warmly welcome the report made by the ILO Director-General to the International Labour Conference. It is a comprehensive document that proposes a set of practical actions to address the challenges currently impeding social justice and access to decent work, both nationally and internationally. Social justice is a matter of the utmost importance, both in our country, Somalia, and worldwide. We should, thus, reflect on how to advance social justice against the backdrop of the multiple crises and overlapping challenges, including the rising cost of living, climatic shocks and armed conflicts that have brought untold misery to millions of people all over the world. In our case, it is the absence of social dialogue that has triggered the prolonged crises which lasted for three decades in our own country. Latterly, the worst drought in over 40 years coupled with violent conflict and economic fragility has pushed millions deep into poverty. Currently about half of the population in Somalia are in need of humanitarian assistance. At the same time, the growing number of IDPs and the continued return of refugees to Somalia are putting increasing stress on basic services and are threatening social justice. These crises, combined with limited opportunities for formal employment, leave many workers and their families in Somalia struggling to afford basic necessities. It is for this reason that we at the Federation of Somali Trade Unions, with the support from our partners, are advocating for the establishment of sustainable Technical Vocational Education and Training. Our aim is to take more children out of the labour market and conflict areas and put them into education and capacity-building centres. We are also conscious of the fact that women and young people continue to face barriers to economic participation due to entrenched social norms and expectations. Women still carry a disproportionate burden of domestic work and have limited access to educational opportunities, which hinders them from entering the jobs. Ladies and gentlemen, we remain convinced that social protection is one of the most effective ways of addressing poverty, inequality and other socio-economic woes. The country urgently needs help in fighting corruption and tax evasion and thereby securing the resources needed to finance social protection. We see social

justice as being central to the development of an equal society in which marginalized and vulnerable groups have a voice as well as the agency to shape their own lives. Furthermore, social justice is about giving workers and their families the chance to find decent work and enjoy economic security in an environment where the rule of law is paramount. But the struggle for social justice cannot focus on working conditions alone. We, as trade unions, must ensure that their efforts extend beyond the workplace to embrace broader macro-economic and policymaking processes. This will play an essential role in overturning the generalized architecture of underdevelopment that afflicts most countries in Africa and in advancing the quest for a new social contract. For our part, we will continue to sustain social dialogue and illustrate the enduring benefits of social justice, as evidenced by our work with trade unions and other social partners. Finally, through our partnership with the ILO, we will continue to promote the adoption of ILO labour standards that advance social justice and decent work in order to strengthen peacebuilding, recovery and development in Somalia. Thank you for listening to me.

Mr Hariyadi B. Sukamdani

Employer (Indonesia)

The Honourable Mr President, ministers, Director-General, fellow delegates, good morning. On behalf of the Indonesian Employers Association, APINDO, I would like to express the highest appreciation to the International Labour Organization for organizing the 111th International Labour Conference, for conducting the non-virtual event for the first time since the pandemic. We hope that the result of the Conference could answer future employment challenges and help the global economic recovery. As we emerge from the pandemic and begin to rebuild the economy, employers have an unprecedented opportunity to place a renewed focus on raising standards of social justice. We do believe that it is a critical time to reframe our thinking, innovate and push ourselves to make our strategy to ensuring a conducive working climate has a real impact on the global economy. Therefore, in 2020 APINDO supported the Government of Indonesia who has issued the Job Creation Law after considering the interests of all stakeholders. This strategic country initiative is imperative to encourage job creation through ease of doing business during the current situation where 12.9 million people need a job, and we will have the bonus demography in 2030. We are convinced that the decision to issue the Job Creation Law is one of the supporting factors for Indonesia to quickly recover from the crisis during the pandemic. On this occasion I would like to convey some of APINDO's views of issues discussed in this year's ILC. Mr President, fellow delegates, ladies and gentlemen, concerning advancing social justice, we do believe that enabling access to decent work plays a critical role. Consequently, we could not agree more with the statement addressed during World Day of Social Justice a couple of months ago by the ILO's Director-General, Mr Gilbert Houngbo. He mentioned about a Global Coalition for Social Justice. Regarding the statement, APINDO has full support by promoting a good faith coalition with the Government and the labour union in Indonesia. We do believe that this coalition on a national scale will effectively increase productivity, which will impact reducing inequality and enhance inclusion. Mr President, when we discuss gender equality at the workplace, women particularly took on more of the home and care burdens brought by the pandemic on top of their work, causing the ILO to warn that some of the modest progress that has been made on gender equality around the world will disappear because of COVID-19. While significant progress has been made in building social protection systems, many informal workers, women, youth, the self-employed

and own-account workers remain excluded, notably in developing countries. The Conference should promote a sustainable and comprehensive social protection scheme for all. In addition, we would like to particularly address that while equipping women with several capabilities will help promote women's participation in the workforce, there is still a need to address the precarious state of women in the informal sector. Mr President, regarding building inclusive labour protection and just transition, APINDO strongly supports the existence of policies in the implementation of the workforce protection scheme that is believed to be a fundamental aspect of a conducive working climate. On occupational safety and health, APINDO views that with the loosening of restrictions on human mobility during the transition period from pandemic to endemic, the Government, employers, and workers must work more closely together to encourage investment and create more employment. Mr President, regarding sustainable technologies, reskilling and upskilling and apprenticeship, we would like to remind all delegates and participants of this Conference that building a future of work needs to focus on people-centred and supported by enabling technologies. APINDO believes that the implementation of reskilling and upskilling should be aligned with a strong tripartite relationship. Consequently, it offers an opportunity to reorient workers towards more productive sectors that will benefit workers, businesses, economy and society. And regarding apprenticeship, recently there is a challenge for many enterprises to provide apprenticeship, considering the business competitiveness where they must perform efficiently. APINDO, therefore, believes that apprenticeship also can be applied in small, medium enterprises where the apprentices can learn about entrepreneurship. Thank you very much.

Mr Solat Mortazavi

Government (Iran (Islamic Republic of))

Mr President, I would like to congratulate you on being elected as the President of the 111th International Labour Conference and congratulate the election of vice-presidents. Also, I would like to express my gratitude towards the Director-General of the ILO for providing his report on social justice. This report clearly shows that the labour market has been affected by condensed and intertwined crises during the last couple of years, the consequences of which cannot be contained without adopting appropriate decisions and measures at national, regional and international levels. The Director-General's initiative of a Global Coalition for Social Justice will be a valuable and effective one. While welcoming the initiative, we believe that the nature of today's emerging crises has made the formation of regional and international coalitions an inevitable necessity. Moreover, we need a social contract to redefine labour relations against the backdrop of technological, demographic and climate developments, and at the same time make them compatible with the requirements, preferences and characteristics of various social formations. Dear colleagues, esteemed representatives of workers' and employers' organizations, the issue of social justice in the Islamic Republic of Iran is not only a territory within social politics but also a deep-rooted principled belief in the Constitution and religious beliefs, which is embodied in upstream policy instruments such as five-year development plans, vision plan and other important instruments. Increased life expectancy rate from 54 to 74 years, increased food security and development of universal, free health and medical care, and applying it even to refugees, are among the achievements of this principled approach. One of the fundamental measures adopted by the Ministry of Cooperatives, Labour and Social Welfare in recent years has been the expansion and completion of the Iranian Welfare Database as a platform for implementing evidence-based social

and welfare policies, especially with emphasis on enhancing the inclusiveness and effectiveness of these policies and the protection of vulnerable strata. Through utilizing this system, the identification of target groups of protection plans has been facilitated, and it is expected that, via paving the way for integrating the system of the provision of welfare services by protection bodies, this system plays an important role in the elevation of social justice in Iran. Dear colleagues, the world of work is both the origin and the field where various forms of social and economic inequalities occur. However, part of the factors exacerbating social inequalities in the world emanate from outside the world of work, which are not addressed in the reports and analyses provided by relevant international organizations, including the ILO. One of these factors is the unilateral or international sanctions regimes which play an undeniable role in the increased inequality among countries. Sanction is, in fact, an institutionalized imposition of discrimination against a human community through denying its members of individual growth opportunities and access to decent work and life. Coercive unilateral measures imposed by the US against the people of Iran is a clear example of a deliberate and purposeful deprivation of humans from their rights to development, health and growth opportunities and others, which is in contrast to the international will to improvement of social justice. I would like to hereby suggest that, in view of its mission to advance social justice in the world, the ILO review the consequences of sanctions and unilateral coercive measures on the world of labour and social justice and publish the results as a research report. Ladies and gentlemen, while appreciating the Director-General for his comprehensive report on the situation of workers in the occupied territories, I would like to say that the recent developments affecting the oppressed people of Palestine are not hidden from anyone. When the security of lives, property and assets of the Palestinian people is openly compromised, it goes without saying what is happening to their economic undertakings, the labour market and their livelihood. In fact, what is unfolding in Palestine is nothing less than religious apartheid. Therefore, such cruel acts of humanity must end immediately, and the rights of the Palestinian people and other occupied territories, including the Syrian Golan, must be recognized for a dignified life. In conclusion, I would like to reiterate the key role of the ILO in expanding social justice in the world and that paying attention to the cultural and social considerations of the Member States in designing and implementing the programmes of this agenda plays an important role in the success and effectiveness of such programmes. Thank you for your attention.

Ms Jacqueline Mugo

Employer (Kenya)

The President and Vice-Presidents of the Conference, the Federation of Kenya Employers commends the Director-General for the well-presented report on advancing social justice submitted to this Labour Conference. We agree with the DG that advancing social justice is critical and needs our immediate action, because we do not have the luxury of time. It will take the concerted efforts of governments, workers and employers to drive towards the attainment of the noble aspirations in the DG's report. We must be intentional, strategic and bold in our actions and interventions. We cannot afford to have the usual finger-pointing and blame game that we often indulge in. Ladies and gentlemen, the report has rightly identified four dimensions of social justice: universal human rights and capabilities, equal access to opportunities, fair distribution and just transitions. At the core of all these dimensions is the availability of the required opportunities. We cannot talk of access to decent work when there are no job opportunities. We cannot talk about a just share of the economic growth without

the growth itself first happening. We cannot talk about freedom of association for enterprises and workers when businesses themselves are in distress or facing closure. The advancement of social justice is only possible when businesses thrive and can create jobs. The violation of social justice dimensions happens in societies where business growth and activity are depressed. Let me highlight four important perspectives for advancement of social justice, especially in Africa. One, a conducive business environment is the foundation for advancing social justice. Enterprises are currently in distress due to the rigid and hostile business environment. Businesses must contend with a shrinking formal sector, high informality, low productivity, high inflation, skills shortages and regulatory burden, among others. In the efforts to meet their financial obligations and fund development projects, various governments in the continent continue to impose unbearable tax regimes on businesses. How can business play its role in just transition in the absence of a conducive business environment? Second, tripartism and social dialogue are vehicles for resolving emerging business challenges and unleashing the creation of decent jobs in Africa and other regions of the world. Having a job that offers a stable income is the surest way of lifting a person out of poverty. However, Africa today is facing the highest unemployment crisis in its history. Africa is endowed with vast fertile lands, massive natural resources and a young, well-educated and passionate population. Unfortunately, Africa seldom decides on her destiny. In most cases, the policy positions and interventions at the global stage do not acknowledge the context and realities of the continent, which hampers the advancement of social justice. The priority for Africa at this stage is to deal with a youth unemployment crisis which requires initiatives for value addition and processing and production of finished products in Africa so as to support enterprises to create jobs. Policies that take away employment from Africa are a key driver of irregular migration. Simply put, people follow the economic opportunities. Third, rights and obligations go hand in hand, and one cannot be enjoyed without fulfilling the other. Social justice cannot be advanced when one party only focuses on their rights. As the ILO advances social justice, it also needs to emphasize the rights holder also has obligations to meet. The ILO constituents, governments, workers, and employers each have their rights and obligations which impose a duty on them to not only safeguard and provide the rights but also work with each other to create ideal conditions for the attainment of these rights. To give an example, one cannot enjoy the right to adequate pay if he or she does not bear the obligation of supporting the payer to afford that level of pay. Fourthly, the ILO needs to build the capacities of constituents, employers included, to implement the various interventions highlighted in the Director-General's report if we are to realize the aspirations of social justice. Lastly, Mr President, employers pledge to play their role effectively towards advancing social justice, and we look forward to greater collaboration with the ILO so that the ideals of social justice translate to real positive change on the ground. I thank you for your kind attention.

Mr Omar Abdi Said

Government (Djibouti)

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, President of the Conference, Director-General of the ILO, ministers of ILO Member States, employers, workers, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, all protocols observed. At the outset, I have the honour of conveying my congratulations, on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Djibouti and also in my personal capacity, to His Excellency Mr Ali bin Samikh Al Marri, Minister of Labour of Qatar upon his election to the presidency of the 111th

Session of the International Labour Conference. This distinction demonstrates the confidence and trust placed in your person, Mr Minister, and also it attests to your personal and human qualities. I am honoured to be able to take part in this session of the ILC, which is placed this year under the topic of apprenticeships and social protection. These are topics that are closely linked to the notion of decent work, which is a goal that the ILO has been pursuing and trying to attain for several decades. This meeting constitutes a remarkable moment to get together to engage in exchanges and to share between partners of the Member States when it comes to responses linked to the challenges that the world of work is facing today. This meeting ties in with a rather particular context for the international community which is dealing with a reality that is constantly in change. Indeed, after having observed a light growth following the recession due to COVID-19, which slowed down relations between States by slowing down the global economy, we are now seeing the cost of new crises which are unfolding through the world, consequently worsening situations and worsening the living conditions of workers. In light of these challenges, we must now fully implement all of the instruments available to us to ensure that the social gains can be preserved and also to maintain strong growth and to resolutely commit to the promotion of peace, a condition without which no social contract can be built. A national employment policy has been formulated, adopted and implemented. This policy reaffirms the importance attached to employment and the development of human capital. We have initiated various programmes to boost the skills of young people, who are the crucible of leadership of the future. Training in promising sectors is recommended to help to improve the level of employability of young job seekers. And to do so, we have come up with a legal framework for apprenticeship contracts. Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, this international meeting gives me the opportunity to share with you some major social success made in my country, Djibouti, when it comes to social protection for the women of Djibouti. Indeed, my country has adopted various texts and regulations which concern maternity leave, bringing it from 14 to 26 weeks, maintaining all of the advantages and benefits paid out to women who have given birth. By the same token, Djibouti has ratified the international Convention No. 183 on maternity protection. This initiative means that my country, Djibouti, is the first country of the African continent and one of the few countries in the world that provides a six-month long maternity leave. On the issue of social protection, universal health coverage remains a reality and covers all social strata of the population, and this since 2014. And despite the cost that this entails, day after day we seek to improve the quality of the services provided. Djibouti, through this policy has sought to cover all of the workers and all of those who are entitled, whether they are from the private sector or public sector, independent workers, retirees, students and vulnerable persons and persons without any income. We have to rise to various challenges in order to achieve the extension of coverage in an optimal way. Nevertheless, we are proud of our achievements to date. Djibouti has also engaged in the extension of social protection to the informal sector in order to guarantee to workers appropriate coverage. We very much appreciate and note the global changes when it comes to the problem linked to social protection which highlights a growing demand for more solidarity and social justice. I would like to reiterate my gratitude for all of the assistance we have received, and I would like to also thank all of the tripartite national delegations who are attending this Conference. I thank them for their contributions that they bring to this platform. These contributions, I sincerely hope, will have a positive impact when it comes to the questions we are examining today. I thank you for your kind attention.

Mr Andy Ellul

Government (Malta)

Distinguished delegates, I wish to thank the Director-General of the ILO, Mr Gilbert Houngbo, for sharing his vision for advancing social justice and promoting decent work. One of the principles enshrined in the ILO Constitution is that universal and lasting peace can only be attained through social justice. In fact, the ILO founders strived to ensure that social justice would be the ultimate goal for the ILO, an organization focused on improving the conditions of labour worldwide. As stated in the report, social justice can be broadly broken down into four interrelated and interdependent dimensions, namely access to adequate standard of living, education, healthcare and social security; equal access to opportunities for employment; fair distribution of the benefits of economic growth; and just transitions. The report pertinently points out that the availability of and access to decent work plays a central role in advancing social justice across these four dimensions. Undoubtedly, the world is faced with many challenges such as the after-effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, inflation, extreme weather events, geopolitical tensions, conflict and war. The ILO cannot address such challenges single-handedly, and we must all collaborate to shape policies and determine priorities to formulate impactful national and global action to promote social justice. The Maltese Government is fully committed to ensure decent work and social justice, and please allow me to share with you some actions we are taking to this effect. In the last years there has been a drastic increase in the activity of platform work across Europe. The platform economy promises workers many opportunities as the barriers to enter this labour market and start earning money are relatively easy to overcome. At the same time, however, platform work has suffered a barrage of criticism from many fronts. The Maltese Government, after extensive consultation with all social partners, enacted legislation which gave platform workers legal rights and benefits, such as the various leave entitlements and overtime and statutory bonuses, just to mention a few. We are also working to better regulate recruitment agencies, the conditions of workers in temping agencies and those engaged with sub-contractors. And this to ensure that the flexibility that these agencies offer does not result in exploitation of workers but rather in better salaries and working conditions. We have also recently set up a Low Wage Commission composed of all the social partners to put forward recommendations aimed at improving the minimum wage. The commission shall take into account the trends in price levels and increases in selected collective agreements, and this to ascertain that any proposed increase in the minimum wage will reflect sector vulnerabilities and productivity gains. Indeed, it is on the broader issue of productivity that I would like to conclude this address. The ILO itself recognizes that enhancing productivity is essential to ensure improved working conditions, higher wages and ultimately raising living standards across all levels of work, particularly for the most vulnerable. As a politician, I firmly believe that social dialogue can play a crucial role in creating the right working environment to allow productivity to flourish while ensuring that the benefits of productivity gains are distributed in a fair and just manner. We also believe that continuous research and innovation are critical to sustainable productivity growth. And here we are not just referring to large-scale innovations or scientific breakthroughs but even the incremental, gradual changes implemented regularly in order to improve work processes across SMEs around the world on a daily basis. There is no room for complacency. We, together with our social partners, must do all we can to ensure that the next chapter of our economic history is built on a productive, empowered labour force and robust social dialogue. Thank you.

Ms Kachollom Shangti Daju

Government (Nigeria)

Director-General of the ILO, His Excellency Mr Gilbert Houngbo, the President and Vice-Presidents of the Conference, ladies and gentlemen. It is my singular honour to address the 111th Session of the International Labour Conference on behalf of the Federal Government of Nigeria. I express the warm greetings from the good people of Nigeria and our newly-elected president, Bola Ahmed Tinubu, and take the opportunity to congratulate the Director-General on his first ILC report on social justice, dedicated to addressing global challenges of deep-skewed inequality confronting our fragile world emerging from COVID-19. The stark realities have indicated and amplified the wisdom of the Constitution of the founding fathers of our organization, as embedded in the Philadelphia Declaration, the Constitution, the Social Justice and the Centenary Declarations, among other instruments. We congratulate the Chairperson of the Conference and wish delegates a successful deliberation. We believe that the relevance of our organization in a world plagued with inequality, rising cost of living, climate change, geopolitical instability, rising debt burden, and particularly among the developing countries, will be assessed by ILO measured response to them. It is in this light that we welcome and thank the Director-General for providing this platform for us to collectively consider, constructively engage and pledge our commitment towards shaping this global ambition at this Conference. The vehicle for the achievement of this ambitious goal is a Decent Work Country Programme which sums up the aspirations of people in their working lives. Whereas technological development and productivity are on the increase, sadly the gap of inequality is widening between and among States. Nigeria is committed to the provision of gainful employment that delivers fair income, security in the workplaces as well as social protection for all categories of its citizens, while offering opportunities for personal development and social integration under the atmosphere of freedom and popular participation for our women and men. Our commitment was manifestly drafted in our second Decent Work Country Programme 2015-2018 and we are waiting for the commencement of our third phase, with technical support from the ILO Abuja office. Our scorecard of decent work deficit index has significantly improved and will be better at the next assessment. Our determination to uphold the sanctity of human dignity and capabilities, provision of equal access to opportunities, ensuring fair distribution and redistribution of shared economic gains, and making appropriate policies to create an enabling environment for our people to navigate and adapt in the face of just transition are all documented, starting from the 1999 Constitution as amended and related labour legislations. We continuously engage with our constituents and development partners towards strengthening our legal and institutional framework to deliver on our expectations with regards to our avowed respect for the fundamental principles and rights at work, provision of full, productive and freely chosen employment, social and labour protection, and social dialogue and tripartite institutions. In 2021 we revived the National Labour Advisory Council, which is Nigeria's foremost national tripartite institution for all labour and employment administration matters. Government at the Council includes representatives from the 36 states of the federation to provide a rich, refreshing reservoir of ideas to power our commitment. Plans are at an advanced stage to commence the necessary process towards the ratification of ILO Convention No. 102 on social security minimum standards, to bring the total number of ratified ILO Conventions to 45. Our focus is also on several intervention programmes on social protection to ensure the non-erosion of the pre-COVID-19 gains on our social protection floors, as well as to cushion the effects of the emerging global challenges.

Ladies and gentlemen, the provision of full, productive and freely chosen employment is at the front burner of national discourse and central to our national development plans. Our government is committed to lifting up 100 million Nigerians out of poverty by 2030 and is resolved, as evident in the National Development Plan 2021-2025, to generate 21 million full-time jobs and lift 35 million people out of poverty by 2025. Distinguished delegates, Nigeria is convinced that injustice and persistent inequality where workers are subjected to unsafe, unhealthy and unfair practices does not inspire sustainable development. To address this, the National Policy on Occupational Safety And Health was revised to give full effect to the Government's intervention in this regard. We are currently updating our future of work reports to align with the ILO Centenary Declaration, the Abidjan Declaration as well as the fundamental principles and rights at work as amended. Finally, Chairperson, Nigeria wishes to pledge our commitment to developing an inclusive democratic state and a just society with focus and main priority on human rights, including labour rights, consistent enhancement of decent work and real income, improving the system of social protection, ensuring gender equality while developing our vast, youthful demographic to the fullest. I thank you all for your kind attention. Thank you.

Mr Joseph Bugeja

Worker (Malta)

Director-General, distinguished delegates, today I stand before you to talk about a theme that is of utmost importance and significance to the trade union movement: advancing social justice. In an era of globalization, it is imperative that we address the challenges faced by individuals and communities around the globe. Social justice is not a catchphrase. It is a call to action, a way of acting, a commitment to create a fair and equitable society for all. Social justice is poverty alleviation, racial justice, gender equality, LGBTIQ rights, disability rights, immigrant rights, environmental justice, fair working conditions and good governance. It is the individual actions and collective efforts to address systematic inequalities and promote a more equitable society. At its core, social justice aims to create a society that promotes equality, inclusivity and human rights for all individuals regardless of their background or circumstances. While we acknowledge that progress has been made, we cannot ignore the fact that social injustice still persists in many parts of the world. Discrimination based on race, gender, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation and socio-economic status continues to hinder the full realization of human potential. It is our collective responsibility to confront these inequalities and work towards a future where everyone has equal opportunities to succeed. We need an economic model based on a human-centred agenda, as proposed by the International Labour Organization. Advancing social justice requires a multifaceted approach. We must begin by fostering inclusive societies that celebrate diversity and embrace the uniqueness of every individual. We must challenge the structures and policies that perpetuate discrimination and work towards creating inclusive societies that provide equal rights and opportunities for all. This means breaking down the barriers that divide us. It is through social dialogue and open-mindedness that we can bridge the gaps and build a stronger and a more resilient society. The Director-General's report is calling for concrete action to eradicate poverty in all its forms and to promote equality, inclusion and human security. We are all affirming that it is possible to tackle the causes of poverty and to achieve social well-being and justice for all. Furthermore, advancing social justice requires collaboration and partnerships at all levels. International organizations, governments, trade unions, non-government organizations, employers and individuals must come together to

drive meaningful change. We must leverage our collective resources, knowledge and expertise to address the root causes of social injustice and work towards building a world where everyone is treated with dignity, respect, and fairness. Malta has made significant strides in promoting equality and non-discrimination. Our laws guarantee gender equality and protect individuals from discrimination based on gender, sexual orientation, race and disability. The introduction of legislation recognizing same-sex marriage in 2017 was a landmark step for LGBTIQ+ rights. New laws have been implemented to fight domestic violence and gender-based violence and increase female representation in decision-making positions. Labour market initiatives were injected in our social security system to make work pay and reduce dependence on social welfare. Successive administrations strengthened the social protection infrastructure to ensure that the most vulnerable can have a decent life. During the past ten years both the contributory and non-contributory pensions and benefits were increased on a yearly basis. Additionally, the Government introduced a second mechanism for the cost-of-living adjustment, specifically for the most vulnerable. In the world of work, social justice and solidarity were particularly in evidence at the peak of the pandemic when the Government, with the support of social partners, intervened through wage supplement and monetary incentives to support workers and employers. Through a robust tripartite social dialogue, we introduced a number of legislations to give dignity to workers. Among these were the abolition of zero-hour contracts, the introduction of transparent and predictable working conditions and a new law protecting platform workers. Currently we are in discussions to overhaul our sectoral work regulations orders and the minimum wage mechanism. As a General Workers' Union, we have conducted and concluded a study on the introduction of the living income. We strongly believe that the implementation of the living income could guarantee a decent living. Nonetheless, Malta faces various challenges. Inflation is a major challenge. While the Government is absorbing the increase in fuel, electricity, water and cereals, prices for food and housing are contributing to constant increases. Ensuring the fair treatment and protection of migrant workers, protecting the environment, addressing climate change, the greening of our economy, sustainable development and traffic are all other major challenges. Promoting environmentally friendly policies and ensuring a just transition to a low-carbon economy, all form part of social justice. In conclusion, advancing social justice is not an easy task, but it is a necessary one. It is a journey that requires commitment, courage and an unwavering dedication. As we move forward, let us remember that our actions, however small, have the power to make a difference. By advocating for equality, challenging injustice and embracing diversity, we can create a more just and inclusive world for generations to come. Thank you.

Mr Jameel Humaidan

Government (Bahrain)

Excellencies, Minister of Labour of Qatar, DG, Excellencies, colleagues, ladies and gentlemen. I am pleased to join previous speakers in congratulating you on your presidency of the Conference. We are indeed confident of your enlightened leadership of our work to achieve desired results. We are indeed proud of our organization and the efforts it has deployed to support social dialogue and labour. The report of the DG this session is of great importance because it covers topics that are very important, in particular during this time. And here we are talking about social justice. The principles of social justice are of great importance for all of the social partners at the global level. And most countries have made progress when it comes to human well-being and

respect for the rights and dignity of workers and also the protection of social justice and social protection for all groups. Now, despite the achievements in the field of social justice, the report of the DG underscores the spread of insecurity on the labour market and a spike in poverty rates as a result of conflicts and also economic crises in countries. We stand by the international efforts to strengthen dialogue, to have dialogue with social partners and international organizations, to design effective global policies, to encourage social investment and to guarantee social justice for all. Ladies and gentlemen, social justice, improving standards of living and strengthening social dialogue, all of these things are a key part of the reform project that was undertaken by His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, our great monarch. May God protect him. And this is something that is followed up by His Royal Highness the Crown Prince and the Honourable Prime Minister. Our constitution reflects the lofty goals of social justice which seek to bolster social solidarity as well as equality and also ensure a decent standard of living for citizens. These principles, when they are implemented, are done through a series of policies and programmes that have been developed by the authorities of Bahrain, in particular when it comes to the programme to tackle unemployment and to improve wages, to strengthen goods and services, and also to help groups in need. All of these initiatives seek to strengthen social protection, and they also help to tackle discrimination at work, reduce forced labour and tackle human trafficking. We are indeed proud of our experience when it comes to bolstering freedom of association and also the progress made when it comes to cooperation between social partners in keeping with the principle of constructive dialogue which seeks to respect the rights of workers and employers on an equal footing. The results that we have achieved in terms of the fight against the coronavirus pandemic on the local labour market, all of this is best proof of the efforts deployed by the Government, workers and employers. And this is done through tripartite coordination on an ongoing basis to address the consequences of the pandemic. In this context, the Kingdom of Bahrain is a role model when it comes to the stability of the labour market and bringing down unemployment rates and preserving the rights of workers, free from any discrimination, of unlawful dismissal, except under exceptional circumstances. We have also bolstered investment and we have undertaken projects to create more jobs, and we have also put in place sustainable development plans. Our success in this field is based on a social philosophy, and this is based on the reform project of His Majesty the King. All of this is done in line with international conventions and international labour standards and in keeping with the noble humanitarian principles of the ILO. In conclusion, I hope that this Conference is a success. I thank you for your kind attention.

Mr Erdenebat Sukhbaatar

Worker (Mongolia)

Mr President and distinguished delegates and brothers and sisters and ladies and gentlemen, it is my great honour and privilege to speak at the 111th Session of the International Labour Conference. Today we need social dialogue more than ever before among social partners, governments and employers and workers. Mongolia is making every effort to apply the democratic values of social dialogue and Sustainable Development Goals set by the United Nations. The distribution of wealth is extremely unequal in Mongolia, which leads to unemployment and poverty. The increasing prices of all types of products and tariffs is pushing more and more people into poverty as a result of the increasing gap between rich and poor. Our region, Asia and the Pacific, is the largest migrant workers sending region in the world, who are the victims of global challenges. Migrant workers and young people, they are wealth creators and great

contributors for the development of the country in the last 20 years. The Workers' delegation of Mongolia fully supports all the items discussed by this 111th Session of the International Labour Conference, namely quality apprenticeships to be adopted as a recommendation, designing effective regulatory frameworks involving workers' and employers' organizations in the design and implementation of policies and systems, preventing and addressing labour rights violations and ensuring equality and diversity in the provisions of apprenticeships. By the Confederation of Mongolian Trade Unions' effort, Mongolian minimum wage increased by 33% last year and reached a consensus to increase by 20 to 30% this year through the framework of the National Tripartite Committee. Workers of Mongolia are demanding justice and equality. Workers of Mongolia fully support the ILO Director-General's speech, "Make social justice a priority issue on the global agenda". I would like to say a special [vgr INAUDIBLE 3:00] the Prime Minster report promoting tripartism and a new social contract proposed by the trade unions of Mongolia. The International Trade Union Confederation Congress held in Melbourne last year declared that we all need a new social contract to achieve more effective, inclusive and a human-centred sustainable development for each country. Our trade unions, employers and government are trying to have new a social contract with more effective social partnerships. Our delegation also supports the item of the Recurrent Discussion Committee on Labour Protection, Leaving no one behind: Building inclusive labour protection in an evolving world of work. Wish you all the success. Thank you.

Mr Sahil Babayev

Government (Azerbaijan)

Dear Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I would like to start by extending a warm welcome to the distinguished participants of the Conference and thanking Mr Gilbert Houngbo, Director-General of the International Labour Organization, for his report. The report outlines very important initiatives and recommendations to ensure fundamental labour rights and principles in the global recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite the adverse impacts of complex political and economic processes at the regional and global levels, Azerbaijan has become one of the world's leading countries in recent years due to its rapid rate of development as a result of a comprehensive reform programme based on the concept of a strong social state. Azerbaijan's economy has more than tripled in the last 20 years. Its reserves are ten times greater than its foreign debt, which accounts for only 10% of our GDP. As a result of social reforms, only within the five years the minimum pension has been increased by 2.5 times, the average master pension has been increased twice, allowances have been increased five times, minimum wage was increased 2.7 times, the median wage increased more than 2.1 times and a salary fund has been increased by 2.5 times across the country. I would like to point out that, as a result of a large digitalization programme in the social sector, more than 100 social services, employment services, labour services have already undergone an electronic transformation. Those centres that provide social services from a single entry platform serve to deliver transparent and timely services, improving citizen-state relations via good governance and strengthening public attention to vulnerable groups. Launched last year, the labour and employment electronic system offers a unified labour relations platform for both businesses and employees as well as a new, efficient support system for all labour markets participants. The system was announced as a champion project at the ITU's World Summit on the Information Society Prizes in March this year. Azerbaijan's employment policies executed together with social partners in close cooperation with

the International Labour Organization. We have successfully completed two Decent Work Country Programmes. A new Decent Work Country Programme will be signed soon based on the principle of tripartism. Being a party to 59 ILO Conventions, including nine fundamental and four priority Conventions, Azerbaijan has continuously given considerable focus to increasing the number of ratified Conventions. In May this year the formal ratification of Convention No. 155 on occupational safety and health was communicated to the ILO Director-General for registration. Dear ladies and gentlemen, as a consequence of the 44-day Patriotic War, the occupied territories of our country were liberated from the armed forces of Armenia by the valiant Azerbaijani army. During the 30 years of occupation by Armenia, the territories of Azerbaijan were exposed to urban, cultural and environmental crimes. Nine cities and hundreds of the villages were entirely destroyed. Since the end of the war, 302 Azerbaijanis have been hit by mines as a result of mine terrorism, and 57 of them have lost their lives. Dear delegates, since 2019 the Azerbaijani chairmanship to the Non-Aligned Movement has launched successful initiatives to work towards pandemic recovery, calling for policies that prioritize decent work for all and eliminating inequalities. The developing countries of the movement are facing common challenges. There are serious problems of unemployment and underemployment due to recession after the COVID-19 pandemic. All these circumstances lead to the disruption of social cohesion. The most vulnerable groups of society have been severely impacted by the recession. Among them are people with disabilities, migrant workers and people living on the edge of poverty in the informal sector. It is of utmost importance to provide full access to the benefits of development of the vulnerable groups of population. As non-members, we believe in deeper and stronger cooperation between the States as well as with international organizations such as the ILO. We attach great significance to cooperation with the ILO to address the challenges identified in the Director-General's report in light of national objectives and relevant ILO standards. Thank you for your attention.

Mr Jamal Kadri

Worker (Syrian Arab Republic)

Director-General, Chair, President of the Conference, ladies and gentlemen. First of all I would like to congratulate Mr Houngbo for his election as the Director of the ILO. I would also like to thank the President of the 111th Session of the ILO on his election. This year we are dealing with a very important subject. Indeed, the problem of apprenticeships and occupational safety and health as well as fundamental rights at work and a just transition are all crucial subjects for all stakeholders. Ladies and gentlemen, our conference is taking place in a very complex global context. Namely, in our Arab region we are facing very difficult times due to the policies of Israeli occupation in the occupied territories and the Golan Heights. These are racist practices that affect Arab workers and have an impact on the populations. Their rights are normally protected by international law and other standards. The Report of the Director-General has also highlighted the arrogant and racist attitude of the Israelis. The Arab workers are deprived of all their rights in violation of all Conventions. That is why it is fundamental that we should find a mechanism to implement solutions to what is indicated in the report. The workers in Palestine and in the Syrian occupied territories are terrible. Ladies and gentlemen, a terrorist war has taken place for years and affected the Syrian population. It has however now exited this war as winners, and we are now the objects of foreign occupation in the north of the country. So there are occupation forces in the country, and this is affecting our gas, petrol and wheat

supplies in the country. We have also been impacted by the earthquake in February. There were many dead and many injured. This earthquake also had an impact on the infrastructures in Aleppo and other areas. I would like to thank the ILO and all other bodies that provided us with aid that allowed us to deal with the tragic consequences of the earthquake. Thank you to all that helped the Syrian people. We need to strengthen the role of the ILO and build capacities so that Syria may face such situations in the future. Technical assistance is required in Syria so that it can deal with the impact of the earthquake. Of course, the economic blockade must be lifted and the multilateral violations against our country must be stopped. The international community must help the Syrian people to recover from this crisis and resolve the blockade and the unilateral threats against the country in terms of security. Indeed, the policies are hostile against Syria. These policies are the source of a great suffering in Syria. Whether the Syrians be abroad or those who have been forced to migrate. The Syrian authorities have tried to bring back the Syrians who had left, because we need people to help us recover from the impact of the war. And the blockade and sanctions are affecting the country too. A just transition towards an environmentally sustainable economy and society is not a choice. These are challenges that all of humanity are facing. The coalition of Syrian trade unions believes in the importance of tripartism, and it is important that we achieve these aims. We must avoid the violation of the rights of the people. [vgr INTERRUPTION 7:41]. Technical assistance with specific objectives must be implemented. And I do hope that this Conference will achieve the establishment of resolutions that will be good for the world of work. Thank you.

Ms Corina Ajder

Government Vice-President (Republic of Moldova)

Dear delegates, the Government of Armenia has requested the right to reply in respect of the intervention by the Government of Azerbaijan. I shall accord this right at the end of this session after completion of the speakers list for this morning. The reply must be brief, no longer than two minutes, and it must be in parliamentary language. Following the custom of the ILO, there will be no reply to the reply.

Mr Hassan Mohamed Hassan Shehata

Government (Egypt)

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate. Vice-President of the Conference, ladies and gentlemen, heads of delegation, allow me at the outset to convey my congratulations to the Minister of Labour of Qatar in connection with his election to the presidency of the 111th Session of the International Labour Conference. I have the honour of speaking on behalf of Egypt, my country. The holding of this Conference is taking place in the context of socio-economic crises that are very profound which the world is experiencing today, especially developing countries and the poorest countries of the world. This means that we need greater solidarity at the international level, and indeed at all levels. Ladies and gentlemen, we did indeed note with great attention the report of the DG this year which concerns social justice. In particular, the vision to update the principles to achieve social justice in a decent environment, also bolstering and strengthening work at all levels: international, regional and national. We reaffirm the importance of solidarity and partnerships that respect the specificities of the Member States of the Organization without adopting terminology which is not consensual and which will only complicate the tasks of

international cooperation. There are various challenges facing the international economy, and this has required us to take measures and to adopt legislation as well as to put in place major national projects to increase the labour opportunities and to bring down unemployment. The President of my country has adopted new legislation on labour. This was sent to the National Council concerning social dialogue and measures guaranteeing a balance in the world of work by bolstering freedom of association. We have also put in place a guide for trade union organizations. Elections were held in transparency and freedom. We are working towards the ratification of the Maritime Labour Convention. This matter is being discussed within the parliament. We are also bolstering projects for SMEs and also for micro enterprises whilst also bolstering the role of the private sector. The Council of Ministers last week changed the name of the ministry. It was called the Ministry of Manpower, and it is now called the Ministry of Labour, in keeping with international labour Conventions. And we are trying to ensure that we have equal relationships amongst all stakeholders. Ladies and gentlemen, we have adopted various programmes and measures when it comes to social protection. There is an initiative for a decent life which focuses on rural areas in particular and which also looks at the integration of persons with disabilities in the world of work. We are also looking at ongoing professional training, partnerships with the private sector and also increasing the employment of women. We have developed a gender equality plan in the world of work and also a project to raise awareness amongst workers about their rights and duties before migration. We have also set up a labour market platform. Ladies and gentlemen, the crisis underscored the tragic situation of Arab workers in the occupied Arab territories, in particular in Palestine and Syria and in the south of Lebanon. Of course measures need to be taken swiftly and effectively in order to end the tragic situation of the Palestinian people, and of course all of this will have a negative impact on the whole region. It undermines the development in the region. We must now move towards a peaceful appeasement process, a phase whereby appropriate solutions are found. We must examine the root causes of the problem, and we must create an independent Palestinian State in keeping with the borders of 1967 with Eastern Jerusalem as the capital. This must all be done in the context of international law. In conclusion, I would like to thank all of those who have worked to ensure that this Conference is a success. We wish every success to the Director-General. We very much look forward to the recommendations concerning the world of work and strengthening cooperation with the organization in all projects that seek to strengthen social justice and professional relations. Thank you very much.

Mr Francis Atwoli

Worker (Kenya)

The President of our Conference and your deputies, I congratulate you for the well-deserved elections of steering ahead this very important Conference. The Central Organization of Trade Unions takes this opportunity to congratulate the Director-General following his appointment to steer the activities of the International Labour Organization for the next five years, and we remain confident that the Director-General will help the Organization to meet its constitutional mandate in contributing positively to the changing world of work. We in the Central Organization of Trade Unions in Kenya equally welcomes the Director-General's report which focuses on advancing social justice through decent work. We share in the conviction that it is time to have an open but conclusive conversation on how to renew the social contract by forging a global coalition with, especially, other key actors like the multilateral system. Madam Vice-President, we recall that the aspiration for social justice through which workers can

freely claim their fair share of wealth that they have helped to generate on the basis of equality of opportunity remains great to date. We therefore must take urgent integrated interagency action based on a human-centred and rights-based approach to address the current challenges that threaten our social cohesion, economic growth and progress. We as workers in Kenya agree with the Director-General's report that the Decent Work Agenda provides the most appropriate framework for advancing social justice, although it is my considered opinion that if the Decent Work Agenda has not achieved its desired goals and results, as witnessed in Kenya and the rest of Africa, we should now change the approach on the same. The question to ask is whether all workers are facilitated to exercise their free will in accessing the opportunities they would wish for and in participating in the distribution of gains of their labour. As shown by the evidence in the report, there are weaknesses in the functioning of industrial relations practice. In Kenya, for example, social dialogue institutions, including the National Labour Board and the wages councils, have often remained inactive owing to governance and funding challenges. But we are however encouraged by the recent action by the new Kenyan administration to gazette the new members on the board of labour. We, however, look forward to the provision of adequate budgetary allocation by the Government. Madam Vice-President, the Central Organization of Trade Unions in Kenya is very much concerned with the declining number of workers who are covered by collective bargaining agreements due to rampant exploitation by employers. This suggests that the International Labour Organization has failed to tackle and close the exploitative routes by global employers and governments like outsourcing, casualization, poor contracts and other related exploitative practices. As pointed out in the report, only around one-third of the global workers are covered by collective bargaining, implying that a large majority fall outside representation. We hope and trust that the International Labour Organization will come up with a way forward on the same. However, there are also instances where government institutions have undermined the ability of workers' and employers' organizations to freely and independently engage in collective bargaining. For example, in my country, Kenya, we wish to call upon the Salaries and Remuneration Commission, SRC, to desist from interfering with the processes of collective bargaining agreements and interfering with the free and independent collective bargaining agreements which are clearly enshrined in the International Labour Organization Convention No. 98. Further, we also want to encourage employers, and particularly multinational enterprises operating in the key economic sectors employing a large number of workers, to invest more in social dialogue. Facilitating workers to transition from technological changes through skills provision and lifelong learning approaches cannot be ignored. In this regard we urge multinational companies operating in the agricultural sector of the economy, particularly in Kenya, including the tea sector, to dialogue with workers with a view to finding sustainable ways of doing business without compromising workers' rights. Madam Vice-President, it is our role as constituents working with the International Labour Organization to provide the required normative standards to guarantee social justice. This coincides with the call for renewal of the social contract anchored on human rights, as proposed by the UN Secretary-General in his report of Our Common Agenda. And a Global Coalition for Social Justice, therefore, must be put in place as this will address all sectors of our economic activities globally. I thank you.

Mr Colin E. Jordan M.P.

Government (Barbados)

Chair and Vice-Chairs of the Conference, Director-General of the International Labour Office, delegates to the Conference, distinguished ladies and gentlemen. First permit me the honour of congratulating the Director-General of the ILO, Mr Gilbert Houngbo, on this his first International Labour Conference. Additionally, I congratulate the Chair and Vice-Chairs and extend to all of you best wishes for a productive Conference. We recall that the Centenary Declaration speaks of the ILO as moved by the imperative of social justice. It is therefore very pleasing to see in this Conference emphasis placed on the advancement of social justice. The Director-General's report is very informative, and we look forward to the Governing Body's and the Office's effective action on establishing the Global Coalition for Social Justice. In Chapter 4 of his report, the Director-General reiterated that the pursuit of social justice is the raison d'être of this 104-year-old organization, and he again highlighted the critical issues that affect the ILO's realization of that goal. I am pleased to report some specifics on the advancement of social justice in Barbados during recent years. Barbados formed its Social Justice Committee with the function of facilitating the involvement by social partners and civil society organizations in policymaking mechanisms to create a society that is safe and fair, thereby reaffirming our commitment to the values of equity, respect for diversity, access to social protection and the application of human rights in all spheres of life, including in the workplace. We established a national minimum wage. This saw an increase in the earnings of many workers at a time when there was significant uncertainty caused by the pandemic as well as the inflationary pressure caused by supply chain disruptions and rising interest rates. Parliament enacted the Employment (Prevention of Discrimination) Act. My Government introduced this legislation to ensure inclusiveness, and the promotion and strengthening of decent work as a critical component of national development. My country also established rates and conditions of employment under the Labour Clauses (Public Contracts) Act to ensure rates of pay and other terms and conditions for workers that must be adhered to by organizations executing government contracts in construction projects. After taking a leading role in the development of international labour standards on violence and harassment in the world of work, Barbados ratified Convention 190, the Violence and Harassment Convention, and has a continuing programme aimed at eliminating the scourge of gender-based violence. In keeping with our strong support for the inclusion of a safe and healthy working environment in the ILO's framework of fundamental principles and rights at work, one of the key outcomes of the 110th Session of the International Labour Conference, we established ten occupational safety and health at work regulations. Chair and delegates, Barbados stands in full support of the Director-General's call for a Global Coalition for Social Justice. This is essential for small island developing states like mine, especially as Barbados promotes the Bridgetown Initiative and the need for fundamental reform to the international financial architecture. Because of its tripartite nature, the ILO is well placed, and indeed may be best placed to ensure the needs and imperatives of employers, workers and governments are reflected in multilateral discussions on the cross-cutting issues of public health, security, trade, access to finance and inclusive development. The ILO can and must continue to bring the human-centred approach to the table, including on matters of the climate crisis and a just transition as well as access to development resources for small States. Barbados stands with the ILO in advancing social justice and promoting decent work. Thank you very much, Chair.

Ms Saida Neghza

Employer (Algeria)

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate. Ladies and gentlemen, heads of delegation, Heads of State, ministers, Director-General of the ILO, Madam Chair of the IOE, colleagues. At the outset, I should like to thank you for extending this invitation to me, and I would like to thank you for the opportunity to make my remarks at the occasion of the 111th ILC. I should also like to thank the Director-General of the ILO for his efforts, in particular the choice of the topic to advance social justice and to strengthen decent work. This is what we all aspire to. We pay tribute to the Minister of Labour of Qatar who was elected as the president of this session. We wish him every success. Ladies and gentlemen, after the disastrous consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic many regions of the world have seen tensions of a diverse nature which have increased the problems, especially in poor countries and developing countries. These consequences are very negative. They have led to a rise in prices of food and other commodities, which undermine development efforts, thus endangering many people who are facing food poverty and malnutrition. There is also the issue of inequalities between developing countries and developed countries, and a divide between the rich and poor even within the same country. This means that many people are left behind without any health coverage, without any food, without any studies on this topic. This indeed is an international threat. Many young people up sticks and search the path of migration. They encounter untold suffering and difficulties. They get involved in drug trafficking and they also get involved in terrorist groups. This further strengthens instability. Of course I should like to mention the issue of desertification, climate change and the impact of climate change on the agricultural sector, and for many people agriculture is the main source of income. In this context, ladies and gentlemen, we must show greater solidarity between developed and developing countries, especially countries that have known colonization. The disastrous effects of climate change and pollution are affecting developing countries even though they were not responsible for them. The results of the UNFCC Conference, the COP and the Climate Change Fund are an opportunity for developing countries. For employer associations it is also an opportunity to strengthen their activities in favour of young people and women. We can also take part in the transition towards a parallel economy which must help countries to move towards formalization. We must draw upon modest resources in the field of agriculture to produce things locally whilst respecting the dignity of our people. We must double our efforts to promote creativity and scientific research, which are factors of competition. We should also like to thank His Excellency the President of the Republic who bolstered the buying power of citizens and has increased unemployment benefits in a bid to show solidarity and social justice. Algeria is undertaking various economic reforms, in particular through the adoption of a new law on investment which drew the attention of the President and which grasped his full attention. There is also a law on finance as well which he paid attention to, and various steps are being taken to bolster creativity. We must also work towards the digitalization of all administrations. As a confederation of employers of Algeria with an economic and social dimension, we very much support the efforts of the Government. We are putting in place socio-economic programmes in favour of young people and women, especially in regions that are experiencing a delay in terms of development. We also have various social projects to improve the standard of living of citizens. Ladies and gentlemen, international solidarity and cooperation are our only path to achieve a world of cohesion which leaves no one behind. We must ensure that social protection is extended to all so as to avert crises and deal with the consequences of crises such as

COVID-19. In the future, we will certainly see further crises: political crises, famine, war, illegal migration. They are indeed tragedies for families and for host countries. By way of conclusion, I should like to pay tribute to the cordial relations that we have enjoyed within our confederation with the ILO. I should like to thank the Director-General for his efforts to create a fairer and more just world for sustainable development for all. Thank you.

Mr Samba Sy

Government (Senegal)

President, delegates, the delegation of Senegal would like to congratulate the President on her election and the efforts that have been made for the perfect organization of this 111th Session of the ILC. I have already had the honour of receiving the Director-General in Dakar on an official visit, and I would like to congratulate him and reiterate my support. We welcome the report written about social justice, which is a supreme objective of the ILO. At the moment the world is at a crossroads. It is facing many urgent challenges: the persistence of inequalities, job insecurity, crises in many forms, weakened social contracts and so on. There are threats against social cohesion, universal peace and sustainable development, so the world of labour must act to advance social justice. However, this requires the promotion of decent work. Within this framework, and with the support of the ILO, Senegal has launched its third DWCP. This follows the two former ones which focussed on the years 2012-2016 and 2018-2022. We have made notable progress in our country thanks to the commitment of the social partners. Collective bargaining has allowed the rise of minimum wages, better trade union representation, a national plan to strengthen social dialogue which promotes social stability and productivity, the modernization of labour administration, a national policy on occupational safety and health, and a strategy to extend social protection to the workers in the informal economy. Senegal reiterates its commitment to the establishment of a Global Coalition for Social Justice. The items on the agenda of this Conference are closely related to the subject matter that has been raised by the Director-General, i.e. advancing social justice. The standards commission is focussing on this matter and on quality apprenticeships. The recommendation which will be drafted by the commission will allow the establishment of an international standard that will create a favourable environment for quality apprenticeships. And this will focus on allowing access to decent work as well as possibilities for lifelong learning and improving productivity, resilience and transitions and the employability of apprenticeships as well as adapted regulations. The inclusive protection of workers in this world that is changing is a cornerstone of the ILO, and we believe that it is also central to social justice and decent work. We believe that a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies is urgent. It concerns us all. Indeed, the report of the Office tells us that 130 million people may fall into poverty over the upcoming ten years, which would definitely have a severe impact on our Sustainable Development Goals. In 2019 the Government of Senegal formulated a national plan for a just transition at the climate summit. The country's goals are ambitious in terms of the climate, and they are human-centred. The project, which is entitled 'The social dimension of the ecological transition', was executed in the framework of the partnership between France and the ILO in 2020-2024, and it was officially launched on the 11th of March 2022. It focuses on three main axes for the just ecological transition: support for research and development using assessment models, the strengthening of social dialogue structures and the capacity-building of social partners, as well as support for the just transition. The commission of general affairs,

in line with the Declaration on the future of work and the resolution adopted in 2022, will use this recommendation to create decent work based on fundamental rights at work. This year gender inequality is the focus of a study. These inequalities persist despite the adoption of many ILO standards. And achieving gender equality is of great interest, especially in countries where these inequalities are still great. Senegal is committed to achieving this objective. This is why the country has integrated provisions in its regulations to fight against all forms of discrimination. This is Law No. 2022-03 which amends some provisions of the Labour Code concerning non-discrimination at the workplace. As the ILO Director-General has stated, the time has come to demonstrate global solidarity and to revive tripartism to renew the social contract. Thank you.

Mr Nasri Abu Jaish

Government (Palestine)

President of the Conference, Director-General of the ILO, workers' representatives and employers' representatives. Allow me first of all to congratulate the President of the Conference, the Minister of Justice of Qatar. I should like to congratulate his deputies, and I wish them all success. I hope our meeting is also a tremendous success. We sincerely believe in social justice. Our country truly believes, despite all of the injustices that have been inflicted upon us. We have experienced several injustices which affect the resources of the country. Our country is suffering from racism. The occupiers ignore all international Conventions. The current Government of Israel believes in transfer. The Israeli Government practises assassinations and steals the resources of the Palestinian people. The Israeli Government is imprisoning the people of Palestine. The people of Palestine are prisoners essentially. The people of Palestine are suffering from division. They are seeing the destruction of religious monuments. Ladies and gentlemen, that is what occupation is. Occupation seeks to reduce the country to a bare minimum and to reduce it to a country of cheap labour. Ladies and gentlemen, since 1980, the ILO adopted at its 66th Session of the ILC concerning the situation in Palestine. The ILO described the poor condition of the Palestinian people. The DG of the ILO, since 1980, has been sending Commissions of Inquiry to Palestine, and every year an annual report is published on the situation of Palestinian and Arab workers. Palestine would like to thank the DG of the ILO. The document of the Director-General recalls the truth, the truth which we are experiencing in Palestine. The report also states that the Palestinian economy is weak. And this, in fact, worsens the economy and entrenches poverty. Ladies and gentlemen, the people of Palestine are still suffering today. The lives of ordinary Palestinian people are difficult, and the labour conditions of Palestinians are very poor indeed. It is absolutely essential that we end the trafficking in these Palestinian slaves. Transit points are places of suffering. The rights of Palestinian workers are not respected. All of the rules of equality are not respected in Palestine, ladies and gentlemen. Today, ladies and gentlemen, we are wondering why for over 50 years nothing has been done. We need assistance. Your Conference is one of an organization that believes in equality, but do you not think it is high time for us all to achieve social justice? Do you not think that the ILC can indeed change the situation in Palestine? Do you not think that it is high time for you all to help us end this social injustice in Palestine? How long can we put up with this injustice? This is a solemn appeal we would like to launch to the room. This is an appeal launched to all of the people of the world. It is high time to end the injustice in Palestine so that we can regain all of our rights. We need rights to guarantee respect for all workers. Allow me here to quote some passages of the Report of the Director-General. The

Report of the Director-General says that this report is one that reminds everyone of the situation in Palestine. For over 40 years the ILO has been preparing a report on the situation of Arab workers in the occupied Palestinian territories. I would like to convey a message of hope to you. I would have liked to give you some good news. Decent work, justice. I would have liked to have seen all of this being transformed into a reality but, as the Director-General has said in his report, sadly, sadly I fear that this promise is not yet achievable. Because the situation in Palestine is unbearable, I would like to turn to you all today in a bid to ask you to please not forget us. Please do not leave us behind. The remarks of the Director-General addressed to this Conference must be implemented. We must work to achieve the rights of the Palestinian people. It is absolutely essential that we eliminate injustice. We sincerely hope that the ILC will be able to turn the dreams of the Palestinian people into a reality. We must not allow the Israeli Government to be above the law. Let us be frank, I am asking the Director-General of the ILO, I am asking all of the participants of this Conference to work hand in hand with us. Therefore, I am asking everyone to support the people of Palestine so that the people of Palestine can recover all of their rights. We hope that the trafficking in slaves stops. I am sorry for taking up too much time. Thank you for listening to me. I wish every success to this Conference. Thank you.

Mr Luis González Arias

Employer (Paraguay)

President, I would like to congratulate the President on his election, on behalf of the entrepreneurs and employers of Paraguay, and for the presiding of this historic 111th International Labour Conference. The Director-General has issued a document on advancing social justice, and I am going to focus on several aspects that I believe are relevant. The world at the moment is facing difficult times. There has been the pandemic, the ensuing economic crisis, environmental problems and armed conflict. These have led to drastic changes in the world of work and, generally speaking, in the economy. These challenges lead us to seek new tools that will allow us to innovate, to become entrepreneurs, that will allow for sustainability and make our economies more resilient in the face of future challenges. They will also help us prepare for a knowledge society, for AI, automation and robotics, amongst others. These tools will replace human jobs but there will be new, more highly qualified ones that will be created, and that is why it is fundamental to give the workers the necessary skills to acquire the skills for the jobs of the future. There are four fundamental aspects that must be integrated into society based on universal human rights, and these include giving access to all to a decent quality of life, education, healthcare and social security. It is also important to renew the social contract. The commitment of governments is crucial as well as that of employer and workers' organizations in order to maintain social dialogue to guarantee their just participation in the economic and social progress. The second aspect concerns equal access to jobs and production, particularly policies and measures that allow this to become a reality. The third is the equitable distribution of the product of development and economic growth in order to help the most vulnerable members of society. And in fourth place, the just transitions that aim to benefit people over time, and these must include the transformations related globalization. Many jobs can be created by means of the adoption of sustainable and clean practices and technologies. Industry must gradually reduce its intensive usage of non-renewable resources such as coal and oil. It is fundamental to integrate people into the knowledge society, and that is why lifelong learning is so important to allow people to acquire knowledge, to perfect it and to acquire new skills at the workplace. These challenges ...

Mr Mohamed Abdelaziz Gobran Abdelhalim

Worker (Egypt)

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful. Director-General Gilbert Houngbo, President of the Conference, ladies and gentlemen, in my personal capacity, on behalf of the Egyptian working class, I would like to wish you a warm welcome to this Conference. We have tripartite delegations from 187 countries. I should like to convey my appreciation and greetings to you from all Egyptian workers. We wish you all success during this ILC. I hope that the work of our meetings will help us come up with solutions to the problems facing workers. Brothers and sisters, members of the Conference, our conference this year is discussing the issue of a just transition towards inclusive and sustainable economies and social protection. Indeed, the world is facing various challenges. Some of them are old and others are new. And despite socio-economic development and economic growth, which have helped to increase standards of living and have expanded opportunities in the world of work, it remains true that there are still fears and concerns when it comes to economic inequality, which is growing within many countries. In fact, and in this spirit, I should not forget that climate change is a major issue which is going to have an impact on agriculture and water resources and which will also lead to conflicts as well because there is going to be a struggle for resources. There is going to be a lack of water resources in the future. That is a reality we have to contend with. In this spirit I would like to welcome the fruitful and constructive cooperation between the tripartite constituents within Egypt. And we work together within a framework of the laws of our country and the Conventions of the ILO that our country has signed up to, which we respect and apply. The ILO has cooperated with us. We have been working together with the ILO country office in Cairo. We worked together to organize various workshops and programmes and seminars. Young people and women take part in all of these activities. They bring new ideas to the table. Ladies and gentlemen, the General Federation of Egyptian Trade Unions is the spokesperson of Egyptian workers at the national and international levels. It is taking every effort to improve the working conditions and OSH conditions of workers and also to increase wages through our representatives within the parliament. We also work with various organizations, in particular civil society organizations and also the ministry of the labour force and the ministry of enterprises and other stakeholders as well so that we can improve working conditions. This has also been done within the context of our Egyptian constitution. Here, for example, we are speaking about article 13, which states that it is vital to ensure that we have balanced working relations between social partners. And also it mentions a thing or two about decent working conditions and also the need to guarantee OSH. As I conclude my speech I should like to restate that our confederation in Egypt attaches great importance to the fight against illegal migration. We need to increase investment in these countries where these migrants come from so that we can establish peace in those countries. We are demanding equal respect for women and equal wages for women. It is also vital to ensure that countries are able to respect their traditions without having anything imposed on countries that are not in keeping with their traditions. We also express our solidarity with the people of Palestine, and we support their right to establish their independent State in line with the borders of 1967. We show solidarity with all Arab countries and all other peoples who are experiencing crises and wars that have a negative impact on their lives. Let us hope that stability and peace reign throughout the entire world. Thank you for listening to my statement.

Mr Paul Mavima

Government (Zimbabwe)

Madam Vice-President, allow me to begin by congratulating you on your election as the management committee for this 111th Session of the ILC and to wish you the very best in executing your duties. From the onset I wish to express my delegation's appreciation to the Director-General for his very first report to the ILC, which is concise and practical in articulating the challenges that confront the world today. That includes the rising cost of living, climate change, geopolitical instability, the debt crisis and the possible solutions hinging on the promotion of social justice. The report of the DG comes at an opportune time as we continue to critically reflect and introspect on the measures we need to take to improve our labour markets and ultimately contribute to meaningful and sustained socio-economic development in our countries. Madam Vice-President, the report of the DG resonates well with the founding principles upon which the ILO was established recalling that, "Universal and lasting peace can be achieved only if it is based on social justice." Indeed, social justice is a prerequisite for universal peace and development. That said, it is imperative for the ILO to unrelentingly pursue the achievement of the Decent Work Agenda and to ensure the promotion of the fundamental principles and rights at work while using its comparative advantage to promote sustainable enterprises and enhance productivity. In addition, skills development, lifelong (sic) and transition from the informal to formal economy remain of central importance in achieving social justice and development, especially in the developing countries. Madam Vice-President, turning to the experience of my country, I am proud to report that Zimbabwe has successively implemented three generations of the Decent Work Programme since 2005. As we implement the fourth generation, I can confidently say we are on the right trajectory towards attaining equalities in the world of work through building sustainable enterprises, employment promotion and strengthening social dialogue. Our tripartite negotiating forum, which was legislated for in 2018, has made significant progress in institutionalizing social dialogue and developing human-centred, inclusive, sustainable and resilient national strategies. We take note of the DG's observation of the disparities between low-income and high-income countries in respect of COVID-19 economic recovery, the challenges caused by the debt crisis and shrinking fiscal space, all of which has resulted in price increases in our countries. We are therefore encouraged by the DG's vision to forge a Global Coalition for Social Justice which will bring together agencies in their multilateral system, including international financial institutions. As highlighted by the DG, we remain hopeful that this will deepen the discussion on overhauling the financial system to better support the real economy and decent jobs and ensure a human-centred approach. Of course, the achievement of global social justice will remain elusive as long as some countries continue to impose unilateral coercive measures on others. Punitive sanctions, which my country is suffering from, impede socio-economic development and inflict harm and suffering well beyond the so-called targeted few, including workers and their families. Madam Vice-President, in response to the Report of the Chairperson of the Governing Body, my delegation appreciates the work that has been undertaken to democratize the ILO structures. As we speak today, two thirds of Member States of the ILO have expressed their desire to reform the governance of the Organization through ratification of the 1986 Instrument of Amendment. Notwithstanding the overwhelming support for democratization, we remain static and await at least three of the remaining eight countries of chief industrial importance to ratify the instrument. It is my delegation's fervent hope and expectation that the ILO will soon be transformed to reflect the interests of the majority of its members. As I

conclude, let me thank the appendix to the DG's report updating the Conference on the increasingly dire situation of workers in the occupied Arab territories. My delegation expresses its full solidarity with those affected by this continuing illegal occupation and, as always, we remain hopeful that the situation will improve in the near future. Finally, let me stress that the attainment of social justice is definitely not a one-size-fits-all process, hence the need for an integrated approach in curbing inequalities through globalized concepts. I thank you, Madam President.

Mr Fayez Almutairi

Arab Labour Organization

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate. Ladies and gentlemen, dear participants, I would like to begin by congratulating Qatar and the President on his election as the President of the 111th ILC. I would like to congratulate Qatar on improving the conditions of workers, and we support Qatar on its path to reform and improvement. We stand side by side with all the workers and all the trade unions, and we wish you all the best. The report issued this year will allow us to move forward indeed. The world is currently facing many crises. We have faced COVID-19, for example. And we need to work hand in hand in order to face such challenges on a national and international level. We must work together also to attain decent work. Jobs must be created for all. We also support the creation of an international coalition that will allow us to achieve sustainable development in the 2020-2030 programme. This must be done in order to achieve a fair world of work for all. It will give us a platform that will allow us to reach these goals. We have been active in this domain since the 49th Session of the Arab Conference, and this will allow us to rise up to future challenges. We must also work together to overcome barriers and challenges. We must be in a position to use all that we have at hand to move forward. Here we are discussing sustainable justice. We need solidarity because it would allow us to pave the way to the future. We must also improve jobs for all workers, including Palestinian workers who must be allowed to work in better conditions. And we must think of social protection for the Palestinian workers too. Services must be provided in a sustainable fashion in order to improve their working conditions. Racial discrimination must be fought against and eradicated. I urge the ILO and the three partners to support the Palestinian labour fund. We must help each other. We must liberate the occupied territories. Implementation measures must be enacted to help the workers, and this should remain a permanent item on the agendas of our meetings. Thank you.

Mr Henrik Yeritsyan

Government (Armenia)

We exercise the right to refute the groundless allegations of Azerbaijan. What Azerbaijan calls liberation was, in fact, a full-scale aggression against the people of Nagorno-Karabakh. Armed forces of Azerbaijan, supported by mercenaries from the Middle East, have grossly violated the international human rights law and international humanitarian law, committed despicable atrocities, crimes, deliberately and systematically targeted residential areas and civilian infrastructures. All territories that were occupied by Azerbaijan in the course of the war were totally wiped out of their indigenous Armenian population. Meanwhile, Azerbaijan spares no effort to systematically destroy the Armenian cultural heritage. In a blatant violation of the ceasefire statement, Azerbaijan has blocked in December 2022 the Lachin corridor, the

only transport link connecting 120,000 Armenians of Nagorno-Karabakh with the outside world. The people suffer from a critical shortage of essential goods, food and medical supplies. Azerbaijan has further created unbearable conditions for life by the disruption of gas and electricity supplies as well as regular targeting of civilians. The objective is to ethnically cleanse Nagorno-Karabakh. Hundreds of businesses have ceased their activities due to the blockade of the Lachin corridor. Around 10,900 people have lost their jobs and sources of income. It is about 50% of the private sector employees. The International Court of Justice adopted the legally binding order on February 22nd, 2023, for Azerbaijan, "To take all necessary measures to ensure unimpeded movement of persons, vehicles and cargo along the Lachin corridor in both directions." However, Azerbaijan has not only failed to implement the order of the ICJ but, in a sheer defiance to it, installed a checkpoint on the corridor. I thank you.

Ms Corina Ajder

Government Vice-President (Republic of Moldova)

Your Excellencies, this concludes our list of speakers for this sitting, so I thank you very much for all your contributions to today's proceedings and I now declare this session closed.

Mr Muhammad Zahoor Awan

Worker Vice-President (Pakistan)

Brothers and sisters, ladies and gentlemen, I hope that you may have already done a good break, having a nice lunch, and now we have to restart our session which we already terminated before this afternoon. And we will definitely go through all the respected speakers, and I request that for the time limitation, which already agreed, is just five minutes. As soon as five minutes, we will be trying to give a little more space but not too much. So then definitely this hammer will indicate for the respected speaker to conclude as early as possible. We would try to be relaxed, but rules are with us to chair and to make guidance to you. Thank you very much for your cooperation in this regard. So we have today, in the afternoon session, 12 speakers: honourable ministers, honourable delegates from employers, governments and workers. So without any delay, I would start now on my list.

Ms Thi Tuyet Mai Le

Government (Viet Nam)

Director-General of the ILO, distinguished ministers, heads of delegations, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen. On behalf of the Government delegation of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, I would like to extend warmest greetings to Mr Chair, Mr Director-General of the ILO, honourable ministers, Excellencies, distinguished delegates. For the Vietnamese people, as well as peoples in the world, social justice is always the goal and aspiration, ensuring universal and social protection plays a crucial role for achieving sustainable development, promoting social justice and realizing human rights for all. In making efforts for promoting post-pandemic recovery, Viet Nam appreciates and welcomes the ILO Director-General's efforts and report on advancing social justice as well as initiatives for promoting jobs and social protection for decent work and just transition to achieve Sustainable Development Goals and pursue the ILO's mission of promoting social justice and decent work for all. Following

the policies of closely combining economic growth with social progress and social justice in every step and policy, Viet Nam continues to enhance a social protection system in which social insurance, unemployment insurance and health insurance are the main pillars. Social assistance, active labour market programmes and basic social services are important basic pillars. Distinguished delegates, Viet Nam is of the view that a comprehensive, flexible and resilient social protection system capable of responding to shocks on a large scale will contribute to social progress and justice, stabilizing people's lives and bringing the country to sustainable development. Viet Nam's efforts to ensure social protection in the post-COVID-19 period have gained significant achievements, with the following highlights. The total number of employed workers in the first quarter of this year is 51.15 million people, recording an increase of 100.2 thousand people compared to the end of last year. The number of unemployed people of working age in the first quarter of the year is about 885.5 thousand people, recording a decrease of 12.4 thousand people compared to the end of last year. The unemployment rate of working age in the first quarter of this year is 2.25%, recording a decrease of 0.07 percentage points compared to the end of last year. Implementation of social insurance policies has made remarkable progress. As of January this year the number of people participating in social insurance was 17.5 million, accounting for 38.05% of the labour force in the age group. In particular, Viet Nam's social insurance policy has followed the trends of international integration. Accordingly, the maternity regime is not only for female employees but also for male employees. The pension regime is revised to ensure better equity for employees working in economic sectors between women and men. Health insurance coverage has increased rapidly with over 92% of the population participating in health insurance. The implementation of social assistance policies has been gradually improved. Currently, more than 3 million people are entitled to a monthly cash subsidy from the state budget. Mr Chair, distinguished delegates, on this occasion Viet Nam reaffirms our commitment to the universal values of the ILO, and we will continue to innovate and improve our labour laws and relevant laws and policies for addressing the challenges of the future of work, to make continued and sustained efforts for the ratification of not only the remaining core Conventions but other key technical Conventions and their effective actual application once ratified. Viet Nam also reaffirms our determination to address social and economic challenges through effective social dialogue, including challenges of the future of work in the context of post crisis. Finally, we do hope that in the near future we can share with tripartite representatives of all ILO Member States about the successful experiences of economic transformation and our continued efforts for decent work for all. In conclusion, I wish Mr Chair, Mr Director-General, honourable ministers and all delegates good health and success. I thank you.

Ms Ewa Kedzior

Worker (Poland)

Distinguished delegates, Chair, first of all let me thank the Director-General for preparing a very detailed and comprehensive report. The report diagnoses four dimensions underlying the achievement of social justice, the first and most important of which are universal human rights, including freedom of association. As the example of Poland and the history of trade union Solidarność shows, the exercise of freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining by workers and employers can be crucial to freedom and democracy for all. It is the legal basis for a just society in every area and can lead to achieving and ensuring the other three dimensions leading to

social justice: equal access to employment opportunities and productive activities, equitable distribution and just transformation. The report identifies a number of reasons of social injustice. Among them is the lack of access to employment. If there is work, it is very often precarious and informal. Statistics indicating that 60% of the world's working population works in the informal economy are unacceptable. Undoubtedly, the transition from the informal economy to the formal economy is the key condition for combating social injustice. It is a tool for combating poverty on the one hand and equipping the state with the tax revenues necessary for realizing social protection on the other. Despite a number of measures that have been taken so far to eliminate social injustice, it persists unchanged for years. What is the cause of it? Can it be assumed that social injustice persists because certain groups benefit from it, because with this injustice small benefits are accrued by many and great benefits are accrued by few? This year we remember the 10th anniversary of the Rana Plaza drama. Wasn't a huge market demand for cheap fashion the indirect cause of the disaster? Someone has to pay for cheap fashion, cheap items or cheap services. Who pays? The workers who produce them. How do they pay? By being deprived of the right to legal, safe and decent working and pay conditions, the right to social security. So, is depriving people of the opportunity to benefit from social injustice a solution? If so, how to make social injustice unprofitable? The DG's report does not ask the above questions but instead points out a number of actions to be taken to achieve the goal. One of them is to promote decent work. At the same time, the report sees possible dangers in deregulatory pressures and widespread practice of non-compliance with regulations for those covered. For example, undeclared work. The report underscores the need to intensify efforts to promote collective bargaining as an effective tool for ensuring fair and inclusive conditions. This important role of social dialogue is often underestimated and overlooked by States. Reaching the goal will require a stronger international solidarity, which the ILO cannot do alone. It will be up to us, the social partners, to awaken the spirit of interpersonal and international solidarity. We can do this in our role as ILO constituents through participating and cooperating in ensuring the implementation of the ILO instruments or, in another capacity, as consumers and citizens by boycotting those who benefit from social injustice. We recognize a social dimension of the supply chains. Controlling the supply chain can better integrate trade and influence the creation of decent workplaces. Experience shows that it takes many years to create standards for decent work conditions. The depreciation of those conditions is a much faster process. All it takes is some crisis, an unexpected change of circumstances. Polish workers remember well when, in the name of austerity and fighting the crisis in 2008, employment contracts were massively replaced by flexible forms of employment that lacked social protection. Time has shown how permanent these temporary solutions turned out to be and how disastrous they were both for the workers themselves and for the entire social security system. There can be no consent to deviation from and non-application of ILO standards. The international solidarity and the fight for worldwide social justice is our duty and necessity. Thank you.

Ms Ane Halsboe-Jørgensen

Government (Denmark)

Distinguished representatives of workers, employers and governments. The focus on social justice and just transition at this year's International Labour Conference could not be more timely. Across the globe we are witnessing a troubling deepening of inequalities and a fragmentation of work relationships. This is compounded by the pervasive job insecurity and ongoing devastating consequences of the COVID-19

pandemic and, on this continent, the consequences of the Russian aggression which is a clear violation of international law. Working poor, child labour, forced labour, inadequate social protection and the daunting challenges faced by the youth in finding employment are all growing concerns that demand our attention. In doing this, we must recall that human rights are universal and indivisible. This includes the right to freedom from violence and discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity. I know this is controversial to some countries, but less than protection of all workers is not acceptable. I hope we find a common ground, a common solution on the Programme and Budget that reflects this. We are confronted with a resounding call to take action, and these challenges are interconnected. Without achieving a just transition, we cannot ensure social justice and decent work for all. Denmark has a long tradition of tripartite collaboration between the Government and the social partners when facing large and complex societal challenges. And, as there are no quick-fixes, our tripartite approach ensures long-term responses to the benefit of employers, workers, the economy and society as a whole. In my view, one of the most crucial tasks at hand is to ensure that our workers possess the right skills. Education, training and lifelong learning hold the key to individual opportunities and prospering societies. We must remember that our youth represent our future. And this brings me to another important topic of this year's Conference: apprenticeships. The value of quality apprenticeships, particularly in the context of green transition, cannot be overstated. The Danish experience is that apprenticeships provide young people and adults with practical training, valuable experience and knowledge in green industries. They learn how to apply their understanding of renewable energy, sustainable agriculture or eco-friendly technologies to real-world challenges. Apprenticeships offer a unique opportunity to bridge the gap between education and employment. So it is timely for the ILO to agree on an instrument to promote quality apprenticeships. The connection between education and industry not only benefits individuals but also ensures that businesses have access to a skilled workforce ready to drive the green transition forward. The Danish Government places significant emphasis on the green transition and tackling the challenges of climate change. It is crucial to prepare for the fact that the green transition will impact all workplaces, affecting every worker and every enterprise. To meet these challenges, close, active and ongoing collaboration among social partners, workers, employers and governments is essential. The ILO, with its tripartite structure, offers a unique opportunity to foster this collaboration. In conclusion, I wish you all a successful conference. Thank you.

Mr M.Ghazwan Al Masri

Employer (Syrian Arab Republic)

Chair, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen. I am very happy to be able to speak on my behalf and on behalf of the Syrian employers and the Chamber of Industry of Syria. Congratulations on your election to the head of this organization, and I am very pleased to be able to take part in this Conference. Our organization is working in Syria with all of the constituents, all of the parties to the entrepreneurial sector. And we are very pleased to have worked with the ILO and to have received assistance after the earthquake a couple of months ago which led to so much suffering with so many people losing their livelihoods. Following this earthquake, the Government of Syria has launched a programme to support the livelihoods of those who have suffered because of the earthquake and to meet the basic needs of the populations that have been so severely affected. And the aim of this is to try to work also to achieve the objectives of our organization, which is to ensure the conditions for decent work. It is important to

continue to help Syria meet the great difficulties that have followed the earthquake. Syria has also suffered the consequences of longstanding years of conflict. And sanctions have also had a very negative impact on the economy, and this has of course been felt by all of the different sectors of the economy in Syria. So to rehabilitate the industrial sector in Syria it is important to focus on supporting micro enterprises, small and medium-sized enterprises and to help them progress towards a modern economy. And we would like to thank all those who have cooperated with us and hope that you will continue to provide assistance in the form of training sessions, opening up new centres for skilling and training of workers. The economic situation today means that we have to try to work on the full range of difficulties faced by workers and employers, including a lack of labour because of migration and instability, therefore, in the labour market in our economy. Once again, I would like to thank you, Chairman, and thank the Director-General for the invitation to the Syrian entrepreneurs' association.

Mr Soodesh Satcam Callichurn

Government (Mauritius)

Mr President, Excellencies, distinguished delegates, good afternoon. I would like to offer my warm congratulations to Mr Gilbert Houngbo for his election as the 111th Director-General of the ILO, the first African to hold such a position. Mauritius, as an African State, takes pride in this. Director-General, I would like to assure you of the full support of my country during your tenure. Mr President, the Government of Mauritius is fully receptive and subscribes to the call made by the Director-General for a Global Coalition for Social Justice. We support the need to reshape economic, social and environmental policies globally in the acknowledgement that a safe and healthy environment and decent work should be seen as a public good but not to become a barrier to trade. The welfare state of Mauritius, Mr President, has been shaped by the principles of social justice since its independence in 1968. Ours is a model of society based on inclusiveness, rule of law, upholding human rights principles and striving to provide equal opportunities and basic facilities for all. I am proud to share some concrete actions taken by the Government of Mauritius to promote social justice in my country. I start with education, which is a cornerstone for individual progress and social mobility. Mauritius provides free pre-primary, primary, secondary, tertiary, technical and vocational education, coupled with free transportation for all students. Free text books and exemption on examination fees are amongst other benefits that are granted. Through a universal healthcare system, Mauritians and foreign workers alike have access to free medical services. We also have a well-established social security system which provides basic retirement pensions to all senior citizens and social aid to vulnerable and disabled persons. Mr President, Mauritius established sectoral minimum wage in 1974. In 2018, thanks to the support of the ILO, Mauritius introduced the national minimum wage. Since then, it has been observed that the wages in many sectors of the economy have evolved upwards with the adjustment of wage relativity. The minimum wage and other social measures have contributed to removing people from the poverty trap and reducing the gap between the rich and poor as reflected by the steady improvement in the Gini coefficient over the years. In 2019 Mauritius adopted the Workers' Rights Act, a landmark legislation to further protect the rights of workers and provide additional social protection. The introduction of the Portable Retirement Gratuity Fund guarantees retirement gratuity benefits for every worker irrespective of the number of employers they have worked for during their lives. Mr President, last week, under the able leadership of the Prime Minister of Mauritius, Mr Pravind Kumar Jugnauth, my colleague the Honourable Minister of Finance presented

the national budget for 2023-2024. The budget brings in its wake a series of measures to promote social justice and improve the lives of our people. Allow me to quote what the Honourable Minister of Finance said during his budget speech, "We have dared to do what no other government has done. We have dared to make equity our driving principle. We have dared to create more opportunities by ensuring that individuals from all backgrounds have equal access to upward mobility. Because we care, Mr Speaker, sir. Because, as Jimmy Carter puts it, 'The measure of a society is found in how they treat their weakest and most helpless citizens.'" Clearly, Mr President, the call for social justice and inclusion has been heard by Mauritius and we espouse in practice the philosophy advocated by the Director-General. Let me also add that Mauritius is the first country in the Indian Ocean to have ratified Convention 190 on violence and harassment. Mauritius believes that it is not sufficient to adhere to Conventions but that they need to be implemented, enforced and applied. We are challenged in this task by our limited resources but are confident that we can count on the support of the ILO as always to deliver on our commitments. In this context, we thank the ILO in respect of all assistance provided to Mauritius so far. In conclusion, let me say that we look forward to pursing a constructive partnership with the ILO to continue investing in our people and upscaling labour conditions in Mauritius. Thank you for your attention.

Mr Bassolma Bazie

Government (Burkina Faso)

Mr Director-General, Mr Vice-President, honourable delegates, before I begin, I bow to the memory of our brothers and sisters who are no longer of this world. We have lost them in many cases due to induced and maintained inequalities, therefore social injustice. And of course there are incredible numbers of victims of social injustice throughout the world. And it is with this painful feeling at seeing the violation of fundamental principles and values of the ILO, based on social justice, equality and dignity, that despite all of this pain, I convey on behalf of the people of Burkina Faso and His Excellency the President of the Transition, Captain Ibrahim Traoré our fraternal greetings. And especially our gratitude for the solidarity with our people in these difficult times, because these difficult times are imposed by terrorist groups whose treachery and barbarity seem not to disturb the conscience of some leaders of the world who call themselves human rights defenders. Libya has been subjected to bombing that defied description long before resolution 1970 of the UN and has seen weapons spread throughout its country, throughout its land. And our country has no weapons or ammunition factories but terrorist groups have been spreading these weapons like grains of sand to plunge innocent people into mourning. Where are these weapons coming from? The authorities of our country, on behalf of the conventions of solidarity and assistance ratified by the world, demand solidarity to protect its people. This appeal has fallen largely on deaf ears, and worse yet, any attempt to resolve the situation has been cynically blocked. It is only when there are massacres that blocked ears are unblocked and tongues that are tied are loosened, and means that could not be found suddenly appear and announce the arrival of doctors after death. Our people have taken up arms and become trained. They are now called volunteers to protect the Motherland, and they are qualified by our traditional partners as militias before the entire world, whereas we see in lands not far AK47s and Kalashnikovs and electricians becoming tank drivers, and they are called patriots and fighters. What hypocrisy. So must it be recalled that in Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and the Sahel in general, not pigeons but humans are being killed, humans who are breathing just like you and who

have a right to life just like all of you. We have not come here to snivel before the world and display our suffering and our wounds but to tell you vehemently that the people of the Sahel, including the people of Burkina Faso have trust, confidence and hope that they will have victory over these terrorist hoards, their accomplices and those financing them, whoever they may be. The people of the Sahel, including those of Burkina Faso, are resisting, are resilient, showing solidarity and are committed to attain this victory in defending their lands and those of their ancestors. And they are saying no to these defenders of these so-called doctors who are trying to just put everyone to sleep but they are in fact vile salespeople of coffins. What cynicism here. Our people and the people of the Sahel say thank you to those countries who are showing solidarity and are working. Our people, together with our partners, are working with ECOWAS and the African Union, who are working for healthy integration and development and prosperity and not for the interests of small groups. We are going to have sovereign diplomacy. We will determine it ourselves. The people of the Sahel, including our people, are going to fight. And as we have seen in the Centenary Declaration of the ILO, we have to cultivate justice if we want peace. And given its social justice mission, these fundamental values and human dignity, freedom and equality promoted by the ILO must be promoted to have this decent world of work. That is why I fully subscribe to the Director-General of the ILO's urgent appeal to advance social justice for decent work. This concept so dear to our organization speaks of transparency and being exemplary in cooperation and solidarity between the North and the South in order to overcome terrorism. Burkina Faso has committed to guiding its sovereign diplomacy to work with partners who embrace this vision. From this rostrum I want to reassure the international community and friends that Burkina Faso remains a country open despite the scurrilous campaign knowingly orchestrated by enemies of peace. We need to foster virtuous governance, a guarantee of credible building of nations' solidarity. And that is why this country programme for decent work promotion is such an important tool, and that is why I can reassure you that my country, through its plan of action for stabilization and development 2023-2025 and with its country programme for decent work. So long live Burkina Faso, the people of the Sahel and people with solidarity, sincere and constructive partners. Long live the ILC, the ILO. I thank you.

Mr Yousaf Sarwar Muhammad

Employer (Pakistan)

Honourable Chair, Mr Zahoor Awan Saab, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, assalamu alaikum and good afternoon. I am Dr Muhammad Yousaf Sarwar, member of the Board of Governors, Chairman of the Province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa chapter of the Employers' Federation of Pakistan. First of all I want to congratulate all the elected members for this ILC. And especially it is an honour for me that the Chair is right now with Mr Zahoor Awan who is from Pakistan as well. I bring warm and sincere greetings from the EFP, the largest employers' organization in Pakistan comprising nearly 1,000 enterprises and 40 institutional members with an outreach to around 2.5 million workers. I compliment the Director-General for presenting a comprehensive report on advancing social justice with a priority to promote social justice through decent work. The Director-General makes a strong appeal to prioritize harnessing the unique tripartite convening power and forging a global coalition to advance the work on social justice and renew the social contract, progressing towards decent work. The Director-General rightly acknowledges the multifaceted challenges faced globally, including economic inequality and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. In Pakistan, addressing these issues is crucial to foster a

more equitable society. We stand fully committed to supporting the Government in implementing the ambitious ILO Centenary Declaration, emphasizing fundamental labour rights and a safe working environment. With a human-centred approach, we aim to alleviate poverty, exclusion and inequality, ensuring a just society. These efforts align with the broader goal of creating a sustainable and inclusive future. The Employers' Federation of Pakistan is also working for implementing fundamental principles and rights at work, particularly in the various tiers of the cotton supply chain and the sports goods industry and other vital sectors of our national economy. As the national focal point, EFP is actively engaged in the implementation of MNED principles and promoting social dialogue for social protection and social justice. EFP took the lead in advocating and lobbying for the introduction of the ILO Better Work programme in Pakistan. EFP is fully committed to the ratification of ILO Convention 190. The Director-General emphasizes the importance of access to an adequate standard of living, education, healthcare, social security and freedom of association. Furthermore, equal access to employment and productive opportunities is vital to ensure economic security and material well-being. The Director-General firmly advocates for international solidarity and the establishment of global partnerships. Recognizing the interconnectedness of our world, these calls serve as a powerful reminder of the need for collaborative efforts in addressing global challenges and promoting shared prosperity and social justice. We prioritize skill development through the Skills Initiative 2030 programme, aiming to create a skilled workforce and enhance youth employability. We have also introduced the National Skills Passport to recognize and uplift the socio-economic conditions of the informal sector. We are a staunch advocate for decent work and employ key instruments to strengthen our mission. Through robust tripartite and bipartite social dialogue and industrial relations, EFP advocates the application of decent work principles. As a testament to its commitment, EFP has spearheaded the WEBCOP, a bilateral social dialogue platform, for the past two decades. In line with its comprehensive approach, EFP actively engages in the industrial welfare programmes aiming to solidify policy frameworks, enhance system coordination and bolster capacity for labour law implementation. Central to our efforts is the pursuit of equitable and inclusive social protection coverage, particularly for vulnerable groups such as women and informal and domestic workers. Collaborating closely with the ILO and social partners, EFP champions gender equality, youth empowerment and women's advancement. Furthermore, EFP is dedicated to promoting climate change actions and actively implementing the ILO's Employment and Decent Work Programme. With great confidence, EFP acknowledges the Director-General's report as a catalyst for transforming changes in the world of work. We wholeheartedly embrace Our Common Agenda in forging a Global Coalition for Social Justice. I thank you all for your patient listening. Thank you.

Mr Radhakrisna Sadien

Worker (Mauritius)

Chairperson, Excellencies, distinguished representatives of the social partners present, good evening to all of you. It is with an immense pleasure that I am addressing you, and our meeting takes place at a time when countries are faced with numerous challenges, be it economic, social or environmental, especially in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and the geopolitical turbulence across the world. Inclusiveness and social justice can only grow in a context of peace and stability starting at the national level. This emanates also from our capacity to join forces in a tripartite manner and to work for the collective good. We need to ensure that all the fruits of development are distributed in

an equitable manner to society. We thus fully adhere to the call of the Director-General for social justice. New challenges such as precariousness of employment, work from home, illegal migration, negative impact of climate change, technological changes, artificial intelligence, among others, have a huge impact on employment. The Sustainable Goals were adopted in 2015 for all of us to enjoy a better future. We are nearing the year 2030. A lot of these challenges have yet still to be met. This can only be achieved if there is an effective social dialogue where all partners are allowed to play their role effectively. Coming to our local situation now, let me inform this august assembly that Mauritius has been able to adopt a national minimum wage. This is thanks to the setting up of the National Minimum Wage Consultative Council and the drive of the Honourable Minister of Labour, Honourable Callichurn, who is present with us today. The next step now is the fight for a minimum living wage. I would say that where there is a will there is a way. Mauritius is among the first countries to have ratified ILO Convention 190 on violence and harassment in 2021. This again is thanks to the support of the current Minister of Labour. What we need now is the full domestication as well as the setting up of mechanisms at the workplace to ensure its effective implementation. The newly born National Tripartite Council, based on the model of the National Economic and Social Council, is welcomed by trade unions in Mauritius. It is hoped that this platform will help address important issues regarding employment challenges that Mauritius is faced with currently. We will need the guidance and support of the ILO and other similar institutions to help us move forward effectively and efficiently. However, there are several other issues on which Mauritius would need assistance from the ILO. They are as follows. Collective bargaining, which is not being practised in the public service, to be in line with Convention 154 on collective bargaining. Secondly, amendment to be brought to the provisions of the Public Gathering Act 1991 to be in line with Conventions 87 and 98 of the ILO on freedom of association. Thirdly, issue of governance in the way disciplinary committees are set up in parastatal and state-owned companies. Fourth, acceptance of self-employed as members of unions, as recommended by the Committee of Experts of the ILO. Fifth, right of trade union leaders to exercise their functions without being intimidated or harassed. One case is too much. Let me tell you that currently the president of the Air Mauritius Cabin Crew Association is being subjected to disciplinary measures in her capacity as an employee although she participated in a radio programme in her capacity as a trade unionist. The intervention of the Ministry of Labour as well as global union federations have been sought in this matter and the ILO has been informed of the situation. We are awaiting a positive outcome on this as early as possible. To conclude, I would state that social justice can only be possible in a society where there is equal opportunity for all, decent working conditions, minimum wage being paid to workers that allows for a decent life, decent working conditions, non-discriminatory laws as well as the practice of good governance and a workplace free from all forms of harassment and violence among workers. I would like to thank you all for your attention. Thank you.

Mr Arezki Mezhoud

Organization of African Trade Union Unity

Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, members of the bureau, Director-General, my sister, regional director of the African region, ladies and gentlemen, delegates. I would like to start on behalf of the Organization of African Trade Union Unity. I would like to offer congratulations to all those who have been elected to the bureau of this Conference and my very best wishes for a successful session. And this session is taking place in what is a very complex and worrisome international context with recurrent

subsequent crises, climate degradation, the impact of the COVID-19 crisis and geopolitical tensions severely affecting the world of labour. And the workers and their family members are most likely the most affected by this situation. The state of the world today is giving rise to a great concern. Poverty and social inequality is increasing. Multiple forms of precariousness are growing. There is an upsurge in antisocial offences, and the freedom of trade unions is being threatened by many different factors. And despite the efforts that are being made in Africa, our continent has nonetheless not reached the hoped-for level in terms of inclusive development, in terms of job creation and social equality, access to basic needs and improvement of quality of life and the conditions of work or society. Unemployment, inflation and expansion of the informal sector, loss of purchasing power, a lack of social protection, migration and a tax against trade unions freedoms are the daily fare of our African workers who have already been made more fragile by the COVID-19 pandemic and many other factors. And this is compounded by the food security crisis and the energy crisis due to geostrategic tensions and their impact also on our future. We congratulate the Director-General on his report in which he addressed the major challenges of our time and has placed emphasis on social justice, which is at the very heart of these issues and should be a priority on the global agenda. And the tripartite constituents must support it and help translate this report into reality. A month and a half ago in Accra we renewed our recommendations to strengthen our cooperation and support with the International Labour Organization, which is a tripartite organization where the three constituents can come together and voice their opinions. And we would like to thank the ILO for the support that we have received, and in particular we thank the Director-General and the Regional Director for having held this important event for the African continent. To guarantee to all access to decent work is a prerequisite to attenuate social inequality and poverty and promote the fundamental rights to work, and especially those relating to trade union freedom and freedom to organization. We consider that the adoption of a balanced socio-economic development strategy at the global, regional and local levels, meeting the expectations of the workers, is very important. And the ILO can play an important role offering opportunities to progress towards a fair and prosperous world. We must not lose sight, however, of the fact that it is impossible to meet the ambitions of the people and the workers of Africa for a sustainable peace and security that are contained in the 2063 African Union Development Agenda and the United Nations 2030 SDGs. Peace and development necessarily go together. And it is important to strengthen those mechanisms that can support sustainable peace to act in synergy to eradicate extremism, terrorism and violence in all its forms, identifying peaceful paths to the resolution of conflicts which are growing in Africa. The latest example of which is Sudan where we have a regular army against a rapid response force. We reiterate our appeal to the ILO and to other regional and international organizations to respect this country and other areas of conflict in Africa, to help respect human rights, the right to work and the protection of civilians and workers. Facing these many challenges, only global coordinated responses that are based on sovereign internal dialogue, democracy, a constructive partnership on an equal footing, social dialogue and taking into account and addressing the economic and social needs of workers can help attain the objectives of growth, of stability, of social justice and progress for all, and it is important to ensure the right of peoples to development and peace. And I cannot conclude my statement without once again reaffirming our solidarity with the Palestinian workers and the workers of the occupied Syrian Golan who continue to suffer from the nefarious consequences of the occupation depriving them of their rights. We also denounce the Israeli policy for the expansion of settlements and forceful expropriation and expulsion

of the Palestinians. The right of the Palestinian people to an independent and sovereign State with its capital in Jerusalem we once again affirm.

Mr Emad Hamdi Hemdan

Arab Federation of Petroleum, Mines and Chemical Workers

Your Excellency Ali Al Marri, President of the ILC, Your Excellency Mrs Claudia Fuentes Julio, GB Chairperson, Your Excellency Gilbert Houngbo, Director-General of the ILO, ladies and gentlemen. Please allow me at the foremost to extend my sincere congratulations to Qatar. I would like to thank them and commend the excellent way they have been running the business of our ILC. Ladies and gentlemen, it is a pleasure for me to take the floor before you today as a representative from the Arab Federation of Petroleum, Mines and Chemical Workers. It is a great pleasure for me to address this great international forum and to speak before all tripartite constituents. I wish everyone success, and I wish you all success in this session. And this is a very important session that focuses on advancing social justice and ensuring comprehensive protection for workers in a rapidly changing world. We know that we are all facing a lot of challenges. We all seek social protection, justice and balance in labour relations. We all want fair wages and a decent working environment. The Report of the Director-General states that comprehensive and lasting social peace can only be achieved if it is based on social justice. The International Labour Organization endeavours to achieve social justice. And, of course, when we look at developments in the world today we would be remiss if we did not talk about a region that is of key importance for the whole world. That region is the occupied Arab territories. Tripartite constituents in Palestine in general, and the workers of Palestine in particular, are faced with discriminatory practices. These practices were referred to in the report prepared by the Director-General on the situation of workers in the occupied Arab territories. I believe that it is not statements or cries of condemnation that we need regarding what is happening in Palestine. We have clear proof that reflects that there are flagrant violations being committed in Palestine, and we must all take a clear stance towards those violations committed against Arab workers in Palestine but also in the Syrian Golan and in South Lebanon. I would like to say that we also reject the imposition of economic blockades against various countries in the world, because those who pay the price of such a blockade or of such sanctions are workers, workers who would lose employment opportunities. And of course these practices put an end to development and undermine workers' rights. We believe in the importance of social justice. The Director-General said that social justice is very important, and to achieve it we must work with all tripartite constituents. Without this tripartite work we will not be able to achieve social justice. The ILO was created in order to safeguard peace and to ensure social justice. In this regard, I would like to tell you that my country also, Egypt, is doing its utmost in order to achieve social justice because we believe that there can be no security and no safety and no social justice if we do not provide social protection for everyone. Social protection and social justice are very important, and it is something that has been clearly stated in the various religious texts of my religion, Islam. Ladies and gentlemen, we hope that we will be able to receive more support from the ILO in order for us to overcome challenges, challenges such as providing labour protection, transiting and entering a just transition, protecting labour relations, raising awareness about the rights and duties. All of these factors are important for us to achieve development goals. Ladies and gentlemen, we would not agree with any agreement that goes against religious texts. I think that we can do away with this crisis. We do not

need another crisis. What we need is for all of us to respect each other, to respect our cultures and our traditions. I call upon you to work together in order to protect workers in Sudan, in Syria and in Yemen. We are for the agreement on occupational safety and health and wish all success to the ILO in order for it to achieve more justice and to develop more recommendations that would ensure protection for everyone. I would like to thank the ILO and the ILO office in Egypt for their continuous support, and I would also like to thank all those who provide us with support. Thank you very much. May the peace and grace of God be upon you all.

Ms Theresa Torkwase Bul

Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing

Greetings to my colleagues at WIEGO and everyone seated here. My name is Theresa Bul. I am a Nigerian waste picker. My local organization is the Association of Scraps and Waste Pickers of Lagos state Nigeria, ASWOL. We belong to the International Alliance of Waste Pickers. Our international union is in its formalization process, so we need the support of a sister organization such as Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing, WIEGO, to share this important space. Our work is constituted of many workers in informal and cooperative settings in the waste sector. We participate individually or collectively in the collection, separation, sorting, transportation and sale of recyclable and reusable materials and products like paper, plastics, metals, glass and the other materials. By selling these recyclables we get an income and, at the same time, we offer waste management services to our communities, reducing pollution and carbon emissions necessary for climate change mitigation. Despite our environmental contributions, our work is unprotected, hazardous and we are excluded from formal labour markets. We do not have labour rights. Our own communities lack adequate waste management, violating our human right to a clean environment and further exposing us to unsanitary conditions, poor health, social stigma and evictions. Most of us work as self-employed workers with meagre incomes and are at the receiving end of the exploitative power relations in different value chains. We cannot compete with a new enterprise entering the recycling industry and Extended Producer Responsibility, EPR, policies and other circular economy investments that are privatizing sectors and diverting materials away from us. Even where we are organized, we struggle to plan for the future because of the constant challenge to our work. These injustices persist because we are not adequately accounted for in national policies nor international agreements. Also, investments designed by the governments with the complicity of multinational corporations to address environmental issues keep excluding us. Even despite that, we are part of the solution. The International Alliance of Waste Pickers and other international networks of workers in the informal economy and WIEGO welcome the ILO report on achieving a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all. For the ILO and for us, a just transition means greening the economy in a way that is fair and inclusive, creating decent job opportunities and leaving no one behind. To fulfil this commitment, workers in informal employment, more than 2 billion workers who make up 61% of the global labour force, must be included. How do we think this inclusion can be done? We believe it is necessary to link the just transition concept with Recommendation 204 from the ILO which establishes the transition from the informal to the formal economy. This means waste pickers, street vendors, home-based workers, domestic workers must be included in social dialogue and be able to negotiate collectively and have a seat at the table in planning and decision-making

processes on the policies that impact their work. In the waste pickers' case, we encourage the ILO to address mechanisms to ensure a fair, equitable and inclusive transition for us. This would include integrating us into all systems to collect, sort, transport and add value to recyclables. Governments should work with us as partners in the design, implementation and revision of these programmes. It includes establishing fair prices and environmental service fees, which our organizations are already pioneering in a number of countries. It means improved working conditions, access to materials and infrastructure, healthcare and social security, and as well as legal recognition at our national and international levels. We must be able to continue our current work in collection, and we also need to be integrated advance in value chains and decision-making processes. We must place social justice at the heart of just transition. Thank you for listening.

Ms Isabel Cristina Molina Obregón

International Young Christian Workers

Good afternoon, President, distinguished delegates from many countries in the world. My name is Susan. I am 23 years old and I come from Nicaragua. I started working at the age of 18 in different areas, and in 2020 I was fired for having resisted the sexual harassment from supervisors and senior managers. During COVID there were massive layoffs that left thousands of young people without a job, and that included me, without any unemployment benefits and no hope of being rehired. Others were sent home without even being paid. And during this time I survived as an informal worker. Today I work for Daysug, a Korean company. I earn 3,500 Córdobas every 15 days. That is the equivalent of US$97. I do have social security, and I have a work contract, but the working conditions are inhumane. We work ten to 11 hours a day, including Saturdays if we have not reached our production targets. Abusive behaviour, shouting and humiliation are the daily fare of all of the workers. The stress in the workplace is making us sick and the business does not allow for any trade union. Any form of organization is unacceptable to the company, and we who are the most vulnerable are driven into situations in which we are humiliated as young workers. We lose all dignity to try to survive in an unequal, unfair, enslaving economic system. Just like me with this testimony, millions of other young people throughout the world continue to be suffering in situations of vulnerability in those areas where we work and live. Day after day we are up against a lack of opportunity to meet our dreams, our objectives. We leave behind priorities such as studying or training or having access to jobs with social protection. The rights of workers are crushed in an environment with massive unemployment, informality and low income levels. The campesinos are dispossessed of their land, and millions live in suburban areas and rural areas without minimal access to what is needed for a dignified life. Zero-hour contracts and the platforms are restructuring the labour markets, increasingly weakening trade unions and leading to worsening labour conditions. Poor quality education, lack of access to healthcare, discrimination in terms of labour market access mean that social justice for young people is extremely fragile. The great economic and social gaps in the world are growing in our very competitive world, and with a lack of equality, equity and social justice we ask ourselves if it is possible for young people to survive and to achieve their hopes and aspirations. For this, there is a need for a policy that will guarantee social justice for all, the need for work, for decent wages that offer a long-term prospect, that can make it possible to start a family and have a better work and family life balance. We need to promote and guarantee social protection for all irrespective of their gender, their race, their origin. We need to slow down the privatization and

commercialization of common goods and services and promote public services and a social economy based on solidarity. We need to guarantee the full participation of civil society workers and have the voice of young people in state processes to ensure alignment with democracy. We demand social justice that can guarantee a dignified life and empower people and transform our societies in a sustainable and just way based on the principles of equality, of justice, of solidarity and participatory democracy. The International Young Christian Workers will continue to work to ensure that young workers do have a dignified life and decent working conditions that respect our rights as human beings and value us as human beings. But we believe that the implementation also of the ILO Conventions can help us make progress in our mission and go further in securing our protection and that of all of the other vulnerable workers. Thank you.

Mr Muhammad Zahoor Awan

Worker Vice-President (Pakistan)

In fact that makes it now the end of the speaker list. Brothers and sisters, ladies and gentlemen, what we see of today's evaluation from the morning session till this afternoon's session, we have quite very high-level discussion together with high-level participation. At least when I see the list there are around maybe 14 ministers from different countries, together with the honourable ambassadors as well as honourable delegates of both employers and workers. They have made their rich contribution in terms of the Director-General's report as well as the Report of the Chairperson of the Governing Body. I think mean that they have touched upon those areas in which that would be a candlelight for us for future of the work of the International Labour Organization. We are very thankful to you, secretariat as well as from me my part. We are thankful to you for all your very kind and good participation. And with this, I announce the meeting to be closed for this session. Thank you very much.

Mr Henrik Munthe

Employer Vice-President (Norway)

Good morning, distinguished delegates. It is my great pleasure to declare open the sixth sitting of the 111th Session of the International Labour Conference. Could you please sit down and keep quiet? We are going to start. This morning we shall continue with the general discussion on the Report of the Chairperson of the Governing Body, the Report of the Director-General and its appendix. These two reports and appendix were presented in the plenary on Monday and have been the topic of our plenary discussions since Tuesday. As has been done for the past few days, I shall follow the list of speakers. It will be displayed on the screen. But before starting, I will just remind you that the speaking time is five minutes. Five minutes. And I also kindly ask you to keep quiet if you are not speaking. You should pay respect to the speaker and refrain from a lot of making noise as we had had the last days. So please keep quiet when you are not having the floor. And then I am very pleased to call the first speaker on the list to the podium this morning.

Mr Alfredo Graell Añino

Worker (Panama)

We greet the participants of the 111th ILC, addressing critical topics like just transition, protection of workers and quality education. We hope that the conclusions that we produce are implemented in all countries of the world to guarantee social justice. Despite the fact that on the 5th of May the WHO declared a pandemic (sic), the economic and social states that provoked this are still far from overcoming it, particularly in countries like ours. In line with the recommendations, the ILO did not focus their priorities on decent work and labour rights but rather gave privilege to the recovery of the economy, giving proceed to asymmetries which affected the least developed countries of the world. Health services only feature in electoral speeches but they are not really given priority in the state policy. In this country, in terms of the economy, we continue to have education centres where we need technology for better education. Given this situation, the deficiencies in terms of health services mean the population suffers and speculation takes place in the market. Up to 60% in increases in prices of medicine is unacceptable. There is a social debt to be addressed, and the Supreme Court of Panama said that there are shortcomings in terms of labour rights. And there continue to be differences between men and women, and the discrimination deepens in the world of work in clear violation of Convention 190. The population needs to be protected against this. In this context, technological change must take place and focus on an inclusive development because business cannot always be dominant and driven by the private sector, benefiting from fiscal benefits and using the public funds. Just transition and due diligence must step down from political discourses and it is contradictory to the situation. The recurrent action by the Government of Panama needs to be in line with its commitments. Multinational companies in Panama are reaping the benefits of our economy, affecting the population with the consequences on the environment for the citizens of the region and of the world as a whole. Panama would like to state that we need social justice, but dialogue is without a result and without compliance with the agreements. That is seriously affecting the viability of this instrument which is being used as a strategy to

modernize the country. And social dialogue is failing and it is a clear example of what is happening in our country. The Government of Panama continues not complying with key Conventions with regard to labour rights. We are lagging behind in terms of social rights. We need to adopt the necessary legally binding measures to address these problems. This situation, given the persecution of unions and companies, imposed by multinational companies, this is political activity that even attacks and will not accept complaints from workers, non-compliance with key collective agreements and unjustified action after years of work in the public sector. Here we have serious violations of labour rights that have become generalized, particularly by the Government which does not comply with the commitments that it subscribes to, and we hope that the commitments that are being adopted be properly complied with. Thank you.

Mr Ignatius Baffour Awuah

Government (Ghana)

Mr President of the Session, permit me to thank the Chairperson of the Governing Body and the Director-General of the ILO for their reports. On behalf of the Government of Ghana, I am honoured to address this Conference on the crucial topic of advancing social justice for all. Mr President, social justice lies at the heart of our collective aspirations for a fair and equitable society. We firmly believe that decent work is an essential pillar of social justice. Therefore, we recognize the vital role played by the ILO in promoting decent work for all and we remain committed to upholding the principles enshrined in the ILO's Constitution as well as the Constitution of Ghana. The Government of Ghana has made significant strides in advancing social justice and promoting decent work. We have implemented policies and programmes aimed at fostering inclusive growth, reducing poverty and ensuring equal opportunities for all. Ghana continues to strengthen its labour laws to ensure adequate protection for workers. Our commitment to the promotion of workers' rights such as freedom of association, collective bargaining and the elimination of all forms of discrimination at the workplace remains resolute. Through effective social dialogue and consensus building among tripartite constituents, Ghana has fostered a conducive environment for building peaceful relations and a resilient economy. Ladies and gentlemen, in recognition of the evolving nature of work, Ghana is embracing the digital era with the opportunities it presents. However, as we are mindful of the challenges posed by technological advancements and their impact on the labour market, government is therefore investing heavily in skills development, apprenticeship as well as re-training programmes. This would equip the current generation of youth with the skills and competencies required by the future world of work. There is no doubt that interventions of this kind will contribute significantly to realizing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with focus on leaving no one behind. Leaving no one behind also requires that we review and target social protection interventions to cater for vulnerable workers. Access to social protection interventions must be equitable and universal. Ghana therefore continues to improve upon and expand social protection programmes to provide a safety net for informal sector workers, women, youth, persons with disabilities and other marginalized groups. This would inure to a reduction in rising inequality, enhance social cohesion and promote inclusive growth. Despite modest achievements, Ghana recognizes that there is still much work to be done. The COVID-19 pandemic presented challenges whilst exposing us to new opportunities. We owe it a duty to tackle the challenges head-on to shape the future we want. Improvement of social protection systems will help mitigate the rising

inequalities faced by vulnerable groups. Let us seize the opportunity to build back better while ensuring that our approaches to economic recovery are pragmatic, inclusive and sustainable. Distinguished delegates, I wish to reaffirm Ghana's commitment to advancing social justice which should be one of our major preoccupations. Through partnership and fruitful collaboration, we will overcome the challenges facing labour markets, promote inclusive growth and create a better future for all through decent work. I thank you for your attention.

Mr Gerardo A. Martínez

Worker (Argentina)

Mr Chairman, the increase in inequality, precarious conditions, informality and poverty has thwarted progress for developing countries. During the pandemic we pleaded for vaccines to be a social good for all the population and it did not happen. No one heeded our call. Given the realities that we have been witnessing over the last few years, the workers call for a change in the international financial architecture, in particular in the protagonist role being played by the IMF whose bad reputation precedes it in developing countries. Without a doubt, the time is ripe to craft a new social contract to respond to the relentless demands: economic, from production, social in nature. The workers need proposals for recovery with a rights-based approach anchored in social progress. We promote a shift from informality to formality and a future world of work with a social protection floor and guaranteed labour. Education is the cornerstone in our inclusive strategy. You cannot have work without education. Workers, we are not afraid of modern times or technological change. However, the facts have demonstrated that benefits are not shared. We want to see investment create jobs with a regulatory state that compensates for the social costs of transition, and that is why we speak of a new social contract. Statistics of the Americas region are alarming. The economies of my region are facing a very complex scenario externally, characterized by low growth in our economies and in world trade. Forecasts by ECLAC estimate that average growth of 1.2% will be insufficient for full recovery to reach everyone. More than 50% of the population lives in poverty, with constant attacks on freedom of association and limits on collective bargaining. We reiterate, as we have been doing so in every single Conference, we need governance in our region that upholds and complies with the rights and fundamental principles that this house advocates for. In Argentina our political credibility is in crisis, which undermines the efforts of the Government to manage the microeconomy. It has been 40 years since we recovered democracy in a context in which policy as a tool to address debts to society is facing challenges. Given the attempts to impose political and social intolerance, we must set up basic conditions for governance in policy and in economy. In the western democracies policy is the cornerstone to address structural problems. The union movement in Argentina calls for cooperation and dialogue. This is the precondition to craft state policy in the medium and long term. The serious nature of our circumstances is clear. We note that in civil society no political force can resolve the structural problems in isolation. We should like to underscore the fact that our government is firm about maintaining social dialogue in which parties can participate freely. This is a right and a fundamental tool to defend the buying power of wages. We also underscore the fact that strengthening social security to improve social benefits is important for the most vulnerable sectors of our population. We advocate for development, production and work. These are the pillars of social justice. National unity is important for our nation and the happiness of our peoples. I thank you.

Mr Ardashir Kabir

Employer (Bangladesh)

President of the session and distinguished delegates, good morning to all of you. My compliments to the Director-General for exhibiting a comprehensive and detailed report at the outset. In a nutshell, the DG's report is a key reference for labour markets and social justice. It offers valuable insights into the persistent inequalities, vulnerabilities and injustices that workers and employees face in different parts of the world and proposes a holistic approach to addressing labour-related issues. As you are all aware, as defined by the ILO, decent work encompasses fair wages, social protection, equal opportunities and a safe working environment. This report recognizes the importance of decent work as a fundamental element of social justice and sustainable development. It further emphasizes the requirement for policies and practices that put the welfare and respect of workers first so that nobody is left behind. This document acknowledges the immense impact of technological progress, digitization and climate change on the working world. It highlights the necessity for adapting to these transformations while safeguarding workers' rights, ensuring their inclusion and providing them with opportunities for upskilling and reskilling. In addition, the report recognizes the importance of social dialogue, tripartism and cooperation among governments, employers, and workers' organizations in shaping policies and implementing effective strategies for advancing social justice. It emphasizes the need for inclusive and participatory decision-making processes involving all stakeholders to create fair and just working conditions. Though the report is timely and comprehensive, there are certain grey areas which should be addressed for attaining the objectives that have been set out. The report does not adequately discuss the potential difficulties and obstructions to executing the suggested policies and procedures, including any country or region-specific issues. By focusing more on the formal sector's situation, it also tends to overlook the state of decent work where there is a large informal sector. Examining the difficulties experienced by informal sector workers would grant us a fuller comprehension of social justice matters. While the report emphasizes the importance of social dialogue and tripartism, it could be argued that it does not fully capture the perspective and experience of all stakeholders, particularly those of SMEs, marginalized groups and vulnerable workers. A thoughtful consideration about enterprise sustainability should also be appended while planning for any kind of social policies so as to achieve justifiable and long-term social policy. Capacity challenges should be looked into. Allocation of resources should be looked into in greater detail. Productivity, taking into account different sectors and region or country-specific issues and practices and the maximum involvement of the private sector in skills development should be considered a priority and looked at in greater detail. Having said that, in conclusion, the DG's report serves as a comprehensive and insightful analysis of the current labour market landscape. It highlights the urgent need to promote decent work, addressing inequalities, adapting to technological and environmental changes and fostering social dialogue. The report's recommendations provide a road map for governments, employers, workers' organizations and other stakeholders to work together in pursuit of a more just and fairer world of work. Thank you.

Mr Firmin Ayessa

Government (Congo)

Mr President of the 111th International Labour Conference, Mr Director-General of the International Labour Organization, ladies and gentlemen. I am addressing you on behalf of His Excellency Denis Sassou N'Guesso, the President of the Republic of Congo, and on behalf of the Congolese Government, with all the respect and sympathy that my country has and owes the International Labour Organization. With that same respect, I address my sincere congratulations on their brilliant election, respectively to the President of the 111th Conference and the Director-General of the ILO. And our country fully approves the Declaration adopted on 10 June 2008 on social justice for a fair world and supports unswervingly the creation of the Global Coalition for Social Justice. Congo reaffirms its commitment contained in the agreement signed on 4 February 2022 between the commission of the African Union and the ILO for the implementation of social justice by promoting decent work. Ladies and gentlemen, Congo is in this year, 2023, in its second year of implementation of its National Development Plan for the period 2022-2026. One of the major focuses of this plan is social progress for all with solidarity. The social strategy implemented within it targets reducing economic and social vulnerability and development that is inclusive of the population to have stronger social cohesion. To obtain the status of a pioneer country of the Alliance 8.7, the Congo has just, with the support of the ILO, equipped itself with its strategic priorities and a very consequential road map, and in the next days it will be concluding its Decent Work Country Programme, DWCP. In terms of improving the professional integration of youth, the Government is carrying out, together with the support of its financial and technical partners, a number of projects to improve employability of youth. Congo has, moreover, undertaken a vast reform of its social security system which will be implemented, inter alia, by the launching between now and the end of 2023 of a universal health insurance programme. Ladies and gentlemen, Mr President, the world is changing. It is changing at a dizzying speed, and the world of work is changing even faster. So our challenge, the challenge for all of us, a collective challenge is to know how to and to be able to adapt the model of the International Labour Organization, favouring the main values of peace and social justice for all. This challenge is one that we must and can meet together. This is the very sincere wish of our country and its people. Mr President, Mr Director-General, ladies and gentlemen, I thank you for your kind attention.

Mr Hideyuki Shimizu

Worker (Japan)

Distinguished delegates and all participants, on behalf of Japanese workers, it is a great honour to address the discussion on the Report of the Director-General. Japan chaired the G7 summit meeting this year. We, the trade unions of the G7 countries, held the L7 summit in April in Tokyo. The participants in the L7 held discussions on issues such as balanced macroeconomic policies, the need for pay rises, efforts toward a just transition, respect for social dialogue and the importance of lasting peace. The outcome of our discussions were summarized as the L7 statement which was handed to Prime Minister Kishida. Moreover, at the time of the G7 Labour and Employment Ministers' Meeting in Kurashiki in April, as well as releasing joint statements with the B7 representing business and the C7 representing civil society, JTUC-RENGO President, President Yoshino, attended the ministerial meetings as the L7 representative and

spoke from the position of workers. As a result of these initiatives, policies proposed by the L7, including the importance of investment in people to secure a just transition, effective social dialogue in global supply chains and securing of decent work, were reflected to a certain degree in the G7 Hiroshima Leaders' Communiqué and the G7 Kurashiki Labour and Employment Ministers' Declaration. This fact signifies that social dialogue is functioning within the G7. Chair, we feel a deep sympathy with the Director-General's report, which presents the concrete direction to be pursued toward the furtherance of social justice based on profound insights into the current situation. I was deeply moved by the call to reframe the fundamental principle of the ILO and the call to pursue social justice from a contemporary standpoint and to take action with our eyes firmly on the future. As is also stated in the report, the world currently faces a myriad of issues such as poverty, disparities and inequalities due to gender and other attributes. I believe that in order to resolve these issues it is necessary for the Government, workers and employers in each of the ILO member countries to implement social dialogue in their respective spheres of action. We must also turn our eyes to the many places in the world where, as ever, the conditions for social dialogue are very difficult. Peace is the basis of the realization of social justice through social dialogue. The military invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation still continues today. An international society that is peaceful and stable is an absolute condition, a prerequisite for the world's workers to maintain a safe and secure daily life. Once again, while we resolutely condemn the act of barbarism by Russia, I declare our heartfelt solidarity with the workers and citizens of Ukraine. At the same time, turning our eyes to Asia, democratization and the labour movement are being oppressed by the military regime in Myanmar. We strongly condemn this and are continuing to support the forces of democratization in cooperation with the ITUC and ITUC-AP. In addition, the ILO core labour standards form a further basis for the realization of social justice. It is extremely regrettable therefore that, of the core labour standards, Convention No. 111 and Convention No. 155, which was added last year, have not yet been ratified by Japan. We believe that Japan should be standing at the forefront of the realization of social justice. For this reason, we demand that the Japanese Government ratify Convention 111 and Convention No. 155 at the earliest possible time. Finally, to conclude my speech, I pledge that we, the trade unions of Japan, will take an active part in current and future ILO activities and will take action toward the realization of social justice. Thank you very much for your kind attention.

Ms Paulina Brandberg

Government (Sweden)

Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, constituents of the International Labour Organization, it is an honour for me to address this 111th Session of the International Labour Conference. In the first line of the preamble of the ILO Constitution, social justice is underlined as the foundation of universal and lasting peace. One hundred and four years after the founding of this organization, the importance of advancing social justice is more pressing than ever. Crises generated by challenges linked to, for example, the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, demographic and technological shifts as well as violence and insecurity, including gender-based violence and harassment, undermine our fundamental human rights and affect people's chances to build a good life for themselves. This is a threat to economic growth and to human progress. Ladies and gentlemen, today I need to be very clear. Everyone must be able to fully enjoy all human rights, regardless of sex, regardless of sexual orientation, regardless of gender identity or expression, regardless of ethnicity, religion or other

beliefs, regardless of disability, age or other status. The Swedish Government is committed to ensure equal rights and the full and equal enjoyment of human rights of all LGBTIQ+ persons. We expect the ILO to be at the forefront of combatting discrimination, including on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression. The ILO cannot fail to protect persons who are among the most exposed to harassment and even threats to their own lives. Today I also want to underline gender equality as a matter of social justice, allowing equal access to rights, resources and opportunities. Sweden's relatively high degree of gender equality derives from decades of political will to prioritize gender equality, to take necessary political decisions and to build an infrastructure for gender equality. Allow me to highlight four important aspects. The first one, social infrastructure, in particular the set-up of accessible and affordable childcare and elderly care of good quality. When childcare and elderly care is adequate, women's labour force participation increases. Second, separate income taxation for women and men. This too leads to an increase in women's labour supply. Third, paid parental benefit for both parents. This provides incentives for men and women to use equal shares of the parental leave. And fourth, women's access to productive resources such as land, property and credit. A gender approach to, for example, land rights can enable shifts in gender power relations, increasing women's economic empowerment and reducing poverty. These aspects promote gender equality and increase women's prospects to have the same opportunity as men to enter the labour market and to remain and progress there. They impact women's earnings, well-being, and bargaining power at home. The Swedish policy agenda strives to combat inhibitive gender roles and structures so that all women and men, boys and girls in all their diversity can live their lives to their full potential. Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, everyone has the right to live in freedom and security. There is no peace without social justice but there is also no social justice without peace. Sweden stands united in strong solidarity with the Ukrainian people in the face of Russia's war of aggression. We will continue to support Ukraine and hold Russia accountable. International humanitarian law must be respected. We welcome the ongoing efforts of the ILO and the Director-General to support the Ukrainian constituents. Let me conclude by saying that Sweden will never, ever accept any pushbacks when it comes to everyone's full enjoyment of human rights. Our aim is, and will always be, to build a more equal, prosperous and resilient world. In this work, we will always fight for the most vulnerable groups, including women and girls as well as LGBTIQ+ persons. Let us continue this game-changing work together. Let us join forces and build a more socially just world with equal opportunities for all. Thank you.

Ms Patricia Veringa Gieskes

Employer (Democratic Republic of the Congo)

Excellencies, Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, allow me, on behalf of the Employers' group of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, to convey the greetings of Congolese employers that always use all of their synergy, means and skills in the service of their country and their partners. And this thanks to the initiative of his Excellency Félix-Antoine Tshisekedi, President of the Republic, who spares no effort to advance social justice. It is also an opportunity to greet the initiative of the Director-General of the ILO, Mr Gilbert Houngbo, to emphasize the fundamental goal of social justice as a central element of all national and international policies. As indicated in this report, structural transformations of the labour market are essential for the DRC because they make it possible to carry out the agenda for decent work, and especially to resolve the issue of the informal economy. For DRC employers, the transformation

of the labour market is not just a veritable lever to implement an environment that is favourable to strengthening social dialogue but also a fundamental element for lasting socio-economic growth and expanding social protection. Within this framework and to illustrate efforts made by the Government, there has been the establishment of free learning, and also soon there will be implementation of universal healthcare coverage together with social justice and in fair transition. In the DRC we are seeking to find mechanisms capable of finding lasting solutions within the framework of climate change, and this is based on several fields. In mining, the DRC abounds in cobalt, and we are going to begin building factories and we are going to cooperate with Zambia to do so in order to have the production of theses batteries benefit many Congolese workers. Next, the green economy. The DRC contains almost 70% of equatorial forest and peat moss which captures carbon. Work is underway to monitor carbon levels, and it is necessary also to limit the intensive use of forests. The Congolese Government has begun reforesting of over a billion trees in provinces, and now this is leading to jobs for youth, even those who do not have a lot of education. Now social dialogue. The role of social dialogue has become crucial. And that is why, with the expertise of the ILO, and more specifically with ACTEMP Central Africa we have, in a bipartite way, worked with our workers, our partners who are here today. And I greet them. We have set up a social dialogue platform with all to provide tools necessary to facilitate better understanding of our partners amongst themselves and also to begin this dialogue that is necessary to deal with any differences for social justice, as sought for all. So the DRC is defined as a solution country within the fair transition, with its young population and natural resources and its will to ensure that this dialogue will be ongoing among all members of the tripartite. Thank you.

Ms Cristina Faciaben Lacorte

Worker (Spain)

Mr President, esteemed delegates, the world that we are facing today has a range of colossal challenges, from climate crisis, new economic leadership that complicates the fragile multilateral institutions and establishes a new global panorama, a globalization of the economy applying neoliberalist logic, together with the new forms of work organization, digitization, robotization, outsourcing of activities and relocations of production that directly impacts work and the working class. The pandemic and the war in Ukraine as well as the price increases and a risk of a world debt crisis also increase uncertainty and challenges. In this backdrop in which inequality is increasing in the world, jobs are becoming more precarious, social contracts are losing their value and are not complied with in many places in the world, as the Director-General said in his report. Thus, it is incumbent that we fight for social justice to ensure it becomes a reality throughout the world. But there will be no social justice if we do not have decent work. In 2015 the United Nations established the only social contract of this century with its resolution on Agenda 2030 and the SDGs. The target number 8 on decent work is designed to guide public policy to ensure full employment, quality jobs, formalization of work, fair wages, social protection, safe working environments, collective bargaining, freedom of association and the right to strike. But decent work also means equal opportunities and non-discrimination and fair distribution of wealth and, why not, a fair transition. When it comes to all the emerging issues like decarbonization, the green economy, digitization, these transitions will only be fair and just if the workers are involved in their development. Decent work and social justice must be for everyone, with no exceptions. And from this very rostrum we call for this, as we have been doing so since 2016. We call for a binding

treaty on due diligence and compliance of human rights and environmental rights throughout the value chain by enterprises. We want this to become a reality and the relevance to reinforce standards of the ILO. We welcome the mandate of the European Parliament to negotiate a European Directive on due diligence. To conclude, I should like to emphasize that over the last few years in Spain we have seen major progress made in social justice. Insufficient but a good start. The impact on employment of the various crises has been somewhat mitigated thanks to a decisive intervention by the state in the labour market, social dialogue and collective bargaining, which has meant we could keep jobs while production came to a standstill during the pandemic using social protection for the affected workers and assistance to enterprises. We agreed on a labour reform which improved the quality of jobs, particularly reducing unjustified temporary contracts. But at the same time this is creating jobs as well, and the recovery of collective bargaining as the cornerstone instrument to improve labour conditions is back. Government and unions also agreed on an increase of up to 40% of the interprofessional minimum wage and a reform of the pension plan which has improved the buying power of 10 million pensioners, all the while introducing measures to bolster the pension system for the future. We have fought hard to ensure that Spain ratifies Conventions 189 and 190, and we are now working on their being transposed into the national legislation. Progress was also made in terms of genuine equality between men and women, although the path is a long one before we have full equality both in terms of closing the wage gap and developing the care economy and to put an end to male chauvinist violence. We have a long path to achieve social justice throughout the world, and I am sure that this will work towards world peace, and the ILO needs to be a key tool in achieving this. Thank you for your kind attention.

Mr Viliami Uasike Latu

Government (Tonga)

Vice-President of the Conference, esteemed delegates, ladies and gentlemen, I have the honour to bring you greetings from the island kingdom of Tonga in the Pacific and to represent my country at this 111th Session of the International Labour Organization Conference. What a privilege it is to meet again in person since the COVID-19 pandemic and for me to stand amongst you on this very important day. I would like to begin by thanking the organizers for the agenda placed before the Conference this year, in particular the reports submitted for our discussion. I especially appreciate the reports on advancing social justice and quality apprenticeship which I find most essential in this time of great need. Such reports allow for reflection and forward looking into the future. The discussion on advancing social justice brings to the fore the enormous work that Tonga needs to achieve universal rights and capabilities, equal access to opportunities, fair distribution and just transitions. Tonga, like most Pacific Island nations, faces immense challenges as natural disasters and external crises impact our already vulnerable small economies. Significant development challenges are hard to overcome due to our relative isolation and lack of economies of scale. Unemployment remains a major development issue in Tonga. There is high unemployment in youth and women, and other market failures include labour shedding and high underemployment. There is a range of skills shortages with only a small number of young entrants coming into the engineering, education and health occupations. This is a big concern for the future. The Government is conscious that adequate policies and programmes are needed to be in place to improve job opportunities, labour participation and to lift the standard of living in Tonga. It is in this context that Tonga stands with hope that the messages of this Conference on quality

apprenticeship programmes, inclusive and adequate labour protection and just transition to promote decent work for all materialize in our shores. It cannot happen in a short period of time, but with the commitment of our government, in partnership with workers' and employers' organizations and with the support of the ILO, Tonga can navigate the complexity of today's rapidly changing world of work and possibly achieve positive social justice outcomes. The support and technical assistance of the ILO is critical to our efforts to strengthen labour market policies and institutions and in developing the capacity of our tripartite constituents to effectively contribute to the agenda of improved labour and employment opportunities, social justice and decent work for sustainable and inclusive development. Therefore, Tonga calls on the relevant arms of the ILO to introduce and implement appropriate programmes, bearing in mind the unique challenges of small states of the Pacific such as Tonga, and to work collaboratively with national constituents to improve our growth potential and capabilities to create decent jobs so we too can advance social justice measures and not be left behind. I thank you.

Mr Mohammed Attia Ibrahim Elfayoumi

Employer (Egypt)

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate. Excellency Mr President, distinguished heads of delegations, distinguished delegates from Employers' and Workers' delegations, it is my pleasure to extend to the ILO our best greetings for its excellent performance, and we wish the ILO success in all its endeavours. Ladies and gentlemen, the ILO, with its tripartite structure, is the engine behind production. And this Conference is one of the most important tools of attaining social justice in labour and the coordination of the principles of decent work and the provision of protection to both workers and employers in order to attain sustainable development and economic stability for the Member States as well as assisting in the implementation of development plans. The report that has been given to us by the Director-General on the various subjects and technical subjects like apprenticeship, the just transition, the consideration of the various policies towards sustainable policies, all of these reports show the sincere desire to support all aspects of labour against a background of all the developments of our age in order to attain sustainable development, to protect decent work and to promote economic progress regionally and internationally. In line with all of that, the Government of Egypt has submitted a number of plans and a number of policies to support the economy of Egypt in order to be able to face the international changes that the world is witnessing today, starting with the COVID pandemic and also in view of the economic crisis that was a result of the war between Ukraine and the Russian Federation and which has affected all countries, in particular where inflation rose greatly and the work opportunities shrank as well as effects on the supply chains. The Government of Egypt has presented a number of initiatives and contributions to support the private sector through the document for state ownership and also to step up opportunities for investment and to inject new finances to help development and also to make national industry stronger and to protect all segments, including those with lower wages, and attaining equality in work and supporting women workers and ensuring equality between the genders in the workplace. The Government of Egypt also has enacted a number of legislations to support investment where it seeks to provide incentives to enhance governance and cooperation and also to provide safeguards for investments. Where it concerns supporting labour, the Egyptian National Assembly will discuss the new labour law, and that follows the discussion of the trade unions law. Also, our legislative improvements have seen a number of

amendments to the law governing the work of enterprises. Ladies and gentlemen, the question of Palestine is the first question for all Arabs. Palestine is undergoing an extremely difficult phase because of the tight grip on the Palestinian territories, and there a number of violations that are affecting employers and workers equally in Palestine. Also, the infrastructure for labour is still incomplete or is absent, and it is our hope that the international community is going to work hard to lift this suffering under which the Palestinian people are living. Finally, I wish all the participants success. Thank you very much for your kind attention.

Mr Salvador Medina Torres

Worker (Mexico)

We should like to congratulate the Director-General and his team for the report that has been submitted to the Conference in which there is an outstanding analysis of the world, regional and local reality and food for thought and initiatives proposed to governments, employers and unions. For the union organizations that we represent on a national and continental level, it is abundantly clear that democracy, tripartism, governance and technical cooperation require good faith, political will to address the shortcomings and structural terms and to agree on public policy that is indispensable to overcome the damage done by decades of lost work. Despite the progress that has been made, often in terms of macroeconomic statistics, nevertheless, over the years policy has been insufficient to overcome the chronic problems of the large populations in many countries. The balance that is outlined in the Report of the Director-General says that although we must not give in to political pessimism and support the efforts of the ILO to put together a global coalition against injustice, also we need to ensure that these efforts have a social and historic sense in line with the Centenary Declaration of the ILO and establish strategies that are properly effective, whose results are not just studies and bureaucratized reports with lists of intentions and theoretical good practices but rather that they are properly and duly focused on positively transforming the world of work and production as well as the respective systems with a lens of decent work, sustainable human development and a decent social contract. Which, in short, is what we need in many of our countries. In terms of the Director-General's report, as it says, discontent with national governance and a loss of confidence in it is on the uptick. The growing polarization across societies is undermining the confidence in state institutions, and even in labour justice, at a critical time when we need to revitalize labour institutions. On the uprise is also social conflict, violent confrontation and defensive social movements. Before the pandemic there were already serious signs of instability, multi-crises, precarious work and precarious lives, and it was clearly evident that we needed a new decent social contract able to provide genuine opportunities for development and prosperity for all and for no one to be left behind. This new social contract needs to be overhauled. We need to reinvest in tripartism. We have said so on many previous occasions. Political and technical cooperation policy between countries or with the United Nations, and in this case with the ILO, urgently needs to be of a higher quality because national conflicts are only multiplying. The Office of the ILO needs to be a benchmark, more proactive when it supports tripartism and avoid inertia and transform to assist with changes that are promised to our peoples but never become reality. Cooperation with the ILO is fundamental, particularly for the worker sector in all areas. The standard-setting system of the ILO must be strengthened on a constant basis because it is the heart of the Organization after all. But cooperation with the ILO is not sufficiently focused on tripartism, although this is the intention of the spirit of its origin, because there is a power imbalance in

many countries and a deep-rooted status quo which needs to be changed so that the aforementioned cooperation actually works. And secondly, the Bureau for Workers' Activities has some shortcomings that we have already spoken about in the past but we have not yet seen rectified. We completely agree that we need to revitalize tripartism and renew our commitment to social dialogue to ensure that when decisions are taken regarding the design and implementation of policy, investment in capacity and public services and their funding, that social justice is paramount. And thus we trust that the ILO and its constituents and its cooperation programmes will reflect the promise implicit in the Report of the Director-General when he says, as it says in the Centenary Declaration, that the ILO has agreed to comply with tenacity with its constitutional mandate to achieve social justice. I thank you.

Mr Hassan Fakih

Worker (Lebanon)

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate. Excellencies, Mr Director-General of the Organization, Mr President of the Conference, honourable people here present in this hall, ladies and gentlemen, heads and members of the delegations representing employers and workers. Despite the digital revolution and progress represented by artificial intelligence and the production of goods in quality and quantity, we see nevertheless many people living below the poverty line and even in extreme poverty, and we are going to have a Global Coalition for Social Justice. Despite this significant technological progress, the richest people hold a monopoly on material resources. The rich get richer and the poor get poorer. The poor lack opportunities to find decent jobs and work in the formal sector. There is a lack of medical services and lack of teaching, drinking water, electricity and sanitary services. But we within our Lebanese confederation, we support the ILO for this Global Coalition for Social Justice. Workers and civil servants and labourers in the formal and informal sectors who are vulnerable are the first to benefit fully from social justice. For us, we consider that there is no social justice with occupation terrorism and a lack of freedom. There is no social justice without food security or water security. The ILO, since its creation in 1944, has played a crucial role in protecting States and societies by focusing on peace and international stability. This is very important, and we see this. This came after the two World Wars. There were two cycles. There was a struggle and a race to control markets and riches of the world. This fight has led to the deaths of dozens of thousands of military and civilians, and we see that capital is monopolized. Power and capital are always concentrated in a few hands, and this has to change for social dialogue, especially in countries of the third world. We all need as a starting point the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We need clear standards and mechanisms. We need to have clear goals for social justice. We must respect the independence of all partners in the production process on equal footing. Mr Director-General, ladies and gentlemen, we look at the Saudi-Iranian agreement with China's support and the summit held in Jeddah in Saudi Arabia. This is a good thing. It is good that Syria is back within the League of Arab States. That way we can make some breakthroughs regionally speaking. But the situation can only be stable if we do not have acts of assassinations and destruction by the governments, Israel's Government, namely, since the start of its creation. We see that the settlements are being expanded. It is happening on a daily basis. The attack on the [vgr INAUDIBLE 4:34] mosque and the Sepulchre attack. The expansion policy and the illegitimate policy of swathes of the Golan and South Syria. We need synergy with the participation of all parties in this world in order to enable the Palestinians to recover their rights and sovereignty on these Arab territories. We

regret the chaotic war between the military in Sudan. For three years now Lebanon has been experiencing its worst monetary, social and financial crisis. Since 19 November 2019, banks have closed. They were closed for three weeks and transferred abroad money of those who had deposited it with some influential parties. Huge amounts were taken out of the country. The price of food and fuel, education and healthcare, electricity and water have all skyrocketed. The country then experienced another nth political crisis at the end of the last president's term. The Government is a government that works just in terms of current business affairs, so we have two main crises. As a conclusion, within our group we continue to work on lasting dialogue with employers to have a multilateral dialogue, and we have made some breakthrough. We are even working with the Labour Ministry. 90% of the healthcare fund has lost its ability to make payments. Within the Arab Mashriq and in our Lebanese society, we think the family is the nuclear structure of society to inculcate ethical values, and we reject all calls to break down the family and we denounce these as pathological phenomena. They may be isolated cases that societies must reform and put them back on the right track. And we once again support the content of the Report of the Director-General, and we hail all the bodies of the ILO and wish them every success in this session, especially in terms of the tension with regard to renewing the social contract which we see in this report. Thank you.

Mr James Hoth Mai

Government (South Sudan)

Honourable ministers, the Director-General of the ILO, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen. On behalf of the Government of the Republic of South Sudan and on my own behalf, I would like to avail myself of this opportunity to congratulate you for having been elected as the president of this session of the International Labour Conference. We appreciate the Vice-Presidents for being elected as well. The Report of the Director-General this year focuses on advancing social justice. The five principles of social justice are access, equity, participation, diversity and human rights. They are captured very well in the Report of the Director-General. Social justice in the Declaration of Philadelphia means that all human beings, irrespective of race, creed or sex, 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. Chair, it is in this respect that South Sudan, as a country and a member of the ILO, has come up with labour regulations and recruitment guidelines to make sure that the employees, regardless of their gender, creed and beliefs, have equal opportunity to employment. South Sudan, in the spirit of advancing social justice, is soon establishing a labour court where all labour disputes will be amicably addressed and resolved. There is a Labour Advisory Council established that plays an advisory role to the concerned authority. South Sudan is collecting market data in order to determine a minimum decent living wage. Of the over 244 million children and young people who are still out of school, reflected in the Report of the Director-General, South Sudan, as a country with a struggling economy, has a significant share in that number. This is because our population is largely rural where many children have no access to education and most children who are in towns have dropped out of school and they become breadwinners of their families. South Sudan, like all the other countries in the world, is recovering from the adverse effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Conversely, we are still struggling with the effects of severe flooding that hit the country hard for almost four years now. The Government has, however, tried to mitigate some of the challenges brought about by floods on the populace. Advancing social justice is also

linked to occupational safety and health. South Sudan, under the Ministry of Labour, has established a directorate dedicated to occupational safety and health. This is because safety at work is paramount and, as a government, we are committed to making sure that the workforce is protected from the effects of unsafe work. There is a policy document in discussion that contains all about safe working environment and measures to be taken should an accident occur in the course of duty. South Sudan is facing a considerable percentage of unemployment. We have thousands of young people graduating from institutions of higher learning every year without employment. This is due to the adverse effects of war and the COVID-19 pandemic. To reduce unemployment we have established vocational training centres across the country to give life skills to the youth so that they would become self-employed and employ others. As a partner to the ILO, we are committed to follow the recommendations put forth by the Director-General in advancing social justice and decent work in the Republic of South Sudan. We will work closely with our social partners to make sure that our workforce has access to decent pay and a safe working environment. I would be remiss if I do not acknowledge to you that we have challenges in advancing social justice and promoting decent work in South Sudan. Mr Chair, ladies and gentlemen, in conclusion, we look forward to a continued partnership with the ILO in improving labour performance in the Republic of South Sudan. We confirm our commitment to the theme of this year's Conference: advancing social justice. I thank you.

Mr Mohammed Shaher Abdalkareem Saed

Worker (Palestine)

In the name of God, Most Merciful, Most Compassionate. Your Excellencies, the Director-General, Vice-Chairpersons, ladies and gentlemen, I greet you on behalf of Palestinian workers. Over 104 years the ILO has worked to put an end to bonded labour and to slavery in the aftermath of World War I. The ILO has adopted so many standards and Conventions in order to protect workers from exploitation, to protect them from slavery, to protect female workers from violence and harassment. The ILO has also adopted many Recommendations in order to ensure social justice. We have read a lot about these things in the DG's report, and we have heard about this initiative to create a coalition for social justice. However, despite these efforts made over so many years, the rights of Palestinian workers continue to be violated by the Israeli occupation. In the into to the Director-General's report on the situation of workers in occupied Arab territories he said that high unemployment persists in Palestine, that women and jobseekers are particularly disadvantaged. This is the result of the brutal Israeli occupation in the West Bank, in East Jerusalem and in the Gaza Strip. Despite the great achievements made by the ILO, despite all these Recommendations and Conventions that have been adopted, there are so many challenges that remain before us. A key challenge is the situation in Palestine where the local population continues to live under the yoke of the Israeli occupation. The DG's report touches on these violations. The report also touches on various programmes developed to ensure access of workers to their workplaces to ensure that they can safely access their workplaces. Moreover, the ILO has adopted Recommendation 205, which is the Recommendation on Employment and Decent Work for Peace and Resilience. However, the situation in Palestine remains complex. According to the World Bank, unemployment in Palestine stands at 37%. In the Gaza Strip that number is 48%. The local population in the Gaza Strip suffers direly because of various attacks, aggressions and wars. Moreover, checkpoints continue to mushroom throughout the Palestinian territories. In the

occupied West Bank we see new checkpoints every single day. According to OCHA, more than 506 checkpoints stand between Palestine cities, villages and towns. These checkpoints undermine economic development and growth. They lead to a fragile economy that cannot sustain economic policies. Of course, all of this means that the economy will not be able to absorb new entrants into the labour market and that we will have more economic downturn in Palestine. I am deeply saddened by the dire reality that we are facing under occupation in Palestine. Deplorable measures continue to be adopted by Israel to undermine the future of workers, and this is clearly stated by your Fact-Finding Mission. As an example, I would like to speak about the permit broker practices. These practices persist. Workers have to pay unscrupulous brokers who continue to dominate the permit trade. They sell permits to Palestinian workers. They exercise a criminal activity that violates laws and treaties between the PLO and Israel. It also violates Conventions adopted by the ILO, and in particular Convention 101. Moreover, decent work deficits prevail in Palestine. Palestinian workers working in Israel, they do not enjoy health insurance. They do not enjoy decent work. They are underpaid and they work extremely long hours. Moreover, Palestinian workers in Israel are chased by the Israeli Army. They are chased by dogs. They are chased by drones. They are arrested arbitrarily. And many of them have lost their lives as a result, and I am sure that you have heard about these cases. Moreover, sexual harassment continues against female workers, especially those Palestinian female workers working in Israeli settlements. Worst of all is that Israel has created a fund for the savings of Palestinian workers without the agreement of workers themselves and without any agreement with the Palestinian leadership. This is a crying violation of all labour standards and all agreements signed with the Israelis. Moreover, settlements are expanding and they are stifling Palestinians, and this can be clearly seen by each and every one of you. Despite all these challenges, the tripartite constituents in Palestine endeavour to improve the situation of workers under occupation. We cooperate with the ILO. For example, together with the ILO we have worked together in order to adopt a position paper in view to amending the labour law. We have taken part in the national coalition for justice. We cannot put an end to poverty and unemployment without putting an end to occupation. As long as we are living under the yoke of occupation, we will not be able to do anything. We call for the end of the occupation and for building a Palestinian State with Jerusalem as its capital so our workers can finally enjoy sustainable development and decent work. Thank you.

Mr Cristian Espinosa Cañizares

Government (Ecuador)

Mr Vice-President, on behalf of my delegation I would like to congratulate you, sir, on the presidency and the other officials for this 111th International Labour Conference and express to you our full support in the exercise of your mandates. Ecuador believes that social justice must be guaranteed by States in joint efforts with social partners, workers and employers, together with the international standards of labour and implementation of the principles of equity, parity and non-discrimination in the world of work. The Report of the Director-General, the promotion of social justice, and the holding of the summit on the world of work, 'Social justice for all', next week in the framework of the 111th review of the International Labour Conference are important steps to achieve this common object. This task will require active participation of the tripartite constituents, governments, workers and employers to ensure that, through social dialogue, we achieve compliance with the fundamental standards of the International Labour Organization and that we agree on the appropriate mechanisms

for the implementation of the Global Coalition for Social Justice with a focus that is centred on human rights and on decent work. Similarly, it is incumbent on us to strengthen multilateralism and international cooperation mechanisms to promote social justice and foster constituents' work with the tools provided by the tripartite constituents, including an increase of essential social investment. In this context, we believe that the implementation of the accelerator and social protection for just transitions for the Secretary-General of the United Nations constitutes the appropriate measure to make reality the objectives of the Global Coalition and address the various challenges and achieve progress in development. This plan seeks to foster investment to create millions of decent jobs, in particular in green economies and digital economies, and extend coverage of social protection to the more than 4 billion people who currently are excluded from it. Mr Chairman, social justice, in conformity with the Philadelphia Declaration of 1944, emphasizes the intrinsic value of human dignity, in virtue of which everyone without any distinction or any discrimination whatsoever has the right to seek material well-being and social development in equal standards and opportunities. The achievement of these objectives is possible through the implementation of various initiatives like the Global Coalition for Social Justice. Ecuador, thus, is convinced that social dialogue cooperation and the adoption of coherent policy, tripartite mechanisms and coordinated action in multilateral bodies will serve to be the guiding light to achieve a future in the world of work that is focused on human dignity and on access to decent work. I thank you.

Mr Idrissa Djibrilla

Worker (Niger)

Mr President, Mr Director-General, distinguished delegates, first of all I would like to address my congratulations to the President of this Conference and to wish him every success in our work. Mr President, we wanted to take the floor on the occasion of this 111th Conference of the International Labour Organization to speak to you about a worrisome situation in our country that is obstructing professional activities and is threatening social calm. I refer here to insecurity in the countries of the Sahel in general and in Niger in particular. This insecurity manifests itself by armed attacks here and there targeting the defence and security forces, civil servants, workers, civilians, and without any specific claims. The workers of Niger, on the whole, have condemned and continue to condemn such actions by terrorist groups faced by Niger and some neighbouring countries. Aware of the current disaster and the one to come, the workers of Niger, through my voice, ask the actors of the International Labour Organization to accompany our country and all the countries of the Sahel who are facing these terrorist attacks, because they are exacerbating poverty and precariousness in our States. Mr President, Mr Director-General, distinguished delegates, without security of people and their property, can we speak of social justice? Can we speak of progress? Can we speak of decent work? In a word, can we speak of all the values for which the International Labour Organization has been tirelessly working since its inception? For your information, in our country, as in neighbouring countries, several public services, mainly schools and healthcare centres, have been closed, consequently putting workers in these sectors out of a job. Children in these areas where insecurity reigns no longer attend school, and the people can no longer enjoy healthcare coverage. Mr President, Mr Director-General, distinguished delegates, I ask that you advocate in developing States to convince them to help Niger and its neighbours to put an end to the phenomenon of terrorism which has lasted too long. I thank you for your kind attention.

Mr Mohammed Saeed Hasan Al-Zaore

Government (Yemen)

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate. Excellency Mr bin Samikh Al Marri, Minister of Labour of the State of Qatar and President of the ILC, Excellency Director-General, Excellencies Ministers of Labour from the Member States, ladies and gentlemen. It is our pleasure to participate in the current ILC, and we wish the Conference success and the adoption of resolutions and decisions that would help workers everywhere in the world. On behalf of the Government, we would like to congratulate Qatar for assuming the presidency of the ILC, and we shall do everything in our power to support Qatar in this presidency. We would like to thank the leadership of the ILO for the excellent preparation and the excellent management of the Conference. Ladies and gentlemen, you all know of the suffering that we are experiencing in our country because of the exceptional circumstances and the economic crisis, and this has had dire effects on our labour. We have got the highest percentage of unemployment in the Arab region, 60%, and this has been included in the statistics of international organizations. Furthermore, many of our youth who are qualified cannot find jobs, and that because of the consequences of political conflicts for three decades now. We have no longer any economic and development project. The wheel of development has stopped. The private sector has collapsed, followed by the brain drain, and young people cannot find work. And therefore we need international efforts to support our government to an exit of this terrible situation and that would allow some stability before we totally collapse. Also, the war that has been launched by the terrorist Houthi militias for over eight years, this war has led to a catastrophic humanitarian condition and a severe economic crisis, with the currency losing a lot of its value, and inflation. And also we find a lot of child labour because of displacement and because of the lack of work opportunities. We try to address all these circumstances, and yet we face many difficulties because of the economic and military crises. We do not have resources, and therefore the state is often unable to pay the wages. For the rest of this year this will be indeed the case. And it is our hope that donors and partners will assist the Government to resolve labour issues and to support and finance development projects. Ladies and gentlemen, the onslaught by the Houthi terrorists on oil platforms and the threat to international navigation has deprived the state from its sole source of financing. And this has led to the deterioration of the situation for the citizens greatly, and many of the difficulties have become compounded. And all of those difficulties have got to be faced by the Government, and yet the Government is unable to engage in securing the daily activities and to ensure stability in the country. And therefore, from this forum we call upon the international community to condemn all those acts of terrorism that have been engaged in by the Houthi militia. And all of that affects our food security. We also appeal to the international community to find a solution that would lead to a comprehensive settlement of the political crisis in Yemen that will ensure a decent life for our people in the north and the south. We also call upon international organizations to deposit the funds for our projects and humanitarian assistance in the central bank because that is going to support the currency and would ensure dealing with the legal government instead of the funds being channelled to informal or illegal banks. Also, that would enable the various organizations to discharge their missions. We also call upon the various organizations and human rights organs to condemn the grave violations that are carried out by the Houthi militias against the women in Yemen whose freedoms have been confiscated. There are crimes against women. They are put in prison unjustly, and there are a lot of violations against women, including sexual violence,

physical violence and psychological violence, horrible things, and we hope that the position will be taken against these terms. Ladies and gentlemen, we would like to say that concerning the ILO request for us to ratify the various instruments that have been put forward by the GB, which are 14 Conventions, we would like to underline that since we joined the ILO in 1965 we have ratified around 30 Conventions and four Protocols but it was not possible for us to ratify the four remaining Conventions. But as soon as the legislative authorities start working in our country we will engage in the ratification in consultation with our three constituents. We also look forward to ratifying the Conventions on new forms of labour. We call upon the Conference to discuss social justice and to move towards a Global Coalition for Social Justice, ensuring sustainable development for all in addition to launching, as I said, the Global Coalition for Social Justice, which would ensure the cooperation between the tripartite constituents of the ILO in order to strengthen all our efforts to attain social security. We would also support all the efforts that seek to strengthen decent work programmes and to promote social dialogue in order to serve the cause of workers. In implementation of the laws and principles that respect human rights and communities, we stress our rejection of all that runs counter to human nature. And we in particular support the Arab Labour Conference resolutions, and we refuse any direct or indirect discussion of those issues or a vote thereon. We also support the people of Palestine to attain its aspirations as part of the peace initiatives. The question of Palestine will remain for the Arabs the main question. We wish our Conference to adopt all the resolutions that would be able to protect decent work and workers. Thank you very much.

Mr Raymond Democrito Mendoza

Worker (Philippines)

Brothers and sisters in labour, social partners, mabuhay. Earlier this year, the High-Level Tripartite Mission to the Philippines on ILO Convention 87 reiterated the long-standing unaddressed anti-union violence, political profiling, impunity and lack of progress in ensuring free and full exercise of freedom of association, and workers' right to organize. For the past 16 years, the Philippines compliance with international agreements, whether for training for Filipino seafarers or for compliance with core labour rights, has placed Filipino workers' concerns front and centre here in the ILC and elsewhere. This high-level mission is already the third ILO mission, we thank you, to our country. But there are too little sincere efforts to ensure Philippine compliance in law and practice and with fundamental principles and rights at work and ILO Convention 87. There is indeed a pervading culture of impunity. Before the High-Level, two labour organizers were abducted in broad daylight. After the High-Level left, a call centre worker, a BPO worker organizer was murdered. No labour organization is safe. Our affiliates, like the rest, were visited by state agents, intruding in our offices and outrightly asking for a list of members, and not to mention political profiling of our leaders amidst a union certification campaign against management union in a multinational agribusiness in Mindanao. The persistence of violence aimed at silencing workers has decimated our ranks. Widespread precarious work with below-poverty wages brought us here today. The ILO supervisory mechanism is our forum of last resort to secure firm Philippine compliance with internationally recognized workers' rights in law and practice and to end impunity. The All Philippine Trade Unions, comprised of ITUC affiliates FFW, KMU, SENTRO and TUCP and other labour groups, pushes for policy imperatives that the Government should pursue. First, establish a presidential commission on freedom of association with its own structure, staffing, funding and tripartite representation to fully realize the ILO high-level

recommendations to address labour rights violations and end impunity. Replace Executive Order No. 23. Its Inter-Agency Committee for FOA cannot protect human rights and trade union rights any better. Second, establish a specialized, eminent, independent non-judicial body to document testimonies, review cases and make proposals for compensation. Third, strengthen the National Tripartite Industrial Peace Council-Monitoring Body with its own staffing and funding to ensure effective protection amidst threats to trade unionists. Form the tripartite validation teams to investigate killings of workers and other blatant violations of Convention 87. Fourth, a Presidential Executive Order institutionalizing joint guidelines on the conduct of state security forces to ensure the proper observance of trade union rights. And finally, fifth, resolve cases of violence and workers' rights violations, such as the killings of unionists Alex Dolorosa and Manny Asuncion, among others. Authorities should investigate with urgency to bring perpetrators to justice, stop killings and end impunity. Ultimately, we demand full respect of human rights and trade union rights. Stop viewing trade unionism from the aberrant perspective of anti-insurgency. Abolish mechanisms for red-tagging and hostile political profiling. We, trade unionists such as me, are social partners. We are social partners. We are not terrorists. The Philippine Government must comply now, immediately adopt, in a tripartite manner, the road map for freedom of association. As one, Philippine labour shall see this struggle through for all workers' rights towards justice. Mabuhay ang Manggagawang Pilipino. Long live the Filipino worker. Dagan salama.

Mr Luka Mesec

Government (Slovenia)

Dear Mr Chair, Director-General, Excellencies, social partners, ladies and gentlemen. It is a great pleasure for me to participate in this year's plenary discussion of the Director-General's report on advancing social justice. We thank the Office for the comprehensive and well-elaborated report and for the valuable opportunity to contribute to the debate. Social justice stands at the very heart of the ILO's mandate. It is a precondition for universal and lasting peace, for social cohesion within societies and the prosperity for the world as such. The world today is enduring environmental, health, economic and social crises as well as wars and conflicts. Moreover, the world of work has been undergoing some major transformations these recent years driven by digitalization, technological progress and demographic shifts, which may bring opportunities but will also tear the social issues apart. And at the same time, some old issues are still persisting. Poverty, inequalities among and between societies, insecurities, lack of adequate social and labour protection, to name just a few of them. We stand at a critical juncture when we need to jointly find a way to secure and advance the progress made in terms of social justice in the last decades and at the same time address new challenges in the world of work. Therefore, for Slovenia, respect for human rights, including labour rights, stands at the very core of realizing social justice. We consider ensuring equal opportunities and non-discrimination a vital and indispensable part of social justice. Work on the improvement of the situation of women and all groups that are vulnerable to discrimination, including LGBT persons, should be stepped up at all levels. Intensified efforts in terms of ensuring gender equality are needed. Ladies and Gentlemen, ensuring decent work, including during the major transformations of the world of work, should remain our focus and aim in our endeavours to advance social justice. Enhanced labour protection, accompanied by adequate social protection, is a key to ensuring decent work. Labour protection, together with social security systems, needs to evolve and adapt to encompass new

realities of the world of work in order to leave no one behind. Slovenia is constantly following and addressing these developments with social partners and through broader public debate. Let me list just a few recent achievements. To address the technological transformations, together with our partners in the EU we are negotiating a new legal framework that will improve working conditions in platform work. In order to tackle poverty among workers, we have redefined our minimum wage to a living wage. So nowadays minimum wage in Slovenia means that you have to be paid at least minimum living costs plus 20% on top. And last but not least, we have just adopted rules on occupational diseases to ensure a safe and healthy environment for all workers. And of course we are looking to the future, so we have just established the Ministry of Solidarity-Based Future, and we are working on new schemes that will support the inclusion of workers into ownership of the firms. So dear social partners, dear Director-General, in conclusion of my intervention, let me assure you of Slovenia's strong support of your endeavours in respect of establishing the Global Coalition for Social Justice. In light of persistent global challenges and major transformations, some of them I have just listed, we need a global debate. The world stands as one, and in order to ensure the ILO's mandate, not just social justice but social justice as a precondition of peace and equal development of each and every one, you have our full support in this year and all of the coming years of the future. Thank you.

Mr Henri Eli Monceau

Organisation internationale de la Francophonie

Mr President, honourable delegates, I have the honour of making this statement on behalf of the group of francophone States. It is gratified by the organization of the 111th Session of the International Labour Conference, whose agenda is perfectly aligned with the priorities of the International Organization of the Francophonie. The group takes note of the Report of the ILO Director-General and shares its concerns and recommendations to promote social justice. To this end, we welcome the holding during this Conference of the summit on the world of work as a substantial milestone to establish a Global Coalition for Social Justice for all. In this context of global recovery post COVID-19 marked by, and it must be said often, persisting social inequalities, it is indeed urgent to put social justice at the heart of all national, regional and multilateral strategies and actions, especially those pertaining to the employment sector. And this in a multidimensional way and in a multisectoral way. Moreover, it is necessary to renew the commitment of the international community to strengthen cooperation and solidarity at an international level. To this end, the Global Coalition for Social Justice must play a decisive role in forming ambitious and effective partnerships. The Francophone group encourages the ILO to work in a concerted manner with other organizations of the multilateral system to make it possible to attain the strategic objective of social protection within the framework of the Follow-up to the Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization adopted in 2008 and amended in 2022. Moreover, it encourages all actors concerned to take the opportunity provided by the planned discussion during this Conference on the topic of social protection to assess the relevance and effectiveness of measures taken post COVID to protect workers and propose necessary adjustments. Faced with many challenges and determined to do its part in multilateral actions for employment, namely for youth, Francophonie has implemented a programme called 'D-CLIC, get training in digital professions'. This initiative has made it possible to organize to date 70 training programmes in 14 countries, mainly in Sub-Saharan Africa. The OIF has also formed a partnership with the West African Development Bank to create a dedicated fund for the training of youth

in digital professions in West Africa. All these initiatives and others underway aim to train and give access to jobs to dozens of thousands of youth, especially young girls. Aware of the stakes and challenges linked to digitalization of the economy, the Francophone group encourages implementation of strategies in order to make the most of opportunities provided by the digital technologies to overcome obstacles and reduce inequalities. So, the Francophone group is gratified by the decision taken by the Heads of State of Government of the OIF, through the Djerba Declaration adopted at its 18th summit, to work for access to digital professions and to facilitate economic sectors, growth and new income generating activities and the value add that it entails, taking into consideration also its risks. Convinced of the fact that quality education and apprenticeship is the prerequisite to have access to decent work, the Francophone group supports all ILO actions in this respect and calls for them to be intensified. It welcomes many initiatives established by the Francophonie in this area, namely through its institute for education and training. These actions support efforts of States and it wants gains to be consolidated in this area. Thank you.

Mr Henrik Munthe

Employer Vice-President (Norway)

That concludes our list of speakers for this sitting. Please note that we will reconvene this afternoon at 14.30. I thank you all for your contribution to today's proceedings, and the sitting is now closed, and I wish you all a pleasant lunch. Thank you.

Ms Corina Ajder

Government Vice-President (Republic of Moldova)

Good afternoon. Distinguished delegates, I kindly ask you to please take your seat as we get ready to start the seventh session of the 111th International Labour Conference. So, as Government Vice-President from Moldova, it is again a great pleasure to be here this afternoon with you. I hope you all had a good break and a good lunch. And we will be continuing with our interventions from our distinguished guests and speakers to discuss the Report of the Chairperson of the Governing Body and the Report of the Director-General. I kindly remind you that the time limit for interventions is five minutes. I also ask you to please keep the silence while the delegates deliver their interventions so that they can focus on their speeches. Thank you very much for your cooperation. And without further ado, I will now proceed with the list of speakers.

Ms Annabel Newman

Worker (New Zealand)

Kia ora koutou. Greetings. The New Zealand Government recently announced investment of $140 million to subsidise an electric arc furnace at New Zealand Steel, one of the country's biggest carbon emitters, removing the equivalent of 300,000 cars off the road or 5% of our emissions reductions required before 2030 and exchanging iron sands for recycling local scrap metal to safeguard jobs. New Zealand Steel's parent company, Australian BlueScope, which is funding half the total cost, says it would not pay without that subsidy. New Zealanders are now knee deep in the impacts of climate change. As 2023 delivers extreme floods and devastation across much of the North

Island, communities are crying out for help, begging the Government to send money, to buy their abandoned houses, to rebuild their fences, replace their stock, and to do it now so their lives can begin again. The biggest city in the country, Auckland, is built on an isthmus and currently being mapped for future building programmes so this year's displacements during the floods are not exacerbated as the rain continues to fall. That mapping is a government intervention toward our climate response. But rebuilding better is not just about bricks and mortar. That is just a response, and often a highly political one. In fact, a profound shift is needed in the accountabilities and responsibilities of all the social partners: union, business, government. New Zealand needs a democracy reset, where the default driver of the nation is not the will of the market but formal, structured, meaningful dialogue between unions, business and government, and in each stream our tangata whenua, or Māori, the indigenous voice of New Zealand. There is a glimmer of hope but just a glimmer. An example, New Zealand Aluminium is a smelter employing 800 workers in a small city, Invercargill. A further 2,000 jobs flow from this heavy industry. All these jobs are at stake with Rio Tinto's potential closure at the end of 2024. The government has established a just transition project that brings multiple stakeholders together, giving real authority and funding to the voice of workers, alongside others. Decent Work is recognized through the government funding of the union for Tiwai smelter workers, E tū, to launch a digital tool and personalized support called Job Match so displaced workers can access jobs that meet the decent work standard or training. However, it is tenuous because it requires political will. New Zealand's first attempt at social protection legislation is on hold until after the election in October. Fundamental to a just transition, social income protection was a fully formed proposition, after years of tripartite negotiation, only to fall out of favour with the employers at the last post or, one might cynically say, when they smelled the blood of an election upset. Regulated industry bargaining, through Fair Pay Agreement legislation, is tenuous. Raising standards across industries through Fair Pay Agreements stops market competition driving down wages and conditions. This was a model developed through a tripartite process that is now not supported by business and is likely to disappear if the Government changes in October. New Zealand's climate change response depends on a reset of democracy. Without building on our Future of Work Tripartite Forum and embedding tripartism, social protection and regulated minimum standards, we will not cope with the massive transformation ahead of us as climate change, the technology revolution and geopolitical upheaval threaten the lives of New Zealanders. As unions, we must look to the global community for inspiration and support in this fight so we can build a world where everyone benefits from decent work and thriving communities no matter what the future brings. Thank you.

Mr Alok Bansidhar Shriram

Employer (India)

Honourable Vice-President, a good day to you and to all the distinguished delegates of the ILO, ILC and the nations across the world. It is indeed a privilege for me, representing the Employers' group from India, to speak to this august assembly. I am grateful to the Director-General of the ILO who set the context for this Conference by bringing into focus advancing social justice. I bring to you an Indian perspective on this subject, which is the bedrock of Indian democracy. The Indian economy is a bright spot in the present global scenario and is expected to give a high growth rate in 2023. However, the recovery in the face of the pandemic and war is not easy and has a deep impact on MSMEs, services and other sectors. Our workforce is distributed both in the

formal and informal sectors. The employees who are engaged in the formal sector enjoy decent work with a fair amount of social protection and respectable wages with good living conditions. They also have access to all health benefits and access to equal opportunity. The safeguards, in line with ILO Conventions, are in place in the form of legislations such as provident fund, employees' insurance, maternity leave up to 26 weeks, health and safety, minimum age, minimum wage, child labour protection, bonded labour abolition, amongst many others. We also have an Apprenticeship Act which has formalized the apprenticeship system including support by the Government. Skilling and reskilling are the need of the time, and the Conference must give special emphasis to this. Our major concern lies in the informal economy which is approximately 90% of the total workforce. This workforce does not fall under the ambit of labour law compliances, and hence it is a challenge to extend social justice and social protection. During the pandemic the plight of the migrants and marginalized workers surfaced. Our organization did an extensive survey with the ILO in three large Indian states. In order to push the formalization of the informal workforce and give it certainty and stability, the Government of India has taken major positive measures by bringing in four new labour codes after extensive bilateral and multilateral discussions over many years. These labour codes have been enacted to ensure simple standards, safety and security along with health and social security coverage once the states implement the same. We have introduced the eShram portal to create a National Database of Unorganized Workers, which is seeded with the Aadhaar. It has details for optimum realization of their employability and extends the benefits of the social security schemes. It is the first-ever national database of unorganized workers, which includes migrant workers, construction workers, gig and platform workers, amongst others. To date 291 million workers in over 400 different occupations have registered on this portal. Additionally, the Government is promoting universal health care under the Arogya Yojana and is the global leader in digitizing the economy. In the new world, the young workforce of India has a very different mindset from those of the '60s and '70s. They are much more dynamic, literate and aspirational. Our debate at this august conference must reflect the reality to shift out of the old confrontational mindset and move towards a cooperative one. Gender equality is also foremost in India's mind as ladies form 50% of our workforce. Excluding them is doing them and our country a huge injustice. Many safeguards have been put in place for their interests. Our constituent SCOPE has partnered with the ILO in conducting many studies on the role of women in the corporate sector and suggested guidelines for making the workplace gender inclusive. FICCI has introduced a social compact which has recommendations for its membership which will impact 25 million workers. The gig and platform sector needs to develop all safeguards to protect the individuals and the organizations. These factors of sustainable organization are clearly spelled out in the ESG agenda. However, there is still a lot of scope to work in the area of social justice and on the four dimensions mentioned in the DG's report. In India, we, the employees, employers and the Government are fully committed and have taken many actions towards these goals. That change is inevitable is a given. It is the only constant. The velocity of change is ever increasing. We should embrace change for our future generations. I urge all members present to be the change. Jai Hind.

Mr John Jairo Caicedo Villegas

Worker (Colombia)

Vice-President, officials, warm greetings from the workers of Colombia. This is an opportunity to reiterate our congratulations to the Director-General, Mr Gilbert

Houngbo, on his recent appointment to such an illustrious organization. We reaffirm our support and commitment as the delegation of workers in Colombia to promoting social dialogue in a context of tripartism. We commend the ideas of the Director-General in his first report submitted to the 111th ILC on the promotion of social justice and decent work as the effective solution to the hard reality in which we continue to see injustice, inequality, informality and insecurity in the world of work, which is why the Global Coalition is more than ever necessary to renew the social contract. We acknowledge that through decent work we can promote the demands of the working class and achieve sustainable development, i.e. Agenda 2030, through a combination of full employment and freely chosen employment with social dialogue, tripartism and the protection of workers. Similarly, we should like to recognize progress that Colombia has made with its initiatives on social transformation. For the very first time in the history of Colombia, union organizations have participated in social dialogue, submitting proposals to develop draft texts for the labour reform in which the various realities will be taken into consideration, socio-economic realities of all the workers of our country. Currently, with the new draft labour reform, implementation of collective and labour rights is sought, which were removed in previous reforms. The new draft text seeks to remove precarious working conditions, rest days and bank holidays, introducing apprenticeship contracts, generating more stability at work, increasing productivity, recognizing the right space to labour relationships, strengthening social protection, the right to organize, collective bargaining, as stipulated in Conventions 87 and 98 of the ILO. Notwithstanding the aforementioned, this reform is encountering various challenges in its legislative process as it goes through the Congress because there are those who opposed these rights with regressive proposals of their own. For all these reasons, I call for solidarity at the 111th International Labour Conference. Lend your support to the proposal put forward by the Government of Colombia, its workers and employers. Taking into consideration the fact that Colombia is one of the most affected countries by the energy transition, we should like to launch an appeal for this transition to be a just one, putting at its centre the workers, and that measures be adopted for effective compensation for those workers who are victims of the extractive industry in Colombia. Mr Chairman, we reiterate our commitment to the constitutional mandate of the ILO to achieve social justice, to develop a forward-looking focus in the world of work where human dignity is mainstreamed throughout. To conclude, on behalf of the Colombian workers, we reiterate our intention to maintain social dialogue to propose joint solutions to promote social justice and decent work. The Confederation of Workers of Colombia will continue its ongoing and historic combat to protect social and labour rights of large sections of the population in the informal and the rural sectors in our country. I thank you.

Ms Claudine Ndusi M'Kembe

Government (Democratic Republic of the Congo)

Ladies and gentlemen, to adhere to the protocol I would like to say that I am especially delighted to be taking the floor here on behalf of the Government of the Republic of the Congo and the tripartite delegation to address this august assembly at the 111th Session of the International Labour Conference to address the issue of advancing social justice. I extend the warmest congratulations from Felix-Antoine Tshisekedi, who is the President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and wish us all success in our work. And we want to thank the Organization for all efforts made to reduce social inequalities and increase social justice. We also want to congratulate the entire bureau on their election and also to the Director-General, Gilbert Houngbo, and

the Director-General for the report. Ladies and gentlemen, the questions and matters in the report have drawn our attention because we are given recommendations to refine our strategies in order to attain decent work. Social justice must be attained not just using approaches of the future with a human-centred approach, ensuring equal access and equal distribution, but also in fighting for just transition. The Democratic Republic of the Congo shares the concerns that were expressed by the Director-General in his work on the importance of national strategies to move forward in this area. In my country, efforts have been made to create jobs by tackling inequalities created by COVID-19, for an economic and social recovery that will be resilient and inclusive, especially in agriculture, in animal husbandry and in industry. Now with regard to labour standards, our country has ratified 37 Conventions, including eight fundamental ones, to fight discrimination at work. And there is the reform of general inspection with over 2,000 labour inspectors, and this will definitely be a game changer, and the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo remains very grateful for the consistent support by the International Labour Organization. With regard to social protection, besides the social security system which covers the private sector, the special regime system for social security has beefed up the social contract in the public sector. Finally, with regard to social dialogue, the Democratic Republic of the Congo has a tripartite committee for monitoring implementation of the country's programme for decent work, which soon will be further buttressed to build its capacity so it can play its role of monitoring implementation. Currently, the working world is now in an election process which will come to an end in the next month. To move forward in social justice, we have to consolidate peace and security in our countries. Our country continues to face the horrors of war due to enemies of peace, and we have to work together with the sovereignty of States. Now with regard to just transition, I take this opportunity to recall the need to protect the environment of inhabitants in mining areas and to put an end to child labour in the supply chains of commodities. Now, despite apprenticeship, which has been taken into account in our country's work, several cases of improvement of mechanisms have been revealed, yet there are difficulties that persist. That is why the DRC is in favour of the adoption of recommendations on apprenticeship. Ladies and gentlemen, I have concluded, and I just want to cite the Director-General. Yes, our world ambition must be commensurate with the challenges we must rise to. So let us build together a global coalition which will be fighting for social justice and will renew the social contract. Thank you for your kind attention.

Mr Jan-Pieter Daems

Worker (Netherlands)

Good afternoon, dear colleagues, and thank you, Chair, for this opportunity to speak on behalf of the Workers' delegation of the Netherlands. I would like to thank the Director-General for his report, which in our view correctly identifies the challenges that lie ahead. The work that we are doing here in Geneva in all the different committees is interrelated. We should approach the Decent Work Agenda and the green transition as one. We should work towards both goals taking into account all the elements and realize how they interact with each other. The green transition has an enormous impact on workers. Unlike before, getting an education or getting a contract does not guarantee you a job until your pension anymore. Therefore, we need to invest in learning and in skills development. That should be part of the very fabric of these transitions. The skilling, reskilling and lifelong developing of workers is not just a workers' responsibility. It is a responsibility for us all. There is an important role to play

by employers in whose interest it is to invest in their workers' skills, and governments should take their responsibility in stimulating lifelong learning with policy and financial means. We know that workers with flexible contracts and performing precarious work are less likely to invest in skills development themselves, and their employers are also less likely to invest in them. So the agenda on the combatting of precarious work is not only the decent thing to do from a humanitarian perspective but also a necessity to have for a successful transition. Secondly, we need labour and social protection for all workers, whether they are temporary or permanent employees, whether they are doing an apprenticeship or are retired, and whether they are a national citizen or a migrant worker. We have seen throughout the world that migrant workers are often treated like second-class citizens. They do not enjoy the same benefits and protections as regular workers. Their working conditions, housing conditions and access to healthcare are often lacking, which is unacceptable. If we approach the Decent Work Agenda and link it to the just transition agenda, we can conclude we need all workers and we need them protected. We need everyone to reach the goals of the global coalition proposed by the Director-General. We need to treat workers equally, whether they are a migrant or a national citizen, man or woman, apprentice or CEO, gay or straight. And if we do not treat them equally on the labour market, action is needed from trade unions, from employers, from governments, and from the ILO because the ILO can play a vital role. In the Netherlands we see that ILO standards on the incapacity of work insurance have already impacted our national debate and help our aim to improve this part of social security. Lastly, we need to make sure the transition does not create winners and losers but creates an inclusive, social and sustainable world for all. Coordination between government departments and international organizations is needed, just as a supply chain approach with a clear responsibility for businesses. Industrial policy and social policy should go hand in hand. Investment decisions on the energy transition that impact workers, like for example in sectors like the mining sector providing the necessary minerals, should be discussed with those workers. Multinationals have an obligation to respect labour rights not just in their own country but in all countries where they are active. Access to remedy should be a right, independently of who the employer is or where their head office is based. If we do not, as the Director-General also concludes in his report, focus on policy integration and international policy coherence, there will be winners and losers, and workers will suffer. Let us make sure this does not happen. Finally, to conclude, for the fulfilment of international human rights obligations, the protection of rights at work, as set out in the international labour standards, is vital. We, therefore, as the Dutch Workers' delegation, deplore the absence of coordination and dialogue between the Israeli and Palestinian sides on vital matters of joint concern, including labour issues, and stress that decent work needs to get the attention it deserves. Thank you very much.

Mr Samir Majoul

Employer (Tunisia)

Ladies and gentlemen, I have the pleasure of extending to the President and the Vice-Presidents a sincere congratulations on their elections to this 111th Session to this Conference. And I also have the pleasure of extending to the Director-General, Gilbert Houngbo, thanks for the report that has been submitted for this session, namely the report on advancing social justice. We agree with what has been stated there, and we think certain things need to be refined to obtain recommendations to obtain social justice and to have a new international order that would be inclusive, fair and durable based on equality of opportunity. The main element in social justice within companies

that are productive and sustainable, we consider that they are the ones that create jobs and provide income to workers, to shareholders, the state and social security systems. And companies are the ones that make it possible to follow decent, productive working conditions in an inclusive way. So we have to focus on creating companies and investment. As a starting point for all development policies, we need to free up and develop economic initiative basing our social contract on that, something we hope to adopt. When we improve the legal framework and we improve human resources and infrastructure, we succeed in creating jobs and prosperity, social prosperity as well as decent jobs. But every time we have greater legal complications, administrative ones and ideological difficulties, this chases away investment, reduces competitiveness and leaves a void with no social protection. Ladies and gentlemen, the lack of balance in regions in terms of investment funding and promoting better environment and in the business world leads to a lack of hope. It leads to illegal immigration, and human traffickers capitalize on this. Illegal migrants are the greatest victims, and this leads to difficulties for countries in transition, and not just them. So we hope that matters related to migration and their repercussions will be at the heart of the focuses for international coordination within the UN and international financial institutions. Ladies and gentlemen, the various crises lead to a debt crisis. Some countries are facing great difficulty in trying to reimburse their debt, and this has to be taken into account when promoting social justice at the international level. We need new tripartism, integrating the ILO, the IMF and the World Bank in order to take into account the social specificities when considering debt issues. We need an economic recovery, taking into account the impact on the social scene. In the Director-General's report we see that we cannot have social justice under occupation, and we share this analysis, and we urge the international community to take requisite measures to put an end to the occupation so Palestinians can live in peace in its State, having Jerusalem as its capital. I wish everyone every success in the work of this Conference. Thank you.

Mr Mohd Effendy Abdul Ghani

Worker (Malaysia)

Bismillahirrahmanirrahim. Assalamu alaikum and good afternoon, sister and brother. On behalf of the MTUC, [vgr INAUDIBLE 0:22] and all the workers in Malaysia, we would like to extend our deepest gratitude towards the Malaysian Government for the amendment of the Employment Act 1955 that has been in force since January 2023. There are 17 amendments, such as the flexible work arrangement, reducing working hours, the increase of maternity leaves, introduction of paid paternity leave, prohibition of forced labour, prohibition of discrimination in employment, prohibition of termination of pregnant employees, obligation to put a notice on sexual harassment prevention, and provisions regarding migrant workers. This new amendment 2022 of the Employment Act brings a new chapter and landscape of the labour system in Malaysia. We are looking forward to the Government continuously monitoring the implementation of the new amendment throughout Malaysia, including Sabah and Sarawak. With the amendment of this act and the introduction of the Anti-Sexual Harassment Act 2022, we can proudly say that we are in line with Convention 190 even though it is still not ratified in Malaysia. We are looking forward to the Government ratifying Convention 87, Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, where the amendment of the Trades Union Act 1959 in Malaysia soon is one of the steps for ratification after the amendment of the Industrial Relation Act last two years. The importance of ratification of Convention 87 is to ensure that all the workers can join the trade union and the union is recognized by the employer. In

Malaysia, only 6% of the 15 million workforce have joined a union. The lack of promotion and awareness by various parties/authorities to promote openly the importance of the trade union is also part of the reason why workers do not join and are aware of the trade unions' functions. The importance of the amendment of the Trade Union Act is not only for the establishment of the union but to encourage the workers in Malaysia to join the unions. The crisis of the global economy since the pandemic until today has already changed the landscape of working conditions in Malaysia, so it is the right time to reform our labour structure with a comprehensive system based on three work-life phases, which are pre phase, present phase, and post phase. Pre phase, which is the wages system. It is high time for Malaysia to restructure the minimum wage to a progressive wage in order to maintain the spending power over the inflation rate. The progressive wage needs to be indicated through skill, education, experience and other relevant variables which is fair to all parties. The progressive wages system needs to cover all the workers from the private sector, statutory bodies and government servants in the name of social justice. Secondly, social protection. The cost of healthcare, education and daily expenses has hiked too high, and most workers are no longer able to afford these necessities. The social protection system needs to be reviewed and to be extended to the informal workers. Lastly, post working life, which is the retirement fund. Malaysia's Employee Provident Fund stated that almost 80% of workers in Malaysia only have about 50 cents monthly during their retirement age for the next 20 years. This situation needs to be solved immediately to avoid future social problems as Malaysia is also an aging population nation. The fast-growing pace of IR4.0 in recent years shows a lot of workers switched to the informal sector even though the job, wage and social protection security are there. The Government must take fast action to prepare inclusive social security mechanisms for the informal sector. Increasing the retirement age is not an effective solution. Not all industries or sectors are suited for the ageing workers, such as manufacturing, construction and plantation. Retirement funds will always be not enough if the wage system is still the same. We urge the Government, both employer in private sector and government as the employer of civil servants, to take this as an urgent matter to be reviewed and closely pay attention to the welfare of public servants in order to enhance the Government's productivity. We strongly support the initiative of the Government to enhance Technical Vocational Education Training, TVET, in Malaysia. In terms of apprenticeships, we very much appreciated the Government's effort in providing the scheme for the apprentice by giving them allowance both in the government sector and through the subsidy through Human Resource Development Fund for the private sector. We are also very appreciative of the statement of the Malaysian Minister of Human Resources that the ministry is open to any suggestion to introduce a special act for apprenticeship, and we hope it can be materialized soon to avoid any exploitation in the workforce and to secure their right. MTUC, we would like also to take this opportunity to extend our sincere gratitude to International Labour Organization, ACTRAV and ITC during the pandemic for assistance, to the workers, not only by providing guidance but also in terms of training, reskilling and upskilling. The commitment and effort from the ILO are highly appreciated. Thank you very much.

Mr Mbodou Mbami Abdoulaye

Government (Chad)

Mr President, Mr Director-General, ladies and gentlemen, delegates, allow me to associate myself with the distinguished speakers who preceded me to, on behalf of Chad, extend our most warm congratulations on your election as Director-General of

our organization. Social justice is based on equality of rights for all peoples and the opportunity for all humans, without discrimination, to benefit from economic and social progress throughout the world. And it is rightly so that your vision of social justice expressed in the report submitted for debate at the 111th Session of the International Labour Conference emphasizes the need for a human-centred greater social justice based on rights. To date, there must be very few or no countries that are not concerned by the matter of social justice, which brings us here today together. It is very encouraging to see the tracks proposed for discussion by the Director-General through your report. This report clearly traces the four dimensions of social justice that have been jeopardized by political and economic circumstances, discrimination and unfavourable working conditions in the workplace. Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, the Government of Transition of Chad, presided by General Mahamat Idriss Déby Itno, is determined to strengthen social justice and human rights on the one hand and abide by international Conventions in labour and Recommendations that have been issued by the International Labour Office on the other. Based on that dynamic, the Constitution that has been revised of Chad guarantees all fundamental freedoms, human rights and citizens' rights, including the right of association, assembly, freedom of peaceful demonstration and the exercising of trade union rights and the right to strike. And these rights are exercised within a legal and regulatory framework. Aware of the importance of youth and wanting to promote jobs for the majority of the active population, the Government, with the commitments it has made at the international level, has begun a discussion which has led to the adoption of a national employment and professional training policy. And emphasis is on strengthening employability and integration into the workforce of youth, women and other vulnerable groups. In the area of social protection, we will focus our action on setting up a system of social protection that is integrated through improvement of services provided and expanding social coverage to new categories. This will to reform has led to the drafting of a draft social security code. In the area of work and professional relations, Chad is very attached to the principle of collective bargaining and tripartism which it considers the preferred mode of regulating labour relations. So efforts have focused on strengthening social dialogue and consultation between the Government and economic and social partners. The ultimate goal being boosting and buttressing mechanisms and consolidating the institutionalization of everything based on an approach of strengthening fundamental labour rights and the stability of companies and development. It is important to emphasize here that the efforts have made it possible to set up monitoring and assessment bodies of the Triennial Social Pact signed on 4 October 2021. The President of Transition has made social dialogue the operative word because he considers it a crucial tool to find solutions to social crises. And Chad organized a round table, bringing together everyone from political and military circles in Doha as a prelude to the national, inclusive and sovereign dialogue. And this event made it possible to reassure the people of Chad and relaunch the economy. We think that close cooperation with the International Labour Office within the framework of the country programme for decent work is necessary. That is why, Mr Director-General, we adhere fully to your idea, "The time has come to create a Global Coalition for Social Justice." To conclude, I would like once again to express, on behalf of our government and my delegation, our gratitude to the ILO and its Director-General for the attention paid to the efforts made by Chad. I thank you for your kind attention.

Ms Lydia Mikheeva

International Association of Economic and Social Councils and Similar Institutions

Madam Vice-President, ladies and gentlemen, the cooperation of various international structures aimed at protecting the interests of people around the world is of particular importance under the current circumstances. The International Labour Organization and members of its trilateral structure have already gained experience of active engagement in supporting and implementing sustainable development. Economic and social councils also see their mission in promoting a just transition at this new stage. Summarizing the results of the 2019 UN Climate Summit, the leaders of 46 countries agreed to promote a just environmental transition by developing national plans through social dialogue. Economic and social councils, which consolidate representatives of the state, trade unions and employers as well as civil society, represent an intrinsic forum for social dialogue at the national level. The members of the International Association of Economic and Social Councils and Similar Institutions, AICESIS, have been doing their best for the past 24 years of its existence to advocate the interests of working people in their countries as well as in the Member States of the association. We are in direct contact with the citizens of our countries who turn to us for help or advice. As a result of work organized on the AICESIS platform, we have discussed and put forward the following basic ideas of a just transition. Adaptation of industries and employment on a continental scale is impossible without the redistribution of goods and financial flow generation sites. Ignoring this factor significantly contributes to more intensive migration flows that strip the labour markets of some countries and oversaturate others. Supranational efforts should be focused on exerting influence on the policies of large corporations to simultaneously pursue the green agenda and promote employment in regions of the world where unemployment prevails. We also propose to encourage the development of independent green economies in such regions. It is a challenge to simultaneously ensure that employers respect the interests of working people and emerge in the parts of the world with unemployment signs. Striking a balance between the interests of companies and those of people seeking a better life is not an easy task, but we are confident that our joint efforts can make a useful contribution in this sphere. AICESIS, along with the ILO and other relevant organizations, can and should become a key agent of a just transition on an international level, facilitating social dialogue, without which it is impossible to build an inclusive, equitable and democratic society. Thank you for your attention.

Mr Albert Emilio Yuson

Building and Wood Worker's International

Good afternoon everyone. The Director-General's report, 'Advancing social justice', states that the principles of freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to bargain collectively are at the core of the ILO's normative foundation. Trade union rights are not only the foundations of the work of the ILO but are the fundamental tools to build social justice. Social justice will not just happen. The dramatic shift away from social justice described in the report comes, in large part, through the failure of governments to protect trade union rights and of business to respect them. That failure is a critical factor in the erosion of democracy and the rise of authoritarianism. Freedom of association is a right. It is not a crime. And yet, trade

union leaders are in prison, tortured and assassinated for exercising these rights. They are in prison in Myanmar, Hong Kong, Cambodia and Belarus, to name a few. In South Korea, where there has been some progress in the past, trade unions under the current government suffer from systematic legal harassment. As we speak, 19 trade unionists are in jail for exercising their fundamental rights. Repeated and groundless harassment led to Yang Hoe-dong, a leader in the construction union, setting himself on fire in a May Day protest. Justice to Comrade Yang. BWI has worked with the migrant workers and their associations in Qatar for almost a decade, helping them to be educated of their rights and how to exercise these rights. The FIFA World Cup has left town without upholding its promise of a decent work legacy. Without the right for migrant workers to form and join trade unions and to bargain collectively, we cannot claim that the job is done. Now it is time for the Qatar Government to commit and take a groundbreaking step to recognize the fundamental rights of workers to organize trade unions and to recognize the global unions to freely operate. The rights of migrant workers are a frontier, a global frontier for social justice. Migration is a global challenge, one that requires a global response. Migrants may be foreign but they are not foreign to the human race. To deny migrants universal human rights is to consider them less than human. The Report of the Director-General also says that freedom of association provides the foundation for democratic participation and genuine social dialogue. However, in recent years the fight in many countries has been to save democracy. That means fighting the extreme Right but also getting elected officials to deliver for the people rather than for a handful of wealthy businesses and individuals. We have to organize to mobilize against the powerful interests that have a stake in overusing natural resources in the same way in which they have for decades extracted wealth from the workers and diluted labour protection. That requires representatives of the workers and the employers to be at the table. That is not only a response to make climate change fair but to make it work. Reducing global temperatures is a huge challenge, but it is also an opportunity to re-tool the global economy so that it serves the people, protects the planet and delivers a better future for all. Thank you.

Mr Maxime Legrand

International Confederation of Executive Staff

Dear Vice-Presidents, ladies and gentlemen, distinguished delegates, it is an honour for me to address you today on behalf of the International Confederation of Managers. It gives me the opportunity to highlight the vital role of managers in shaping future-fit workplaces and thus a more efficient and sustainable economy and society. It gives me the chance to remind the role of managers in social dialogue, who can facilitate communication and understanding between various stakeholders. As a manager, you take responsibility, with expertise or/and a team. You agree to take a collective with you, whatever the size and form that it takes: a team, a workshop, a trade union organization, a company, a city, a country. When we get involved in organizations like ours, a managers' union, it is of course also to have an impact around us in our company, and more generally in the society in which we live. As an organization representing managers, we therefore have a dual commitment. And in saying this, I am fully aware that the challenges we face are more and more numerous. First, there is this war in Ukraine that does not end. It is a tragedy because thousands of people are killed every week. It is a war with international cyberattacks with the permanent aim of destabilizing democracies. And this war unfortunately has concrete impacts. As energy prices soar, everyone is a little more inclined to look at their daily problems, on their primary needs: food, housing, heating or cost for mobility. This

situation does not favour crucial longer-term objectives. Yet short-term concerns and future resilience are intimately linked, so we need to design climate and environmental solutions with clear business cases now. In today's interconnected world, managers hold a significant responsibility not only for the success of their organizations but also for the well-being of their employees and the broader community. They are the catalysts for change and transformation, responsible for strategic decision-making, resource allocation and ensuring operational efficiency. Managers have a pivotal role in promoting decent work and improving labour conditions. But to be able to do so several conditions must be met. Among them, of course, the freedom of action needs to be recognized in social dialogue everywhere in the world, and managers need a place there. More than ever we, managers, must defend our positions, question what our leaders are doing and planning for us. We must do this because it is in our nature to want to understand things for ourselves but also to give meaning to our teams. But this has become all the more important as some of the values we uphold, professionalisms, knowing what we are talking about, rigour in demonstrations, all the values are less and less shared by some of the political elites in the world. Therefore, we must continue our work to inspire current and future generations. We need real leaders who draw a future that is both feasible and liveable. We need trained employees, trained managers. We need meaning. We need to live in a more equitable society that offers equal opportunity to all diversities and minorities. We need to show what leadership means today. Honourable delegates, honourable representatives of governments, take this into consideration. Encourage politics that promote leadership, that ensure the representation of managers in social dialogue, that guarantee independent trade union organizations, politics that give prospect to future generations, that enable achieving our collective potential, preserving freedom and health, the two most important things we have. A society where the way work is organized takes care of employees, where the managerial function is valued, where those who make the effort to acquire expertise and skills, where those who take up challenges are rewarded, such a society will be a much more innovative and creative society, much more efficient economically and much more beneficial for democracy. Thank you for your attention.

Mr Andrés Román

Organization of Mutual Entities of the Americas

Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, I am delighted to say that the mutual funds of Latin America, through our Organization of Mutual Entities of the Americas, is present once again at the International Labour Conference. First and foremost I should like to underscore and congratulate the Director-General for his outstanding report on the urgent challenge of promoting social justice and the imperial need to adopt a renewed social contract rooted in human rights, both on a national and international level. The mutual fund system of the Americas has been working on these vital conditions, including the recommendations of the ILO to improve access to employment opportunities and facilitate a proper living standard with the objective that all people should live a decent and productive life. Our organization shares the vision of the ILO. We believe that social justice is indeed a package made up of public and private policies involving states and members of civil society and designed to guarantee wage security and access to essential services for all, addressing in particular the most vulnerable sectors, protecting and empowering people throughout their lives. This definition involves the philosophy and the practice of mutual funds in its entire scope, reaffirming the paradigm that means that there is no human situation

that mutual funds are indifferent to as they share the inspiring objective of these recommendations. Similarly, we can affirm that that mutual fund system is an example of effectively applied social justice because the various services that they provide to millions of families constitutes a factor of great importance for a decent life for the inhabitants of the communities with mutual funds present and can have an impact. This ideology is rooted in the idea of solidarity together with the doctrine and principles of the mutual fund system which is human-centred. Social justice, a concept that the ILO Declaration particularly emphasizes, requires obviously a globalization that includes the principle of equity as one of its key pillars to achieve these objectives. As has already been said in previous occasions on this note, the functional structures of the mutual funds bring together workers who have a vocation to provide services at a local level and are very relevant in terms of the social model which has mutual funds as protagonists in the frontline of combatting poverty, exclusion, discrimination and all types of violations of human rights. It is also clear that the mutual fund system is a bastion of the solidarity-based economy. It is one of the genuine forms of organization that successfully implements the methodology of associations with the objective of contributing to establishing and implementing the objectives of the ILO for social protection in its entire scope. Our organization fully shares the idea that action must be developed in a holistic framework that is globalized with a strong focus on strengthening social justice. This process, which is being carried out within our systems, has been recently recognized in terms of the role it has played in promoting the social economy for sustainable development adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations at its 66th plenary meeting. This resolution refers to the general discussion that took place at the 110th International Labour Conference in July of 2022 on decent work and the social and solidarity economy. ODEMA, together with others, celebrates this success within the social economy through a world recognition of the fundamental role that mutual funds play in building a future that is sustainable, which is a critical milestone for development. We note that since its creation, ODEMA, together with other organizations of the social and solidarity economy, has been working in a tireless manner in various international areas to promote and disseminate the work that mutual funds carry out, which are so valuable for decent life for inhabitants of communities throughout the world. And finally, ODEMA should like to say, on behalf of the mutual funds in Latin America, that we are firmly committed to continue to promote the consolidation of all of the objectives outlined in this Conference. I thank you.

Ms Lorraine Sibanda

StreetNet International

Good afternoon, dear Chair, dear delegates to the Conference and my colleagues from Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing. I am Lorraine Sibanda, President of StreetNet International. StreetNet International is a global alliance of street vendors and informal economy workers. It is 20 years in existence and has 600,000 members in 52 countries. I am also president of the Zimbabwe Chamber of Informal Economy Associations. Speaking on behalf of street vendors and other informal economy traders, we are glad to be a part of the International Labour Conference and have this opportunity to make our voices heard once again. In most countries we are still not recognized as workers and therefore do not benefit neither from labour protections nor from social protection schemes. Eventually, we do not have a seat at the table where decisions which affect us directly are made. I must take this opportunity to ask again for the full implementation of Recommendation 204 in a

way that ensures our participation in inclusive social dialogue at all levels of planning and decision-making processes. If our goal is to leave no one behind, we must ensure that all workers' organizations have the right to collective bargaining, including those of street vendors, domestic workers, waste pickers and home-based workers, and many other workers who comprise 61% of the global labour force. Now that climate change has become an inevitable part of our daily lives, we are especially vulnerable to its impact. Our members have been displaced and prevented from working due to extreme weather or natural disasters. Displaced people, in their turn, seek survival in the informal economy as the first option to provide bread for their families. Thus, informality is growing with climate change. A recent case of Cyclone Freddy in Malawi and Uganda displaced hundreds of our members and destroyed their livelihoods. Other cases are the floods in Mozambique and also in Bangladesh which also affected thousands of people. As street vendors, we work in public spaces, exposed to all sorts of hazards. We work in burning heat and are exposed to extreme weather conditions. We are in desperate need of safe and healthy working conditions. Member States must therefore consider the impact of the climate crisis on all workers' well-being. To face these effects, we urgently require the introduction of social and labour protection measures, including social assistance and social insurance. Considering that a substantial number of street and market vendors are women, often the sole breadwinners of their families, it is also imperative that governments ensure adequate maternity protection for all women, including those who are working on their own account. Governments also have the obligation to directly ensure a safe and healthy environment and provide sanitation, access to water and electricity, storage facilities, proper market infrastructure, decent and affordable public transport. We also routinely experience high levels of violence and harassment from multiple sources. As such, we remind once again the need for the ratification and implementation of ILO Convention 190 on the elimination of violence and harassment, which recognizes the role of governments and local authorities to ensure our safety in the world of work. Despite all these challenges we face, it is important to note our positive contributions to the national economies and the environment. We make locally-produced food and drinking water more accessible and affordable in low-income areas. As sellers of second-hand goods, we are also crucial actors in the circular economy. We also played a very important role as public health agents during the COVID-19 pandemic. Our contributions and our work must be recognized by governments and all other stakeholders. We are not a problem. We are part of the solution. We commend once again the International Labour Conference for focusing its discussion on just transition and also on labour protection, that are so important for street vendors and in which our voice is hardly heard. We appreciate being part of these debates because there can be nothing for us without us. I thank you.

Ms Christine Nathan

International Catholic Migration Commission

The International Catholic Migration Commission is pleased to deliver this statement at the 111th Session of the International Labour Conference in response to the Report of the Director-General. Since 1951, ICMC has served migrants and refugees throughout the world, both through its extensive network of Catholic Bishops' Conferences and other Catholic-inspired and civil society partners, global advocacy and direct humanitarian and resettlement programming in countries with complex migration and refugee-related issues. We put respect for the rights and dignity of our beneficiaries at the centre of our efforts and do so regardless of faith, race, ethnicity

or nationality. More recently, our organization has been supporting local Catholic church services in Ukraine serving millions of internally displaced persons with emergency, mental health and psychosocial support, and there we have observed first-hand the impact of this crisis on work and on workers. Our organization is keenly aware that the present session of the ILC takes place at a crucial moment in economic and social history, in which the world of work has been confronted with profound and wide-ranging challenges, including the long-range impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, economic crises and, both more recent and ongoing but often ignored and forgotten, conflicts, wars, persecutions, inequalities and injustices in every region of the world. There also is no doubt that the heaviest burdens are shouldered by those who are most vulnerable, including forced migrants, refugees and informal workers. At the same time, we wish to point out the strengths and resilience of these same populations as well as their much-needed contribution to the societies in which they are welcomed, protected, promoted and integrated. Thus, ICMC wishes to bring the following observations and commitments to the attention of this esteemed gathering. In the context of today's global labour market, the consumerist economic model and the aim to attain maximized profits are pursued at direct expense to workers and constitute an affront to their human dignity and rights. Common efforts, guided by common values, must constitute the driving force toward sustainable development. For the past six years, the ICMC has engaged in close collaboration with the ILO in promoting social justice, decent and dignified work with fair wages. We have undertaken such efforts in close association with the Holy See Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development and with an extensive global network of Catholic-inspired organizations and other faith actors and grass-rooted organizations in all parts of the world. This latter effort is known as 'The Future of Work, Labour after Laudato Si' and was initiated in support of the ILO Centenary celebration. ICMC welcomes the future launch of the Global Coalition for Social Justice and pledges its support and engagement in this endeavour. In conclusion, allow me to remind ourselves that migration is a universal phenomenon that has existed since time immemorial and is inseparable from the labour issue. Thus, both should be approached from the perspective and actions rooted in social justice. Thank you, Mr President.

Ms Macarena Fernandez Grimalt

Unión Latinoamericana de Trabajadores de Organismos de Control

Madam President of the International Labour Conference, representatives of governments and employers. The Report of the Director-General of the ILO submitted to the 111th ILC emphasizes the quest for social justice. A concept very much in line with the doctrine and the practice of the Latin American workers' organizations. We commend and are inspired by this new emphasis given to this value, given the current reality and the constant threats to world peace, the environment, the world of work and worker dignity. Even though economic growth is an important result, often critical, its total value must be related to the opportunities it provides to persons and their human rights and civil liberties, good health and a good environment. The social contract has deteriorated because of increased inequality, conflicts and weakening of institutions that are supposed to protect workers' rights. In many countries the economic, financial, health and environmental crises have generated increased discontent and distrust in established institutions and leaders in government and public life. The economic slump, extreme inequality of wages, insecurity in the broad sense of the term, extended poverty, is a call for a more active role of the state to have

sensible planning, execution, evaluation and control. Having this capacity is a prerequisite to achieve the objective of sustainable growth with social justice. A protagonist state does better in a context where there is representative democracy. Representative democracy in our times as we know it is challenged and called into question by an outbreak of growing discontent of citizens with traditional politics. They see themselves. They want voters to see them as rebels and disruptive forces. It has been shown that in various cases, more than one would wish indeed, these reckless adventurers derail and go off course towards autocratic or authoritarian leadership, and in other cases they end up being censored, ousted or not re-elected. Fighting for the defence of labour rights and enhancing public oversight is a clear objective that characterizes reality, and when it is absent, corruption is rife and diversion of funds and there are risks for the life and the health of citizens. The issue of sustainable development with social justice, taking into consideration the challenges of modern times, will be of a global scope, common to all brother and sisters of the ILO, and will require the setting up and proper functioning of a network of multidisciplinary cooperation. We, as workers of the tax and oversight of the public sector, we are in a position to make our contribution to this discipline to ensure that in each country this contribution be productive. It is vital that we defend our institutions and particularly our workers. And the document of September 2022 is in line with this in which the workers, governments and employers agree on the importance of a future normative framework that protects workers in the exercise of their responsibilities and must object to certain acts carried out by government officials, and these put these people more at risk of labour, economic, political harassment. As the secretariat of international relations of ULATOC and UITOC, and with the support of all of the countries that make up this organization and the PSI, we have promoted the development of a norm as standard that will protect oversight workers. Our draft has already been submitted and is known by those in charge of the norms department and sectoral activities as well as the Governing Body of the ILO. This makes us hope that this draft will be transformed into an indispensable reality to seek more equal societies where social justice reigns supreme. I thank you.

Mr Walter Merkis

Confederación de Trabajadores y Trabajadoras de las Universidades de las Américas

I should like to being by congratulating the report writers, and we support the commitment of social justice that will be launched next week during the course of the International Labour Conference. We, the workers of the technical administrative sector of educators of public universities of the Americas organized in the CONTUA confederation, we have come to reaffirm the need to firmly advance, to draft an international standard that will establish the guarantee of a framework of rights for our sector. Our colleagues, educators, have two international recommendations that they have developed together with the ILO and UNESCO. The general one is relative to the situation of the educators of 1966, and the specific recommendation refers to the specific situation of educators in higher education of 1997. These standards are part of the supervisory system of the ILO, with periodic review by the Committee on the Application of Standards. And there is also a mixed joint ILO UNESCO committee that analyses compliance. But it does not involve in its scope of protection our representatives. This situation must indeed be rectified. Our educators work together in the same universities, and we suffer the consequences of a lack of compliance with the conditions of decent work. And we have the same employers but we do not enjoy

the same standards of protection. We are making progress based on the aforementioned steps, enabling us to move together with the ILO to analyse in detail the state of our labour relations in our sector. And the next step will be to begin dialogue to build tripartite consensus, and CONTUA, together with the PSI, we call on support from the Director-General and the Office. We ask for this support to travel this path more rapidly. Madam President, these are difficult times in some countries of the region for the workers that we represent here today. In Costa Rica, for example, the Government has rolled out a policy that is counter to all the international norms, obstructing in an autocratic manner the exercise of the right to strike, putting conditions on the development of collective bargaining and applying malevolent norms that seek to dismantle altogether the system of social protection. In Guatemala, the University of San Carlos has been closed for two years because of the courageous student strike that rejected the violation of autonomy that took place when a rector was fraudulently elected. And we suffer constant attacks on our union leaders who are threatened and harassed. In Peru, the political crisis has led to a total breakdown in dialogue, and there is an ongoing standstill in terms of collective bargaining in the public sector. In Panama collective bargaining has not advanced, and this was highlighted by the ILO only three years ago in our national university in Panama. And furthermore, Madam Vice-President, we should like to submit to this Conference a proposal to create a strategic alliance between the ILO and universities to recover the discussions that took place during the course of the Centenary Declaration meeting and to generate a nexus between the academic world and the world of work to come up with sustainable solutions to the problems that we are encountering. CONTUA calls on the ILO to meet with the Latin American and Caribbean representatives of higher education and to carry out work that would enable us to sign an agreement at the next Conference that will take place in San Luis, Argentina in 2024. And finally, we call on the governments and social partners to sign up to a commitment for lasting peace rooted in a new social contract enshrined in guaranteeing decent work and in which we will forge efforts to put an end to poverty, close gaps where there is inequality and radically change environmental policy. All of this will only be feasible if, inter alia, we guarantee human rights in higher education and understand it as a public and social good that must be guaranteed by States. I thank you.

Mr Felix Alberto Campos Caceres

Latin American Union of Municipal Workers

Madam Vice-President, members of the ILO, warm greetings from 3 million workers in the Latin American Union of Municipal Workers, and in particular from the Latin American Federation of Municipal Workers. We are participating in the agenda of protecting workers and defending Latin American municipal workers, and in particular Peruvian workers who, after 42 years of struggle, in the streets at times, is overcoming the ongoing obstacles and abuse carried out by the Government and the Executive Power and the Ministry of Economy and Finance. We have succeeded for the very first time since 1972. We now have the right to collectively bargain, and we made sure that in the Congress this law was enacted. However, the Ministry of Economy and Finance, despite the existence of this law, continues to violate our right to collectively bargain, using the methods that they have at their disposition, using the annual budgetary laws and their legislative powers that have been delegated to them. And they use various legislative initiatives like additional credit structures. Even though they have been granted to them, they are unduly used. They are fraudulently used to invade our workplaces, unrelated to budgetary matters, and they create fake norms against the

exercise of collective bargaining, against our workers collectively bargaining. The identification at the opportune time of these fake norms by us and our protests in the street has put a stop to these ill-intentioned steps taken by the Ministry of Economy and Finance. And they tried to review and change our collective agreements and they tried to eliminate collective bargaining altogether through the removal of trade leaders and sometimes imprisoning them, our trade union leaders, because of the way that the ministry interpreted the collective bargaining laws. This year the Ministry of Economy and Finances once again has used a new methodology. Using manipulation of their budgetary planning, they shortened the deadlines to ensure that when it comes to collective bargaining, collective bargaining could not be inserted into the budget for the year. And we call on the ILO to call attention to these officials working for the Ministry of the Economy of Peru to stop their constant action. And, if possible, we would like to see them reconcile their budgetary planning with the timeframes for collective bargaining. Also, in Chile there is tremendous work being carried out by municipal workers in Chile. They are carrying out democratization, decentralization and modernizing their institutions. And these three areas of work in Chile are vital for the Chilean population and the municipal workers. The objective, of course, is to remove existing barriers between public services and individuals, bringing the state closer to the citizens, improving the quality of democracy and crafting into law the opinion of the workers in matters related to the management of municipalities. Over time our movement has worked together with Colombia, Ecuador and Venezuela. COEMA has been like the big sister for the rest of Latin America. In Argentina there are 590 million municipal workers in COEMA, and despite good organization in COEMA and good union legislation in Latin America, there is very sound union legislation, there is still labour precarity and there is strong political interference. As a result of the creation of special social plans that foster non-registered labour, and in particular in the province of Santa Fe, the Government has impeded collective bargaining of municipal workers. There were two organizations to legally negotiate but only one is allowed to, and this violates the freedom of association, and that is why we denounce the Government of Santa Fe in Argentina and call on them to cease their discrimination against the FESIM, which is affiliated to the ULATMun municipality confederation. The municipal workers in Argentina want a minimum wage established and that this be mobile in nature, be established by the state, that the law does not provide for the municipal workers in Argentina. It seems as though the Argentinian municipal workers are not considered equivalent to other union organizations, and we call for collective bargaining in Argentina. And we call on the ILO to send communication to these countries like Argentina and Chile and call on them to align themselves with these Conventions with their legislation. Thank you.

Ms Corina Ajder

Government Vice-President (Republic of Moldova)

So, dear delegates, this concludes our list of speakers for today. I thank you all very much for your contributions. It is the last session of the day, so please allow me to wish you an excellent evening until we reconvene tomorrow. The sitting is now closed.

Ms Corina Ajder

Government Vice-President (Republic of Moldova)

Good morning, dear delegates. May I kindly ask that you please take your seats? It is a pleasure to declare open the eighth sitting of the 111th Session of the International Labour Conference this morning. Dear delegates, I kindly ask you to please take your seats. Thank you very much. This morning we shall continue with a general discussion of the Report of the Chairperson of the Governing Body and the Report of the Director-General. The two reports and its appendix were presented in plenary on Monday and have been the topic of our plenary discussions since then. We very much hope you had a good rest and are ready to continue this morning with the 24 interventions that we have scheduled. I will use this opportunity to remind Your Excellencies that the time limit for the interventions is five minutes, so I kindly ask you to please keep with this time limit. May I also kindly ask you to please cooperate in keeping the silence in order to allow the speakers to really focus on their interventions on the podium. Without further delay, ladies and gentlemen, I will invite the first speaker to please take the floor.

Mr Sattar Mohbaliyev

Worker (Azerbaijan)

Dear Chairman, dear Conference participants, ladies and gentlemen, I greet you on behalf of the Azerbaijan Trade Unions Confederation and wish you success in the work of this session. I should note that Azerbaijan has not been spared the consequences of COVID-19, which has had an impact on the lifestyle of the population and the economic indicators. However, despite these consequences, our country has been able to maintain the sustainable socio-economic development. In 2022, the gross domestic product of Azerbaijan increased by 4.6% compared to the previous year. Over the past 20 years, the minimum wage in our country has increased by a factor of 17.3, pensions by a factor of 12.3. In addition, we have started increasing pensions every year in accordance with inflation rates. Serious reforms, comprehensive programmes and numerous laws related to the social sphere have been adopted. All this has had a huge, positive impact on the well-being of members of society. The main goal of the document 'Azerbaijan 2030: National priorities for Socio-Economic Development' adopted in 2021 is to increase the welfare of the population by strengthening the country's economy, reducing poverty to a minimum, returning the population to territories liberated from occupation and liberalizing access to foreign markets. As one of the important measures implemented by Azerbaijan in this direction, I should especially mention that the Smart Village project was developed and successfully implemented by the state in order to stimulate the process of population settlement in our liberated territories. Experience from around the world shows that such villages make it possible to reduce the current level of poverty by up to 50%. The implementation of this programme guarantees the fulfilment of our obligations under the European Social Charter. Dear conference participants, in June 2022 a conference was held in Baku with the support of the ILO. It sought to determine the priorities and results of the country programme on decent work for 2022-2026. At this conference, social partners were obliged to ratify Convention No. 187, promotional framework for occupational safety and health. Work on this is currently underway. I believe that a

legislative framework for ratification of ILO Convention No. 187 is already in place in our republic. Certainly, without the technical support of the ILO, conducting relevant investigations and making appropriate changes to the legislation in order to fulfil all these obligations, we would have encountered certain difficulties. Currently, there is a high level of cooperation between the ILO and our country. I hope that the provision of technical support and effective mutual cooperation will be continued by the ILO in order to educate trade union members on social protection. Dear Chairman, I note with regret the fact that during the 111th Session we also witnessed the cases of abuse of this platform for political propaganda. To be more specific, the delegation of Armenia was repeatedly making allegations against our country. The delegation of Armenia was claiming that Azerbaijan is not complying with the order of the International Court of Justice and disrupting the movement of civilians through the Lachin road and thus negatively impacting the health and lives of individuals. We refute these allegations and are pleased to share the information. As a follow-up measure to the relevant order of the International Court of Justice, in April 2023 the Republic of Azerbaijan established a border checkpoint on the Lachin road. The newly established checkpoint serves as a mechanism of transparency and law enforcement for the movement along the Lachin road, thereby ensuring the security and safety of movement, including travel for medical purposes. On the other hand, the abovementioned checkpoint was established to prevent the systematic and large-scale abuse of the Lachin road by Armenia. This abuse includes the rotation of personnel of Armenian armed forces that are illegally stationed in the territory of Azerbaijan, the transfer of weapons and ammunition, the entrance of terrorists and other illicit activities threatening the health and lives of civilians in the region. We remind the delegation of Armenia that the order of the ICJ states that the Republic of Azerbaijan shall take all measures at its disposal to ensure unimpeded movement of persons, vehicles and cargo along the Lachin corridor in both directions. We also remind that the obligation to ensure the freedom of movement and other human rights and freedoms does not include the right of individuals to uncontrolled crossing of State borders. For future sessions and other meetings, we suggest that the delegation of Armenia refrain from misusing the international fora for false propaganda, including through misinterpreting ICJ orders. Thank you for your attention.

Mr Michal Maksymiuk

Employer (Poland)

Madam Chair, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, it is an honour for me to address the 111th Session of the International Labour Conference on behalf of the Polish Employers' delegation. I would like to congratulate Mr Gilbert Houngbo on his appointment as the new Director-General of the ILO and express our appreciation for his report: the challenges and opportunities for human-centred perspective of future workplace. We are living in a time, unprecedented changes and uncertainty, evoked chiefly determined by the necessity prompt implementation of energy transition and digitalization. Those forces are shaping our economies, societies and labour market, creating new opportunities for growth based on innovative technologies, organizational solution and social inclusion, yet also posing serious risk for workers, enterprises and whole communities. The COVID-19 pandemic has further intensified those challenges, exposing fragility of our social protection systems, vulnerability some employees, and all sectors less resilient to changing workplace environment. At the same time, forcing employers, workers and governments to make joint effort to transform our economies to make them more adaptable to the current

global changes. If you want to overcome the negative climate change effect and disturbances in the supply chain caused by COVID-19 or by the other natural disasters, if you want to strive for a more friendly workplace, we all need to work closely together in the spirit of solidarity, respecting the rules of truth rather than artificial dialogue. In addition to the crisis caused by COVID, Central and Eastern European countries face challenges caused by the ongoing war in Ukraine which negatively affects our countries' economies and brings about problems related to migration. This unwanted war impacts our labour market, also forcing us to adopt our education systems to adverse conditions. Therefore, cooperation and unity are essential importance if we are to support those in need and properly address [vgr INAUDIBLE 2:58] the challenges. In his report, the DG calls for renewed commitment to advancing social justice through the promotion of decent work for all. He identifies four key areas of action: ensuring effective access to public services, strengthening social protection systems, enhancing social dialogue and tripartism, respecting and realizing fundamental principles and rights at work. We fully support this vision and we recognize the crucial role of the ILO providing guidance, assistance and cooperation to this Member State. It is the social partners areas. We also acknowledge challenges and opportunities posed by the changing world of work, such as the impact of digitalization, climate change, migration, demographic shifts on labour market and societies. As the Polish employers we expect the Polish Government to work towards strengthening social dialogue and social partners. Therefore, we expect tripartite social dialogue that will have even greater impact on society and economy while maintaining tripartism. [vgr INAUDIBLE 4:13] to believe that social dialogue and social partners can play a fundamental role in addressing the challenges facing Polish economy and society, such as [vgr INAUDIBLE 4:22] innovation and competitiveness. For this reason, and also for the benefits of tripartism, such as ensuring balanced representation of interests, forcing [vgr INAUDIBLE 4:33] cooperation, facilitating the implementation on monitoring of policies and agreements. Ladies and gentlemen, I would like to thank you all for active participation in the Conference. I appreciate the valuable contribution, insights and perspective on our various topics that we have discussed. I believe that together we can make a difference in advancing social justice and decent for all. Thank you for attention.

Mr Francisco Torrealba Ojeda

Government (Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of))

On behalf of my government, we welcome the report from the Director-General of the ILO saying there has to be greater social justice in the world. It sets out how this can be achieved, and it talks about the current situation, both nationally and internationally, so that we can go for a focus based on people and based on rights. We are in favour of the success of this 111th Conference because we are looking at important things such as apprenticeships, the protection of workers and a fair transition to economies which are sustainable. At this time, we in Venezuela have worked so that we can get back to the well-being of our revolution, thanks to respect of human rights and human dignity. And we want to guarantee social security, the right to work, and we want to involve people together with the employers and the governments so that we can come up with systems which are more humane and which are socially sustainable. Our president, Nicolás Maduro, has decreed important ways to guarantee minimum pay, and has also looked at putting resources from the oil industry into social security funds. And this is part of our national plan for the period 2019-2025 which is in line with the Sustainable Development Goals. We want to

guarantee rights and the social conditions of work within the country, despite the difficult situation because of what we have suffered by this inhumane economic blockade. And there have been more than 930 illegal acts committed against us by the international right and its allies. We would say that these criminal measures, commercial war, the blockades or sabotage of independent economy so as to defeat or bring down sovereign governments is pernicious and this can affect the future of work. We would alert these actions which run across international law, and we see that these mean that people cannot enjoy their human rights. And this also affects the right to work, to health, to development and the actual life of peoples. We fight against this with valour and with intelligence against this economic warfare, this attack on fundamental rights, because we believe this is very important for the future of humanity. Despite these attacks, our President Maduro is still working for his people. He is trying to bring about a structural change in the country so that we can give a boost to our economy. This should be inclusive and sustainable so that we can conduct dialogue with all sectors of the economy. Chair, we are still working on the basis of a broad-based social dialogue, and we now have a dialogue which is based on a social dialogue forum. And this brings together where we can have open and frank discussions so that we can look at applying and improving international standards. And here we have had the support of the ILO who has provided us with technical support, and this has been done on the basis of respect and good will. We are still working on this, and we are trying to bring about social justice within the world of work in our country. This is part of the undertaking that we have entered into and this is based on Bolivarian diplomacy, and we will continue to overcome the threats that face our country. We would like to now speak on behalf of the Groups of Friends in Defence of the Charter of the United Nations which comprises 20 countries. We support the governments of Cambodia and Nicaragua in their exchange with the Committee on the Application of Standards, and we believe it is important that these Conventions be based on social dialogue. We are against any arbitrary actions of isolation or coercive measures which go against the sovereignty of countries, of their ability to choose and the principle of non-intervention in internal affairs. We believe that the use of article 33 against Belarus is not very constructive and that this can in fact stand in the way of positive results. Finally, we would like to reaffirm our complete undertaking to support the fair cause of the Palestinian people in the Golan in Syria, and we note their heroic fight. Thank you.

Ms Xiaoping Wang

Government (China)

Mr Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, dear friends. The Chinese Government supports the Director-General's report to the Conference, appreciates the ILO's efforts to achieve social justice through decent work and commends the Director-General's initiative to establish a Global Coalition for Social Justice. Meeting people's aspirations for a better life is the foundation for social equity and justice. For the past years, in implementing the people-centred development philosophy put forward by President Xi Jinping, the Chinese Government has historically resolved the issue of absolute poverty, effectively safeguarded the legitimate rights and interests of workers and continuously improved the competencies of workers. We have achieved relatively full employment in a large developing country of more than 1.4 billion people and built the world's largest social security network. The Chinese people have seen their living standards significantly improved, while enjoying access to better social services and more opportunities to play a part in national development. At present, under the

leadership of the Communist Party of China, the Chinese people are motivated and united to promote common prosperity for all based on our own reality, stand for integration of material and cultural ethical advancement together with harmony between humanity and nature, and pursue peaceful development so as to build Chinese modernization in an all-round way. Achieving comprehensive human development and social progress in a developing country with a huge population like China is unprecedented in its enormity and complexity as well as in its significance and impact. We will ensure that efficiency and equity are balanced, reinforced and integrated, adhere to the social value and norms of fairness and justice and guarantee equal participation and development for the people. With a focus on employment as the most basic livelihood, we have implemented the employment-first strategy to achieve high quality and full employment. We have taken the income distribution system as the basic system to promote common prosperity and strive to increase the income of low-income groups and expand the middle-income group. We will make social security a safety net for people's livelihood and further improve the multitiered social security system that covers the entire population in urban and rural areas and see that it is fair, unified, reliable, well-regulated and sustainable. Ladies and gentlemen, dear friends, today the world is witnessing accelerating changes unseen in a century. Intertwined challenges and crises, increased uncertainties and instabilities, inequality, discrimination and a marginalization in the world of work are all raising new issues and posing new challenges for the development of Member States. Approaches for solutions would require joint efforts. Here I would like to make three proposals. First, adhere to people-centred development in the fundamental interests of workers and with the view of promoting and implementing the ILO centenary vision of a human-centred approach to the future of work. We need to increase employment opportunities, improve employment quality and income levels, strengthen social protection and do a better job of seeing that the fruits of development benefit the working population in a fairer way. Second, adhere to ensuring and improving the people's well-being in pursuing development. We need to continue to promote balanced, coordinated and inclusive development, create more jobs through economic growth, increase human capital investment and comprehensively improve labour relations governance. Thus facilitating the mutual supplementation and a positive interaction between quality development and improvement of people's well-being. Third, adhere to inclusiveness and cooperation. To uphold the vision of global governance featuring shared growth through discussion and collaboration as well as multilateralism, we need to effectively leverage the coordinating and leading role of the International Labour Organization, strengthen development cooperation, support tripartite constituents of Member States to explore the labour governance models that are in line with their national contexts and to bring new impetus into promoting modernization with diversified characteristics. Ladies and gentlemen, dear friends, in the ever-changing world of work that is full of opportunities and challenges, the Chinese Government is committed to working with all tripartite constituents to make our future brighter and contribute to building a human community with a shared future. Thank you.

Mr Bakhtiyor Makhmadaliev

Worker (Uzbekistan)

Distinguished Madam Chair, ladies and gentlemen, allow me to greet you on behalf of the Federation of Trade Unions of Uzbekistan. I wish you every success. In the Report of the Director-General, Mr Gilbert Houngbo, on advancing social justice it

says that social justice can be described using the human opportunities and rights, equal access to employment and productive activity, just distribution and a just transition. The Republic of Uzbekistan is undertaking large-scale work in all these areas. As a result, we have improved the well-being of our people. We have transformed economic sectors and we are undertaking consistent reforms on ensuring the rights and interests of human beings in terms of a civil society. Ensuring that these reforms are continuous, as one of our main tasks, we represent more than 5.5 millions workers, and in recent years significant changes have taken place in the country and in many, many spheres. Such democratic concepts and skills as human rights and freedoms, primacy of law, transparency, freedom of speech, social control and gender equality have become part and parcel of our daily life, and major changes have taken place in the labour sector as well. The constitution of Uzbekistan has been updated, and there is now a standard whereby each and every person has the right to decent employment, to choose their area of work, to enjoy decent working conditions, occupational safety and health, and be protected from discrimination, and a minimal wage, as well as protection against unemployment under the law. The new version of the Labour Code sets out the main concepts of social partnership in the area of work, its forms of implementation, and the systems of social partnership which are based on a committee on social and labour issues at all levels. Legislative provisions for a tripartite committee on social and labour issues is an indicator that tripartite social dialogue will play a key role in the development of the country. Today, trade unions, together with civil society, are conducting work in order to develop society and ensure the implementation of the slogan that people must live well not tomorrow but today. We are ensuring social justice and we have set up a special agency in this area which also includes social inspection. Trade unions support the suggestion to continue reform in the health sector to improve living standards and ensure that there is a medical services package available to all as well as health insurance. We look forward to major changes on such issues as a full reform of the offer, labour migration, training and provision of language training to people going abroad. A lot needs to be done to achieve genuine social justice and a fair distribution of services. In most developed countries, we witness that there is an unjust distribution of wealth, and this is not in line with the principles of a fair distribution. Trade unions also pay close attention to climate related changes. This will require major efforts in improving training and employment services. In conclusion, on behalf of the trade unions of Uzbekistan, I would like to thank the International Labour Organization for the close attention and practical assistance extended to our country. I would like to remind you once again that trade union activity is not a crime. Trade union activities are not extremism. I wish every success to all the participants of the Conference. I am convinced that with such a large number of participants the Conference will meet all the expectations. Thank you.

Mr Juan Antonio Ledezma

Employer (Panama)

Chair of the 111th International Labour Conference, the Employer and Worker Deputy Chairs, ladies and gentlemen. On behalf of the National Private Enterprise Council of Panama, we recognize and believe that the Report of the Director-General sets out in four chapters the dimensions of social justice: universal human rights and skills, access to opportunity, just transition and equitable distribution. If we look at the analysis which is in this report, we would on that basis call upon the ILO to refer to the work done by the employer sector and to do so as follows. To recognize the importance

of the functions of sustainable companies as creators of jobs and as promoters of innovation and decent work, as set out in the Centenary Declaration. Support the employer sector as the main source of economic growth and job creation promoting initiative so that we can have sustainable companies. We should also have a broad agenda so that we can show the importance of our productivity in the reduction of poverty and reduction of inequality. We should reflect the close relationship between productivity, skills and social justice. We should also emphasize the contribution of the employer sector to social protection, the creation of decent work and the importance of an alliance between the public sector and the private sector so that we can achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. We should also stress what has been achieved by the ILO in social justice, reaffirming social dialogue and tripartism. We cannot have social dialogue if, indirectly or directly, it excludes the employer sector or the worker sector. And paraphrasing what the Director-General said in his opening speech, we cannot bury our heads in the sand like ostriches. And I would also like to say something about the employer sector in Panama and what we have done to contribute to social justice. The COVID-19 pandemic really created the worst crisis of the last 50 years and we are still feeling its effects. During this very difficult period in our history the employer sector was at the very forefront of promoting measures of biosecurity, and we did this so that we could protect jobs and we could also avail of new opportunities. Our group, CONEP, presented 47 priority proposals to the Government which were high impact over the short term so that we could really reverse the loss of jobs and that we could bring about economic growth. Clearly the main generator of jobs is the private sector and the employer sector, and we need support so that companies are sustainable and that they can generate jobs in the formal sector. The National Private Enterprise Council has been very clear regarding the Social Security Fund. We need to have an integrated and basic approach so that this fund can actually do what it is supposed to do properly. CONEP has a proposal based on three pillars, and this is based on technical studies, and this would mean that we can set in place a system of pensions which is universal, equitable and based on solidarity. And this is a proposal that has been put forward in social dialogue systems in our country. And our group, CONEP, has said that we believe that we should restart dialogue for the Social Security Fund and that we should deal with this because if there is inaction, there will be a reversal effect which we will not be able to make good in the future. Thank you very much.

Mr Malek Ezzahi

Government (Tunisia)

In the name of God, Your Excellency the President of the ILC, Your Excellency the Director-General, ladies and gentlemen. I would like to start by telling you how proud I am to be taking part in this ILC. I believe that the ILC is a unique forum for dialogue and consultations between the tripartite constituents over a number of key issues. Ladies and gentlemen, in his report entitled ‘Advancing social justice’ the Director-General states that the ILO should keep pace with developments. It should play an active role on the regional and international levels in order to achieve sustainable development. This sustainable development should help us ensure social justice and promote decent work for all, especially in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic and the challenges that it has brought about. The ILO should endeavour to overcome challenges based on a human-centred approach. Social justice should be the end state of all national and international policies, especially as we are currently witnessing a multitude of crises and increasing inequalities that lead to the marginalization of more

people, that hinder economic growth, prevent the creation of jobs and create conditions of instability for both workers and their families. Universal and lasting peace can be established only if it is based upon social justice. This social justice should ensure the dignity, freedom and equality of all people. Social justice is one of the key objectives that is sought by the ILO. I believe that social justice should be the key objective sought by all national and international policies. Ladies and gentlemen, my country, Tunisia, has adopted an alternative development approach that is based on good governance and the equal distribution of resources in a participatory manner. This approach ensures the participation of everyone. It is inclusive. It promotes decentralization and strengthens economic activity and growth. It also promotes social reforms based on our development plan that we adopted in Tunisia for the period 2023-2025. This development plan seeks to curb poverty, promotes social justice, seeks to put an end to social and regional inequalities and strengthens the basis for labour rights. We believe that social inclusion is of major importance to everyone and to us in Tunisia, and so is the development of a local economic paradigm that would complement the efforts made by the private and public sectors in Tunisia. That is why a presidential decree, Decree No. 15 for 2022, was adopted and issued by the President of Tunisia. This decree promotes social enterprises and shows that my country is seeking to develop economic activity and enterprises with a social nature in order to provide decent living conditions for everyone away, from discrimination and to ensure inclusion, especially for the most disadvantaged groups in my country. I would like to seize this occasion, ladies and gentlemen, to recall the suffering of Palestinians in the occupied Palestinian territories. Palestinians are oppressed. They suffer from injustice. We would like to salute their fight to defend their dignity and their homeland. We call upon you to provide them with further support and to redouble efforts in order to provide further assistance to them to ensure their right to live in dignity and to become independent and to achieve social justice and human justice first and foremost. Long live Palestine. Long live all Palestinians and all underprivileged people throughout the world. At the end of my speech I wish you all success. Thank you for your attention.

Mr Guangping Jiang

Worker (China)

Distinguished Ms Vice-Chair, dear delegates, it is a great pleasure to meet with you in person here at the International Labour Conference. First of all, on behalf of Chinese trade unions and China's workers, I would like to extend my warm congratulations for the successful opening of the Conference and my sincere greetings to all the delegates here present. The DG's report pointed out that polycrises are intertwined in today's world which have a profound impact on the world of work. Workers in all countries have borne the brunt. Social inequality has increased and about 700 million people around the world are living in extreme poverty. The report reaffirms that social justice is the fundamental purpose of the Organization, analyses the rich connotation of social justice from four dimensions and emphasizes that it is our common agenda to build a Global Coalition for Social Justice to reach a new type of social contract and realize decent work. I totally agree with that. I also support the DG in emphasizing the principle of tripartism, especially the participation of trade unions as social partners which is crucial for realizing the goals of the constituents. Also, I agree with the three technical topics of the Conference, because apprenticeship, social protection and just transition are important for the sustainable development of the world of work and are closely related to the vital interests of workers in all countries. I believe that under the wise leadership of the Chair and the DG this

Conference will be a complete success. Delegates, the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China proposed to insist on realizing people's wish for a better life as the starting point and ultimate goal of the Chinese modernization and to focus on maintaining and promoting social fairness and justice. On the eve of May 1st this year, President Xi Jinping extended festive congratulations to the working class in the country, emphasizing the need to protect the legitimate rights and interests of workers, calling for promoting the Chinese modernization through solid work and giving full play to the role of workers in building a strong country and in rejuvenating our nation. At present, the Chinese unions are following in the policy of the CCP Central Committee adhering to the worker-centred working principle and making solid progress in rights protection and worker serving. First we have paid close attention to workers of new employment forms, migrant workers, laid-off and transferred workers, as well as workers in difficulties, striving to solve urgent problems faced by them in employment, social security, safety and health, and skills training. Second, we focus on developing democracy in the whole process. We have improved the democratic management system of enterprises and institutions through holding the workers' congress and guaranteed the democratic participation of workers in enterprise management in accordance with the law. Third, we have accelerated the establishment of a worker survey system with targeted assistance and inclusive services to help workers in difficulties and improve their quality of life. Fourth, we continue to do a good job in extending regards and providing assistance to workers in need and assisting their children in schooling and providing them with employment and legal services. We work to build more service stations for outdoor workers. Through these efforts the workers could experience a greater sense of gang, happiness and security. Delegates, I take note of the discussion on the case of Belarus. Experience shows us that if article 33 of the ILO Constitution is invoked to impose sanctions on a certain Member State, workers in the country concerned are always the biggest victims. Their jobs and income will be seriously affected and their families will suffer great pain. We deeply sympathize with and express concern on this. In the context of the DG's call to bring constituents together to build a Global Coalition for Social Justice, we should refrain from invoking article 33 to deal with the Belarus case. In the face of the complex and profound changes in the international situation, as well as the uncertainties in the world of work, China's trade unions will always hold high the banner of peace, development cooperation and workers' rights and actively carry out exchanges and cooperation with the unions of various countries. International and regional unions, we hope to join hands with you to protect the interests of workers across the world, improve workers' well-being and contribute to the sharing of fruits of modernization, realizing decent work and social justice for all and building a community of shared future for mankind in the world of work. Thank you all.

Mr Akihiro Ichimura

Employer (Japan)

Madam Vice-President, thank you very much for this opportunity to speak here as a representative of Japanese employers. As Director-General Gilbert Houngbo noted in his first report, we are all facing an array of crises, including the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, rising living costs, extreme climatic events, geopolitical uncertainty and worldwide debt crisis. In the midst of these challenges, the G7 Kurashiki Labour and Employment Ministers' Meeting took place in the Japanese city of Kurashiki in April this year. I attended this meeting to represent the B7 together with Secretary-General Mr Roberto Suárez Santos of the International Organisation of Employers, and we called

for all those involved to shift away from the defensive, short-term policies towards a strategic agenda based on economic growth, job creation and realizing decent work. We particularly emphasized the importance of creating a policy mechanism to encourage job creation and business development, promoting efficient and user-friendly reskilling and upskilling policies, and developing economic growth and inclusive societies. The B7 and the L7 compiled a joint statement and presented it to Mr Katsunobu Kato, the Japanese Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare. The joint statement urged G7 leaders to make deliberate and systematic efforts to reduce inequalities by promoting decent work and respect for fundamental principles and rights at work, invest in human capital and social protection, foster sustainable development and a just transition to carbon-neutral economies, encourage productivity, innovation, decent job creation and inclusive economic growth, and ensure an economic order based on social justice. The key points of the joint statement were incorporated into the G7 Hiroshima Leaders' Communiqué released on May 20th. This year's International Labour Conference is a forum for crucial discussion of precisely the pressing issues that we affirmed at the G7 Kurashiki Labour and Employment Ministers' Meeting. One aspect of training and education is being addressed in the second discussion on the proposed quality apprenticeships recommendation. The G7 Kurashiki Labour and Employment Ministers' Meeting also positioned apprenticeships as vital to economic growth and inclusive societies, and this ILC focuses on just transition in the general discussion. The International Labour Office has submitted a report for discussion that broadly identifies related issues. I hope that this will prompt constructive discussion based on awareness that each country faces different challenges requiring different responses. A key theme of recurrent discussion is social protection, which is essential to realizing decent work. We will soon be halfway through this year's International Labour Conference. I hope that the representatives of governments, employers and workers will use the remaining time for thorough discussion that clarifies issues to be addressed in the aim of achieving a bright future for us all. Thank you for your attention.

Mr Anthony Yaw Baah Akuamoah-Boateng

Worker (Ghana)

Madam Chairperson, first I would like to congratulate the Director-General on his appointment to the high office. I do so on behalf of organized labour in Ghana. The Ghana Trades Union Congress and organized labour in Ghana associate fully with the Director-General's noble vision of advancing social justice. The Director-General discussed his vision with us when he visited Ghana in February. We assured him that we will do our part to help advance social justice in Ghana, in Africa and globally. But the question we should all ask is how are we going to advance social justice? Thankfully, we already have the tools for advancing or even achieving social justice, and that is the international labour Conventions. We can achieve a higher degree of social justice everywhere in the world if we improve the application of the existing international labour standards, with special focus on the core Conventions. Conventions 87 concerning freedom of association and 98 concerning collective bargaining must receive special attention in our quest to advance social justice. These fundamental conventions give the power and voice to workers and employers to protect their interests and to advance social justice for their members. A significant number of countries have already ratified these Conventions. Ghana ratified Conventions 98 and 87 in 1959 and 1965 respectively. Workers and employers in Ghana have exercised these rights fairly well since we achieved independence from British colonial rule in

1957, even during military regimes. But in the last couple of years many workers in Ghana are unable to exercise these rights, especially the right to freedom of association and collective bargaining, especially in foreign-owned companies. Currently, we are dealing with a case involving a power-generating Chinese company called Sunon Asogli Power (Ghana) Ltd which is owned by Shenzhen Energy Group Company Ltd and the China-Africa Development Fund. Workers in this company decided to join the union in 2021. The Chinese management of the company and their Ghanaian collaborators are doing everything they can to frustrate the efforts of their employees to form a union in the enterprise. As I speak, the employment of the core leaders, three of them, has been terminated. The Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations in Ghana has intervened but the management of the company has refused to reinstate them. Organized labour has already given a strike notice to ensure social justice for these workers. The unions in Ghana have achieved a lot through social dialogue, but regrettably now we may have to resort to strike on a very regular basis to ensure that social justice is there for the working people of Ghana. We call on the ILO to provide the necessary technical support to Ghana to complete the review of our labour laws to provide adequate protection for the working people of Ghana. We also call on all international trade union organizations, including the ITUC and [vgr INAUDIBLE 4:58], including All-China Federation of Trade Unions to support the Ghana Trades Union Congress and organized labour to advance social justice for the working people of Ghana. I thank you very much.

Mr Agni Deo Singh

Government (Fiji)

The President of the Conference, honourable ministers, Excellencies, Director-General of the ILO, delegates, bula vinaka and greetings. I am honoured to address this Conference on behalf of my country, Fiji. It is also humbling to be delivering this statement as Fiji's Minister for Employment, Productivity and Industrial Relations since all my previous involvements with the ILO until this annual gathering have been as a Workers' representative. It is therefore a privilege to now be here representing the Government but in equal partnership and cooperation with the Employers' and Workers' representatives. Mr President, on 24th December last year, Fiji witnessed a new dawn with the election and formation of the People's Coalition Government. We are embarking on a momentous journey of political transformation. The Coalition Government is a manifestation of the diversity and unity of the Fijian people as it brings together three political parties representing a wide range of views and interests. The Coalition Government is firmly committed to safeguarding democracy, human rights and the rule of law. One of the key priorities of the Government is to foster a conducive and harmonious labour environment in Fiji, which has been adversely affected by years of non-compliance with international labour standards, curtailment of trade union rights and the absence of social dialogue. The Coalition Government recognizes that decent work is indispensable for sustainable development, social justice and peace. We are fulfilling that through a process of reforming laws, including proper consultation with our tripartite partners to ensure the views of employers, workers and stakeholders are taken into account. We have removed contractual employment in the civil service and have increased the retirement age of workers to 60 years to ensure our workers enjoy long-term security of employment as well as to help retain our skilled workers. Fiji has reconstituted the Employment Relations Advisory Board in line with ILO Convention 144 to ensure employers, workers and government have equal voice. It allows the spirit of tripartism and good faith employment relations to be at the

centre of discussions in the newly constituted Employment Relations Advisory Board. We recognize that this approach will strengthen our ability to meet both domestic and global challenges and workforce demands. A crucial issue that Fiji faces is the phenomenon of labour mobility, which entails both opportunities and risks. While it benefits workers, it also causes brain drain and loss of skilled labour. We are concerned that this can hamper Fiji's development, social cohesion and national identity. Mr President, the Fijian Government is committed to balancing labour mobility and its impacts. We are implementing policies and programmes to retain and attract skilled workers, enhance their employability and productivity, and ensure their protection and welfare. And we are working closely with our tripartite partners and stakeholders in those endeavours. We value our people. We value their strengths. We value their rights as enshrined under the constitution and also under the ILO Conventions ratified by Fiji. The Fijian Government is working towards the re-establishment of the tripartite wages councils to determine minimum wages for different sectors of the economy. We know this will be welcomed by our workers. The industry-based councils will work on a tripartite basis with the representatives from government, unions and employers. Their main goal would be to determine a decent minimum wage for all sectors. Mr President, Fiji is resolved to working closely with the ILO and its tripartite constituents to achieve decent work for all. We appreciate the support and assistance that the ILO has provided to Fiji over the years, especially during the difficult times of political instability and crisis. We are committed to addressing the concerns raised by the Committee of Experts and plan to submit our report by September. We look forward to strengthening our cooperation and partnership with the ILO in the future. Vinaka vakalevu. Thank you.

Ms Corina Ajder

Government Vice-President (Republic of Moldova)

Dear delegates, I inform you that the Government of Armenia has requested the right to reply in respect of the intervention of the Workers' delegate of Azerbaijan. I shall accord this right at the end of the present sitting after completion of the speakers list for this morning. The reply must be brief, no longer than two minutes, and it must be in parliamentary language. Following the custom of the ILO, there is no reply to the reply. We shall now continue with the next speaker.

Mr Wills Rangel

Worker (Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of))

On behalf of the workers of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, we would like to congratulate the Director-General and Mr Ali bin Samikh for his appointment as President of the 111th ILC. We share the considerations of the DG looking at the world of work. We are looking at the social inequality that exists in all countries, which is a product of the paradox between capital and labour, and that these contradictions have been made worse. And this is because certain unilateral and coercive measures have been applied by the United States and the European Union against our country and this has affected the international sale of our main export, which is oil, and our bank accounts have been locked abroad and we have lost our assets such as the CITGO company and the gold deposited in the United Kingdom. We have now suffered seven years of artificial monetary manipulation which has been engineered from abroad, and this has led to hyperinflation which has destroyed our pay levels and social protection,

both in the public and private sectors. Our country has overcome this aggression expressed as the international blockade. We have made economic progress and we have seen 18 months increase in our GDP. And this is because of the great effort which has been undertaken by workers in our workers' councils which work together with the central trade unions, which work in towns, in the countryside and in our communes. Our revolution has always guaranteed social dialogue, which is clearly covered in our constitution, and this goes well beyond traditional tripartite discussions. The Government has brought together a social dialogue forum, and this has brought in workers' and employers' organizations. And we have run national meetings and working sessions, and we have been able to discuss the application in Venezuela of Conventions 26, 87 and 144 of the ILO. We now see that the methods which have been applied in various countries to establish minimum pay in line with Convention 26 does not apply to countries such as Venezuela which have been the subject of international economic aggression. And we insist that the technical side in the ILO has to come up with a methodology which can be applied in countries such as ours which suffer an international blockade for Convention 26. Social dialogue and our trade union organization. Last May we have brought in nine measures which we put to our government so that we can improve pay and we can improve social protection within the country. These are measures which will mean that we can get back to a living wage and we can improve social protection. In Venezuela, the workers, we want to see a multipolar world where there is no domination based on exploitation of workers or domination of one nation over any other and that we represent the environment in methods of manufacturing which will ensure the survival of the human race. Only in this way will we have peace and the well-being of peoples. And we would also believe, as does the Director-General, we have to look at the situation of workers in the occupied Arab lands, particularly Palestine which is occupied by Israel and which rides roughshod over international standards of coexistence. We believe that we have to stop the imperialist dominance of workers in the world, and that is what we call for. Long live Venezuela.

Mr Noureddine Tabboubi

Worker (Tunisia)

Madam Chair, President, on behalf of the group of Tunisian workers I thank all trade unions of the Tunisian General Labour Union. I would like to express my recognition to the Director-General of the ILO, Mr Gilbert Houngbo, for his excellent report on social justice. A special feature of the report is linked to the definition of social justice and the attention given to the factor of production, the culture of social justice and respect for human rights. Madam Vice-President, as a workers' trade union, we are fighting for social justice on two fronts. Firstly, on the national front. Our struggle for decent work, for a fair wage and the fight against poverty, unemployment and injustice and our struggle to ensure human rights and freedoms, in particular freedom of association, is part and parcel of the effort of vulnerable groups to promote values of justice, equity, freedom and equal opportunities for all groups of society. At national level we are combatting the efforts of the Government aimed at restricting trade union freedoms by appealing to arbitrary transfer and rejection of social dialogue and by publishing contradiction to international conventions of various texts and trade union rules. The workers of trade unions from across the globe are making great sacrifices to achieve these objectives. They are facing the consequences that hinder social dialogue and hinder independent trade union action. Furthermore, trade union members are facing the consequences of crises such as pandemics, climate change,

conflicts and wars that lead to crises such as the current food crisis which has worsened since the beginning of the Russian Ukrainian war. Secondly, on the international front we believe that the lack of justice in international relations, that the growing gap in terms of the economies and between the rich and poor countries lead to the impoverishment of southern countries. We recall something mentioned in the report of the DG, namely to face this reality by working together, joining our forces and advancing a human-centred social justice on the basis of a comprehensive approach, taking into consideration human rights as well as social and economic issues. Madam Vice-President, we believe in the central role of the ILO in creating a world where the values of democracy, liberty, justice and equality triumph and as well as the fight against racism. We consider it crucial for the Organization to deal with indebtedness and to launch international dialogue to help developing countries to deal with a foreign debt burden. Investment must be made in the green economy. It is important to tackle the issue of migration as well. Some countries to the north of the Mediterranean want to limit the freedom of movement on the one hand while taking advantage of the migration of the elite on the other. At the same time, southern countries are being asked to monitor borders. These are tasks that are complementing other already serious challenges. Action for social justice, as has been said by the Director-General, can only be ensured if we have constitutional representative institutions that are democratic and when States are committed to promoting and protecting individual and collective freedoms. Furthermore, we believe that the creation of a Global Coalition for Social Justice can only be effective if wars and occupation of territories of other countries stop. I raise my voice to recall our support that we extend to our brotherly Palestinian people. I invite all those who believe in freedom and justice to redouble their efforts to support the Palestinian people to put an end to the unjust occupation, settlements and arrests and to release prisoners and to raise the restraints and to thereby enable the creation of an independent Palestinian State with East Jerusalem as the capital. Thank you.

Ms Aurora Díaz-Rato Revuelta

Government (Spain)

Good morning everybody, and thank you for allowing me to address you today. It is a privilege to speak as Spanish Ambassador at this 111th International Labour Conference, and I would like to congratulate the Director-General, Gilbert Houngbo, for his vision in promoting social justice and decent work, and all those who work with this organization in the pursuit of social justice. I have listened very carefully to what the Director-General said, and we would like to say that we agree with his report, particularly regarding putting social justice as the very cornerstone of recovery. We believe it is important that we work in a global coalition so that we can fight against inequalities and we can convert social justice into a political imperative globally. And this would be something that should feed into multilateral cooperation and the consistency of policy. We believe it is important that we also look at gender balance and gender equality and we should also consider those groups such as LGBTIQ+. We would also support those who are not protected, and we should also look at the new forms of work such as the platform and gig economy, and we should also have to look at the number of women who work in those sectors. We believe that it is important that we look at apprenticeships where we are looking adopting a new international standard as a recommendation. We think it is important that people be covered over their working life so that they can maintain decent work throughout that time. We believe that permanent learning is very important so that we can avoid unemployment,

and it is important that this be of quality so that we can do this together with vocational training systems and also together with universities so that this is something that can be offered to young people. We also believe it is important that we look at the risks of climate change, and we hope that these can be discussed at length in the general discussion and just transition. The conclusions of that discussion and also those coming from the recurrent discussion should help guide governments, social partners and the ILO itself so that we can make genuine progress in this area. Spain is going to remain a great ally of the ILO, and you can certainly bank on us for our support when we take on the presidency of the European Union. We have ratified the greatest number of Conventions, and indeed, Yolanda Díaz, our minister, deposited Convention 188 on work in fishing and Convention 189 on domestic workers. And these ratifications are added to those which were ratified in 2022 on work at home and also on violence and harassment, Convention 190. And I want to finish here in the house of tripartism saying that it is important that we use social dialogue so that we can achieve labour rights, as is shown by the 18 agreements that we have regarding minimum wage, distance work, platform economy and the support for those who are without work, and also that we can do something about temporary work. Thank you.

Mr Fermin Mesa García

Employer (Cuba)

Delegates and guests, we were very happy to read the report from the Director-General on the promotion of social justice. In it, they look at the challenges that we face, and these are challenges faced by all constituents of the ILO so that we can promote and achieve greater social justice and decent work in each of our countries. We would agree that the current situation which we see in the labour market is very bad. It is insecurity, injustice, and rights are being trampled on and there is inequality. We believe it is important that we look at the workers' and employers' organizations and give them their full role, both nationally and internationally, so that we can actually overcome this current multistranded crisis. There are many challenges we face. There are millions of children who work. They do not go to school. They do not have access to good education, and this affects their health, their well-being and it affects their families. As a consequence of this, we see that their productive potential is limited. This affects the least developed countries and they cannot really promote decent work because of this. And this is something which is part of the Sustainable Development Goals up to the year 2030. The crisis which has been unleashed by COVID-19 brought greater inequality, greater poverty and greater social exclusion, and this meant that debt went up, prices went up and there are geopolitical conflicts and also climate change. And all of this means that social justice becomes a dream that is difficult to realize. If we look at the information we got from 2022, this is very worrying. There has been a lack of trust in national governments, and we see that what we are doing is the antithesis of the social justice we would all like to see. Certainly access to productive and freely chosen jobs is the actual basis for improving people's quality of life because decent work is at the very centre of that. And therefore it is up to us to prioritize international and multisectoral cooperation, which is according to the mandate of the ILO. And we should look at the future of work based on people so that we can make sure that the working environment is both safe and healthy so people's rights can be respected. And this has to be part of macroeconomic, social and environment policies of our countries. The ILO should seek greater resources and knowledge so that employers can produce and create decent jobs and the green and the digital economies so that these policies can mean that there is a propitious environment for

job creation. Chair, we in Cuba recognize what we have achieved in social areas despite the world crisis and the problems that we have faced in our country because of the criminal blockade which has been unleashed on us for more than 60 years by the United States. In Cuba, macroeconomic policies are a pillar of our development. Scientific and technological innovation mean that we have got a national biotech sector which has allowed us to immunize the whole population despite the economic, commercial and financial obstacles that we face as a country subject to a blockade. We have discussions with the trade unions and government, and we now have decent work, safe jobs and we have done this through more than 8,000 MSMEs. And these are very, very much the backbone of our economy. And 219,000 workers who work in them, and 135,000 new jobs have been created in the sector and they have social protection. We are still suffering the effects of the blockade and we are now improving the economic good of municipalities. Thank you.

Mr Marc Leemans

Worker (Belgium)

President, members of this august assembly, I wish to take this opportunity to illustrate the relevance of the ILO and its mandate. It is widely admitted that the main means of action of the ILO is its standard-setting agenda. Some standards are considered as fundamental and therefore, at the very minimum, to talk about decent work and freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining are at the very heart of this system. Decent work has become crucial for the 2030 road map of the UN with SDG 8 under the auspices of the UN. Last year the fundamental standards were broadened to include the right to occupational safety and health, but what is even more important is what we do with this at the national level. On the 1st of July we will be exactly halfway towards the 2030 deadline. But are we also halfway toward the objective of decent work? Every year the ILO supervisory bodies are discussing a series of violations of labour standards. As we know, this is just the tip of the iceberg. A lot of effort will still be required to ensure that these standards are complied with, and this explains the role and the raison d'être of the ILO. In an increasingly difficult context, with political currents that are making authoritarianism, exclusion and the hatred of the other inter-political ingredients, we see how this threatens social and political democracy and the mechanisms that ensure that workers are not losing out in a system based on competition in search of profit and greed of shareholders. When we are talking about violations of fundamental labour standards, simply human rights, we quickly think about southern countries and eastern countries, about dictatorships or conflict areas. As ever, northern countries should get off lightly. Look at my country, Belgium. It was often praised in the past for its progressive social policies, its cooperation model. Is this still the case? For a long time we have thought that forced labour existed above all in dictatorships. Today it has been introduced in the north of my country by a series of local authorities for the long-term unemployed. With the progress of e-trade, we see that child labour is re-emerging in the delivery of parcels. Or look at digital platforms. Our government has created a capitalists' haven for them under the guise of a collaborative economy. As long as platform workers earn less than €7,170 per year, they do not have social security and job security, without a possibility to engage in collective bargaining. This is not a third status. It is no status at all. It is very unique, and they are even not recognized as self-employed. We have the most stringent wage-setting system in the world and a law is being discussed which could lead to an increase in the average hourly wage costs which exceeds that of neighbouring countries. This means that Belgian workers are not allowed to negotiate

wage increases or reductions in working hours without the reduction of salary. Following a complaint by three Belgian trade unions, the committee for trade unions strongly condemned Belgium, but our government is not listening and we will continue to denounce this. This week our parliament is discussing a draft law. This law includes considerable risks for the right to demonstrate. And now employers are appealing to civil governments to take action in the case of strikes, and yet the European Committee of Social Rights has already explicitly declared that these practices violate the right to strike. The list of violations, both legal and factual, of fundamental labour standards is becoming disgraceful. It is unworthy of a developed country such as Belgium, unworthy of any country of the world. We understand very well how important it is to have a strong international and European regulatory framework as well as oversight mechanisms with the central role of the ILO and its supervisory bodies. These are safeguards that act as reminders and encourage governments to demonstrate restraint and proportionality. And this is very much in line with the quote by Euripides on avoiding transgression. Thank you.

Ms A. Adidjatou Mathys

Government (Benin)

Mr President, august assembly, on behalf of my country, the Republic of Benin, its government and the delegation that accompanies me to this 111th International Labour Conference, I would like to address to you, President, my congratulations on the election of your bureau and on your election as the head of the ILO. I would like to take this opportunity to express to our Director-General my recognition for the tools submitted for our consideration, namely in particular the Director-General's report. The assessment of the report highlights that he has made an institutional organizational assessment of the situation of the world of work in the Member States of our organization. The historic facts recorded in the report on the working conditions and living conditions in the world since the establishment of the ILO persist to this day and, for this reason, are of great importance not only to the governments but also to workers and employers and the international community. Mr President, now that in Africa and in the other countries of the world the informal economy is developing and accounts for more than 80% of activities, it is crucial for our conference to consider these issues during the current session. Furthermore, the crisis in trust that we can see among our social partners and governments remains in place and impacts the social relations. This is crucial and hinders investment by companies and undermines the collective stand of institutions that seek to maintain social cohesion in our countries. The effort to maintain a social contract is of crucial importance to us. My country believes that the concerns of the Director-General, as enshrined in his report, are of great importance. However, the major challenge of our organization is in the mode of production, marketing and the distribution of global wealth. To save humanity from these constraints and prevent further ones in the future, a new approach is vital for all countries. In my country, since 2016 the Government has undertaken important institutional reforms as well as social and economic reforms in order to establish an effective administration, a truly democratic and modern state. A special investment programme was launched and includes over 45 projects that seek to reinvigorate the economy, create wealth, increase the number of jobs and integrate young people in the private sector. Furthermore, industrial and economic areas have been created through a legislative framework that makes it possible to secure structural investment and ensure that there is a trained and qualified labour force available. These reforms have made it possible for my country to record a 6% growth rate in 2016 at the social

level. Because of the economic growth, during 2022 we have increased the salaries of all social professional categories in the public sector and we have raised the minimum wage in the private sector. These significant efforts have had an impact on the purchasing power of workers and households and have been welcomed by the population, and workers in particular. Nonetheless, the needs of the population have not been covered, and we should not forget that many companies are having trouble to overcome the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. This situation has been aggravated by the war in Ukraine that has brought instability to energy prices and commodity prices, and this undermines Government's efforts. In this context, the solutions proposed by the Director-General to advance social justice across the world and combat social inequalities are fully in line with my country's concerns. At national level, therefore, we must do more. And in terms of jobs, we must support enterprises, improve skills and employability of the labour force and maintain social dialogue. I would like to point out that my country designed and started the implementation of a national strategy for professional vocational training in order to make young people employable, to provide them training and ensure that they can be self-employed. At the national level, in addition to the assistance provided by international organizations, we must simplify the funding provided to various policies in order to ensure the efficiency and transparency of these actions. These are the observations that I would like to make on the Report of the Director-General. I thank you very much, Mr President and dear colleagues, for your consideration.

Mr Daniel Mongo

Worker (Congo)

Madam Chair, President of Conference, we would congratulate the President of the Conference who has been appointed as Chair of the Conference. This is very beneficial for all of us. Director-General, we would like to congratulate you for your report to the 111th ILC. We believe it had some very good points in it which are in our general and broad interest. The 111th Session of the labour conference, which we are now attending in person after the terrible scourge and problems of COVID. We believe this is a time for renewal after the Centenary celebrations of the ILO and also its presence in Africa as well, which happens since June '19. And this has meant that the world of work and the various sides of industry have always recognized what we have achieved. And this also guides our view to the future so that we can have fair globalization, something that all of us want. Director-General, this however is not always achieved because there is injustice, there is inequality, there is discrimination in all its forms. And also people do not benefit from the fruits of growth equally, and this means that this detracts somewhat from what we have achieved. And unemployment is endemic amongst young people, be it in my country or be it in Central Africa, our subregion. And I would say that this is a subregion which remains one which has great mineral resources and it has arable land available. It also has energy sources and it also has great environmental resources in rich forests. It also has water courses such as the River Congo which goes through our country and which is the second largest river in the world after the Amazon. And if you look at all of this wealth, sometimes people cast jealous eyes over this and we see this happening from the capitalist world. And as you know, Chair, they organized support for war in the DRC, in the Central African Republic, and these are armed conflicts. There is also in Cameroon, in the English-speaking part of the country, or in Chad as well where a president has been killed. So lasting peace is not achieved. Indeed it is disrupted. Chair, at this session, we are looking at issues which are of particular importance to us, on

apprenticeships, on social protection of workers, and we are looking at a just transition to environmentally sustainable economies and societies. And we know that we also have application of standards as well as a standing committee. Now I will not go further on youth employment, Chair, because I think we can say that this is at the very centre of all of our concerns. We are holding this session now, and some countries in the world are fighting wars and they have weapons of mass destruction. We have a war in Ukraine. We have a war in Sudan. And what else? So therefore we believe that we have to now stand up and say no to war. We have to bring in peace, and we have to have a peace with is freely entered into, and this has to be something that all of us hold important. Social security floors have to provide coverage to all. And thank you very much.

Mr C. Anselme Amoussou

Worker (Benin)

President of the 111th International Labour Conference, Mr Director-General of the ILO, ladies and gentlemen delegates and advisers, ladies and gentlemen. I am making this statement on behalf of the workers of Benin in order to share our thoughts about the situation in 2023 of the workers of my country at a time when the International Labour Organization is struggling to advance social justice for a more humane world of work. Our conference is taking place at a time when humanity is still healing the wounds left by the COVID-19 pandemic, wounds that have been worsened by not only the conflict between Ukraine and Russia but also worsened by the dehumanization of labour relations and the professional relations between employers and governments across the globe. Today, in the name of economic recovery, in the name of corporate profitability, workers around the globe are facing invented reality in the name of a race for profit and profitability. As a result, the fundamental rights and principles that are at the heart of the ILO mandate are in a very poor shape across the globe. Social justice still remains a dream for many millions of workers across the globe. For this reason, I welcome the themes of this 111th ILC. Mr Director-General, dear delegates of the Conference, every year the name of the worker from Benin changes but the content of the statement remains the same: this list of violations of the workers' rights and description of manoeuvres invented to deregulate the market and labour relations, making the situation of millions of workers even more vulnerable. But why is this the case? Because there is a situation. The situation in my country is not positive. There are violations of social rights and trade union rights, in particular with the criminalization of the right to strike. And yes, in my country, Benin, a worker who is striking can be sentenced to prison. We think that this is unacceptable. Social dialogue remains a luxury. The principle of adjusting salaries is being questioned. Special agreements are also questioned. As in 2018, I would like to stress that, as part of efforts to review standards, the protection to the right to strike be recalled. The same applies to the need to understand social dialogue as a crucial tool for re-invigorating the global economy. In my country, the National Council of Social Dialogue has been unilaterally dissolved by the Government without any respect shown to the principles of tripartism and the charter that established this body. Social dialogue has become an unnatural phenomenon in Benin, and it sometimes occurs only by accident. In 2021 trade unions turned to the Government, and the Government re-established the right to strike. The response to this appeal by the Government was a new reform aimed at criminalizing this right. We must recall and remind the authorities of Benin that no objective of economic development or efficiency can justify a denial of rights and of jobs. Social justice, social dialogue, respect of human rights are not compatible with

competitiveness and socio-economic efficiency. The workers' trade unions associations reaffirm their determination to play their part in a realistic and determined manner in order to ensure that an inclusive government can be re-established. In this year, the year 2023, we call for a strong involvement of the ILO and its bodies in order to change the current trends in Benin. Long live the ILO. Long live social justice. Thank you.

Mr Getahun Hussein Shekur

Employer (Ethiopia)

Mr President, Director-General of the ILO, honourable ministers, Excellencies, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen. Let me begin by congratulating you, Mr President and your Vice-Chairs, on your election to preside over the 111th Session of the International Labour Conference. I am confident that your able and wise leadership will meet our expectation for the outcome of the important event. Mr President, allow me to extend my warmest congratulations to Mr Gilbert Houngbo of Togo for his election as the first African ILO Director-General. As the Confederation of Ethiopian Employers' Federations, we stand ready to support the new ILO Director-General in his endeavour to advance social justice in the world of work. I would also like to use this opportunity to commend the Director-General for his succinct report that outlined various issues to advance social justice. We fully agree with the DG's proposal that the establishment of a Global Coalition for Social Justice, consisting of the ILO tripartite constituents, organizations from the multilateral system and other stakeholders, would be instrumental for coherent and concerted action to advance social justice. We concur with the view of the Director-General that the compounding crisis illuminated in his report, that is to say insufficient investment in social development, growing inequalities, faltering global solidarity and unprecedented levels of debt, constrained the advancement of social justice in the world of work. In this connection, Mr President, a multidimensional and profound reform is going on in my own country to advance social justice and decent work. However, our technical and institutional capacity to engage in inclusive and effective social dialogue to promote decent work and social justice is limited. That deserves the due attention of the ILO. Mr President, let me take this opportunity to affirm our full support of the technical items placed on the agenda of the Conference by the Governing Body for discussion, which in our view are topical and relevant to advance social justice and decent work. Mr President, as I had reflected in my last year's intervention, I pointed out that if we have to create more decent and productive jobs, particularly for our young people and the vulnerable, we have to create an enabling environment for micro, small and medium enterprises that have a huge potential for creating employment opportunities. In this regard, we are of the view that apprenticeship programmes are of much help if they are guided by a set of clear rules and procedures. I cannot end my statement without recognizing the Report of the Chairperson of the Governing Body for the period 2022-23 that, in our view, fully captured various issues in its different sections. Mr President, with these few words, let me conclude my statement by affirming the commitment of the Confederation of Ethiopian Employers' Federations in our endeavours to advance social justice and promote decent work for all in Ethiopia; and we look forward for the ILO's technical support towards strengthening our institutional capacity. Thank you, Mr President. Thank you all for your kind attention.

Mr S Sunandar

Worker (Indonesia)

Bismillahirrahmanirrahim. Assalamu alaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh. Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. It is our honour to be here representing the Indonesian trade union organizations. First of all, I would like to say thank you to all parties here, especially to the ILO Director and to all delegation members, and to Mrs Ida Fauziah, Indonesia Minister of Manpower, who is so generous to lead the Indonesian delegation, both from the government element and the employers. I am here as the leader of the Indonesian delegation from elements of the trade union which consists of several confederations such as KSPI, KSPSI, KSBSI, KSPN, SARBUMUSI and KASBI, which are members of Indonesia tripartite membership. In Indonesia there are 24 registered trade union confederations and around about 120 federations. I am so proud standing here as Indonesian delegation. Therefore let me share with you about Indonesia. The same as other democratic countries, all workers in Indonesia, under state laws, are able to join and are free to form trade unions. However, in reality it is not easy to achieve maximum results due to a range of factors such as intimidation, career threats and threats of layoffs for union officials and employees, which are still high on the part of company management. And through this forum we also replicate the theme of the 111th ILC in 2023: social justice in every movement we made. Even for the workers from Indonesia it is very difficult to make all of this happen because lately almost all the laws and regulations issued by the Government and legislative institutions in Indonesia are not in favour of the interests of workers and even tend to degrade the level of welfare of the workers. That is why the Indonesian trade unions make continuously movement to reject the Omnibus Law, especially the clause on employment cluster. The employment cluster clause in the Omnibus Law for sure is not supporting the welfare of workers. Clauses such as allowing the outsourcing for an unlimited time in all types of the work, easier termination of employment, reducing minimum wage standards, and the right to negotiate and to bargain are increasingly threatened. These clauses are against the SDGs and the very purpose of this ILC. Therefore, with this momentum, we hope that the collaboration and solidarity of workers' trade unions in the world will help us to find solutions and the best way for workers in Indonesia. And we highly expect full support and involvement of the Government and good employers in finding solutions in this matter together. In solidarity, on behalf of the Indonesian delegation of workers' unions. Thank you very much.

Mr Miguel Zayas Martínez

Worker (Paraguay)

Deputy Chair, ladies and gentlemen, delegates, I represent the trade union movement in Paraguay, and we are affiliated to the Trade Union Confederation of the Americas, the CSA and the CSI, so I am very happy to address you today at this important international conference. You represent not just governments, employers, trade unions and observers. And I would like to quickly tell you the main concerns that we have in the trade unions in my country. I could say these do not just concern us. I could even say they frighten us because we are affected by the global crisis, the structural violence and the changes which we are seeing. And these hold sway throughout the world. We support what was said by the DG in his report on social justice, and we affirm the importance of the Declaration of Philadelphia which is based

on the fundamental values of dignity and human freedom. And this links directly to decent work. On the 30th of April of this year, in my country we had national elections and we now have a new government. And we in the trade union movement in Paraguay have worked on a document which is titled 'Reactivation of decent work', and we have put this to the Government. And we set out strategies and policies so that we can deal with the problems that we face in our countries, and this is a way in which we can strengthen and renew the labour movement in our country. This document is based …

Mr Olivier Guy Ouedraogo

Worker (Burkina Faso)

President of the 111th Session of the International Labour Conference, Mr Director-General of the ILO, ladies and gentlemen, members of this august assembly. At the outset, allow me, on behalf of the Trade Union Confederation of Burkina Faso, to extend my congratulations to the President of the 111th Conference of the International Labour Organization. Mr President, the Trade Union Confederation of Burkina Faso welcomes the holding of this session under the slogan of social justice, and above all, we welcome the desire of the Director-General of the ILO to give priority to this value. How can we combat the growing inequalities of our world without resorting to one of the fundamental objectives of the ILO which has been highlighted many a time? Namely to make social justice a reality across the globe. And this is one the vital aspects of its preamble which we quote, "Universal and lasting peace can be established only if it is based on social justice." When we talk about social justice we are coming from a country, Burkina Faso, which since 2016 has been suffering the torment of an unfair war which has been imposed on it by terrorist groups. These groups oppose universal human values in genera and democratic values in particular, the values that our people have subscribed in a sovereign manner. This unjust war leads to losses in lives and resources. It also leads to a political, social and economic crisis, the main consequences of which were the interruption of the democratic process through a military coup d'état in January 2022. It also resulted in the displacement of at least 2 million people, closure of companies, loss of jobs, increase in the cost of living as well as freedoms being questioned and challenged. And this situation presents a threat to the coexistence of our people. The military government, which was the result of the second coup d'état in the space of eight months, decided to dissolve the Supreme Council of Social Dialogue, which is a tripartite body of our country, and this without consulting social partners that were behind its creation. Just to recall, the unity of trade union action, with the support of ECOWAS and the ILO, helped create this supreme council. This decision will present a problem for our country. One of the causes of what we are experiencing now comes from inequalities. These inequalities can only be dealt with through social dialogue, and this is something we are convinced of. Social dialogue is, above all, an African value. We say in our country, "What can be obtained by force can be obtained much more efficiently through friendship." To this end, we appeal to the Director-General to ensure that social dialogue be placed as the main tool which can advance social justice and that the Government of Burkina Faso be called upon to comply with its international commitments. On behalf of the Trade Union Confederation, please accept our congratulations. Long live the struggle of workers. Long live social justice. Thank you.

Mr Oliya Alibeigi

Worker (Iran (Islamic Republic of))

In the name of God, Excellency, dear Mr President, distinguished delegates, workers, employers, governments. On behalf of the esteemed workers of my country, the Islamic Republic of Iran, I would like to express my sincere thanks and appreciation for the efforts of the secretariat and the respected DG of the ILO in preparing valuable documents and holding the 111th Conference, as well as the presence and participation of the social partners. Dear Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, the inclusion on the agenda of important issues such as the strategic goal of social protection, safe and healthy work environment, quality apprenticeships, and the abrogation of the ineffective Conventions, protocols, and Recommendations show the forethought and foresight of the leaders of the ILO with the aim of passing all member countries from the traditional economy with low added-value to knowledge-based economies with high added-value and maintaining adherence to sensitive environmental conditions. The miracle of innovation in the emergence and in the development of knowledge-based economies has greatly affected the labour market of most countries, including my own country, in such a way that the training of apprenticeships and skills offered do not match the skills required by knowledge-based economies. On this basis, it is necessary for the ILO to take effective steps by developing and promoting technical cooperation, especially of a new type, with the help of the governments, especially the developing countries, and by creating a fundamental transformation in meeting these key needs. Ladies and gentlemen, workers' access to the components of decent work, job security and establishing social justice, eradicating occupational diseases and fair wages to plan and enjoy a dignified and anxiety-free life, which is one of the framework principles of fundamental rights at work, is the duty of governments and employers and an inalienable right for esteemed workers. Therefore, I request the honourable DG of the ILO to adopt a policy by emphasizing the principles of fundamental rights at work through social dialogue and tripartism and achieving social justice based on the basic values of human dignity to protect workers more so that governments could pay serious attention to the precise implementation of these strategic goals which are one of the basic principles of fundamental rights at work, to provide a big step towards clarifying the fair regulation of labour relations between workers and employers. At the end, I would like to draw everyone's attention to a poem by the great Iranian poet Saadi, who beautifully said, "Human beings are members of a whole in creation of one essence and soul." And I believe that all people, regardless of race and nationality, should feel responsible for each other and work together to establish social justice and quality life. But, unfortunately, the unscrupulous and unilateral sanctions of the US and their non-compliance with Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action agreements and commitments have resulted in the loss of investment opportunities and, as a result, the increase in production costs. And for this reason, the quality of life and livelihood of the esteemed workers of my country has become difficult and hard. Therefore, I request all of you, especially the leaders of the ILO, to take practical and appropriate measures to remove the cruel sanctions that have targeted the workers of my country. I wish that peace and friendship, which is the foundation of social justice, will prevail all over the world and that all people will enjoy the same rights regardless of race and nationality. Long live the workers and long live social justice. Many thanks and respects.

Ms Corina Ajder

Government Vice-President (Republic of Moldova)

Dear delegates, I remind you that earlier in the sitting the Government representative of Armenia requested the right to reply in response to the intervention of the Worker delegate from Azerbaijan. I now give the floor to the Government of Armenia to exercise the right to reply. The reply must be no longer than two minutes and must be in parliamentary language. Again, no right of reply to the reply shall be granted. So, sir, you may speak now.

Mr Henrik Yeritsyan

Government (Armenia)

The delegation of Azerbaijan accuses Armenia of politicizing the session. However, the statement delivered by the Workers' delegate was in fact more political in its nature than the statement delivered by the Minister of Labour and Social Protection of the Population of Azerbaijan. This is a vivid example how the Government of Azerbaijan instrumentalizes its trade unions to promote its state propaganda and mislead the international community. We would like to once again reiterate our position and denounce the illegal actions of Azerbaijan against Nagorno-Karabakh. In a blatant violation of the ceasefire statement, Azerbaijan has blocked in December 2022 the Lachin corridor, the only transport link connecting 120,000 Armenians of Nagorno-Karabakh with the outside world. The people suffer from a critical shortage of essential goods, food and medical supplies. Azerbaijan has further created unbearable conditions for life by the disruption of gas and electricity supplies as well as regular targeting of civilians. The objective is to ethnically cleanse Nagorno-Karabakh. Hundreds of businesses have ceased their activities due to the blockade of the Lachin corridor. Around 10,900 people have lost their jobs and sources of income. It is about 50% of the private sector employees. We would like to once again quote the legally binding order adopted by the International Court of Justice on February 22nd, 2023, for Azerbaijan since the delegation of Azerbaijan does not seem to have grasped its essence and the circumstances under which it has been made. Azerbaijan must, "Take all necessary measures to ensure unimpeded movement of persons, vehicles and cargo along the Lachin corridor in both directions." Azerbaijan has not only failed to implement the order of the ICJ but, in a sheer defiance to it, installed a checkpoint on the corridor. I thank you.

Ms Corina Ajder

Government Vice-President (Republic of Moldova)

Dear delegates, this concludes our list of speakers for this sitting, so without further ado, have a good break. Many thanks to all the contributors and the listeners. Until the next sitting, thank you. Good bye. The sitting is now closed.

Mr Henrik Munthe

Employer Vice-President (Norway)

Good afternoon, distinguished delegates. It is my great pleasure to declare open the ninth sitting of the 111th Session of the International Labour Conference. My name

is Henrik Munthe, and in my capacity as the Vice-Chair from the Employer I will chair this sitting. This afternoon we shall continue with the general discussion on the Report of the Chairperson of the Governing Body, the Report of the Director-General and its appendix. These two reports and appendix were presented in the plenary on Monday and have been the topic of our plenary discussion since Tuesday. As has been done for the past few days, I shall follow the list of speakers and it will be displayed on the screen. But before starting, I just would like to remind you that the speaking time is strictly five minutes. And furthermore, I kindly ask you to keep quiet when you are in the room and refrain from talking on your mobile phones when you are in the room. And then we are ready to go.

Mr Hongren Zhu

Employer (China)

Mr Chairperson, first of all, on behalf of the China Enterprise Confederation, I would like to congratulate you on becoming the chairperson of the 111th International Labour Conference. The Director-General of the ILO has pointed out in the report entitled 'Advancing social justice' that social justice includes universal human rights and ability, equal access to employment and production, fair distribution and just transition, and set the goals in promoting the Decent Work Agenda. It is of great significance to promoting and advancing social justice. In this world, the economic and social development has improved people's livelihood and well-being, but there is still a long way to go to achieving the goal of social justice. The Director-General pointed out to enhance the inclusiveness and effectiveness of labour governance, improve the labour market system and revive tripartism and renew the social contract, enhancing multilateral cooperation and the policy coordination to promote decent work and advance social justice. We totally agree with the Report of the Director-General. Social justice is the foundation of building lasting peace. President of China, Mr Xi Jinping, pointed out that promoting social justice has to be in line with the fundamental interests of the people, and we have to address this issue from the perspective of the people. In recent years, Chinese people's well-being has been improved greatly. Every aspect of rights and interests has been guaranteed. About 100 million people in the rural areas were lifted out of poverty, and we achieved the 2030 UN Sustainable Development Agenda ten years ahead of schedule. We enhanced the employment priority policy. Over the past five years 63.5 million jobs were added in urban areas. We follow the people-centred development philosophy, enhance the input in improving people's livelihood and to meet the basic needs of people and promote fairness and equity to promote the equal access to basic public services. Since the Belt and Road Initiative was launched ten years ago we have put about US$1 trillion investment and created 420,000 employment jobs and helped 40 million people out of poverty. As the representative of China's employers' organizations, the China Enterprise Confederation has cooperated with the Beijing office of the ILO and the China coordination labour relations. We have participated in the formulation and implementation of China's decent labour plan and promoted the implementation of the decent work objective. We have promoted relevant work and promoted the application of the international labour standards such as the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation and equal remuneration Convention. We have formulated the labour protection mechanism on female employees in the workplace and the elimination of the sexual harassment of female employees in the workplace. We have cooperated with the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security and the National Health Commission. All of these efforts

are aimed at protecting the labour rights of female employees and building a harmonious workplace and building a healthy and comfortable working environment. We carry out international cooperation projects and we encourage Chinese enterprises to shoulder their social responsibilities abroad and promote local economic and social development to achieve a win-win outcome. We participate in the discussion activities in terms of occupational education and skills under the framework of B20. And we have made efforts to promote equal opportunities in the labour market, inclusiveness to promote the adaptation of education to future work demands, and we have contributed our wisdom and solutions to the just transition of the labour market. There is an old saying in China, "The fire burns high when everyone brings wood to it." We will follow the guidance of the community with a shared future for mankind proposed by President Xi Jinping to work with other employers' organizations to benefit people of all the countries and to make development more balanced and to make sure everyone has equal access to opportunities. All of the development outcomes will be shared by all the people and we will make active contributions to promote social equity and justice. Lastly, I wish the 111th International Labour Conference a complete success. Thank you.

Ms Fanny Sequiera Mata

Worker (Costa Rica)

Mr Vice-President, ladies and gentlemen, the relevant and vital aspects of the world of work and the economy that have been dealt with in the Report of the Director-General clearly reflect the many problems that afflict our societies. In the case of Latin America, there are many types of inequality, marginalization and inequality that roll on from generation from generation. And Costa Rica is hardly an exception. The report outlines the huge challenges and pending social debts that have been exacerbated by the pandemic and many other crises. It also refers to the importance of decent work for social justice and the many shortcomings that proliferate in our countries, making it clear that solvent public policies are currently insufficient to address the social damage of the past and bring the future of work in line with the Centenary Declaration. We believe that decent work is vital for sustainable human development. And through tripartism we can transform the world to guide development policy in a human-centred manner on the basis of a new, inclusive social contract. But in Costa Rica we have seen a tax against freedom of association, collective bargaining and strikes, both in the public and private sectors. We are witnessing major problems when it comes to labour and union rights, both through legal reforms which have removed the practice of the right to strike and collective bargaining and parliamentary initiatives that seek to increase our working days with precarious modalities, cheapening our labour force. Even the education systems and vocational training is lagging behind because of insufficient investment in innovation. The dual working and training schemes are not right spaced and they lack social and economic protection. And all of this is a result, largely, of a lack of political will for tripartite dialogue. Overhauling tripartism instead of diluting it is a key step to overhaul the social contract, because without freedom of association there is no tripartism and there is certainly no democracy. Social and economic protection, this is an area of grave concern for the working class. The report points out an increase in living standards for the majority of our populations. We have salary policies that are anchored in minimum wages or stagnant policies with frozen wages, like in the case of Costa Rica. And every day that passes it is more difficult to reconcile working life with family life. And the protection systems and social security require priority that they are not getting, despite the fact that the backbone of well-

being, cohesion and social stability is, as we know, decent work. In Costa Rica we are witnessing governmental action without proper social security and a state debt to the tune of billions that is not being addressed. As inferred in the Report of the Director-General, a deterioration in the social contract has undermined human development in a serious manner. This is a red line for us because unionism on a national and international level is calling for a new social contract, as we know, that would help us to overcome the status quo and recentre ourselves and return sovereignty to the people and not tolerate corruption, fiscal evasion and discrimination that reigns supreme in Costa Rica and in many other nations. Multilateralism, as has been said, must be in a position to give priority to rights, equity and social justice and put it on top of the interests of the financial elite. Globalization of justice is one of the main challenges facing multilateralism. And in the case of the world of work, it is critical that we reinforce labour administration and inspection and the various processes that govern labour justice. But in Costa Rica we have a context where the policy is to privatize. Several public institutions have been sold, totally disregarding the valuable role that is played by citizens and that they play for national governance. And finally we would like to express the need to have a stronger ILO with more impact on corporations to revitalize tripartism. We should like to say that the ILO needs to avail itself of more power and be more influential and have an influence on the various decent labour programmes and strengthen its supervisory mechanism. For this reason, we cherish the hope that we will indeed create a proper Global Coalition for Social Justice that will have a transforming effect, particularly when it comes to the standard-setting lens that it will bring and the social benefits that it could also bring with it, making the work of the ILO ultimately more efficient. Thank you.

Mr Marwan Alshaali

Employer (United Arab Emirates)

Mr President of the Conference, the President of the Governing Body of the ILO, Director-General of the ILO, Excellencies, dear heads and members of delegations present at the ILC, may the peace and grace of God be with you. Allow me to speak on my own behalf and on behalf of the brother members of the United Arab Emirates. We want to express our consideration and thanks to our colleagues within the ILO and all the Member States who have worked to make a success of this 111th Session of the ILC. It is happening when the world today is facing multiple crises, compounding crises, socio-economic crises. We are at risk of the slowing of the world economy, facing climate change and also challenges of digital transformation. The problems are many. The main problems are the economic factors of growth of countries, and we need synergy to look at the impact and repercussions of these difficulties. We need to work with all three parties within this process in order to benefit from constructive dialogue of all stakeholders involved within the public and private sectors. Ladies and gentlemen, the United Arab Emirates is strengthening its position as a destination, one of the most competitive countries thanks to innovative strategies for growth and economic diversification but also the best indices for economic development. We consider the private sector as a crucial partner that is implementing many projects. They have strengthened our country's economic model, namely in investment. We are providing an enabling environment to attract foreign investment. The private sector is endeavouring to strengthen its role in development, developing economic relations as well as economic and investment relations within the country and abroad aligned with our vision for the next 50 years and our relationship with the countries of the world. We would like to talk about some of this economic success. We have about 1 million

economic licences for private companies. We have a GDP of 70%, with a lot of private participation. Out of the 28 elements of indices of economic competitiveness, we have done a lot to buffer the shock of changes in the economy and we are unique in our endeavours to protect the environment and to deal with climate change. Climate change is something we will talk about at the next COP28, which will take place in the United Arab Emirates in the city called Expo, Dubai next November. Ladies and gentlemen, the union in our country is developing a spirit of entrepreneurship to have an enabling environment for countries to have innovative projects based on new ideas, on innovation and emerging technologies because these are the main lever for economic growth that make it possible to strengthen diversity. Honourable delegates, in conclusion I congratulate all of you and wish you every success in this Conference. Thank you.

Mr Woldeyesus Elisa Gulay

Government (Eritrea)

His Excellency Mr Gilbert Houngbo, ILO Director-General, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen. At the outset, my delegation likes to congratulate Mr Gilbert Houngbo for his election as ILO Director-General and wish him decent work that advances social justice as to his endeavour. Again let me congratulate and thank the Director-General for his ideal first report to the 111th ILC session. Honourable Director-General, yes, it is very true that the world of work globally faces sets of challenges which significantly delay it not receiving, or in our case totally vacates the progress of proper implementation of decent work intertwined with the Sustainable Development Goal, SDG8, agenda that is sought as a pathway to our social justice vision. However, by alleviating those clouds of challenge, the popular Decent Work Agenda has to be put in practice to advance social justice. To practically implement the Decent Work Agenda linked with SDG8, the ILO has designed the Decent Work Country Programme model with its process and steps, designated Decent Work Technical Teams at regional and subregional levels, and identified the decent work SDG indicators. However, when it comes to its real operation, except a few, many of its Member States are being hampered by all round of challenges, made the popular Decent Work Agenda to remain only a blueprint. Honourable Chairperson, it has to be noted that Eritrea's struggle was not only for independence. It is also for social justice of its people and to pursue its struggle on social justice worldwide. Right away after independence in 1993, Eritrea became a member of the ILO and is playing its role and continues to play in this effort. Despite all the challenges faced, Eritrea now is heading to implement its development plan that incorporates the Decent Work and Sustainable Development Goal agendas. This justifies Eritrea's assurance in advancing social justice through decent work with you, ILO new Director-General. With the intention to advance social justice through decent work, we had attempted to review the Decent Work Country Programme guide developed by the ILO, which was trimmed by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, from the review made in addition to the [vgr INAUDIBLE 3:08] challenge, my delegation humbly recommends to re-examine on the following implementation deterring factors for a smooth and fast implementation of the popular Decent Work Agenda. One, the ILO Decent Work Country Programme module deals with the procedures, and the steps of implementation seem to be lengthy, leading to more bureaucracy that goes back and forth for approval, discouraging to track. Its shortening seems to be vital. Second, beside the general statistics on the number of countries that have launched the Decent Work Country Programme, there are no progress reports on what the results are and challenges

encountered. Therefore, subsequent follow-up reviews could facilitate sharing experiences, including successes, challenges and lessons learned to accelerate the implementation of decent work at national and regional levels. Third, Decent Work Country Programme implementation should not be donor driven. Rather it has to be purely based on partnership in promoting decent work to advance social justice. In conclusion, ladies and gentlemen, as promoting decent work advances social justice, it is decisive to work on getting solutions to the critical challenges and adhering to its practical implementation being with the social constituents. And again, wish you decent work that advances to social justice for you all. I thank you for your kind attention.

Mr Blake Mulala

Worker (Zambia)

Chairperson of the International Labour Conference and all distinguished delegates, thank you for the opportunity to speak in the plenary of the 111th Session of the International Labour Conference. I take the opportunity to congratulate the Director-General and his team for the success of this Conference. May I thank the Chairperson of the ILO Governing Body for setting a suitable agenda for this International Labour Conference. Indeed, the Director-General's report, which focusses on advancing social justice, brings to light the challenges facing the world of work today. It is sad that the current global economic order continues to perpetuate inequality and vulnerability. This is despite all efforts to attain social justice from the inception of the ILO over a century ago. Although social and economic development has contributed to an increase in average living standards across the world, it is equally true that the world is faced with many challenges. The world continues to be characterized by high levels of inequality and social vulnerability. For developing countries such as my country Zambia, the threat of a debt crisis is also real, being the first country in sub-Saharan Africa to default on its external debt obligations in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. The rising debt challenges in developing countries threaten the fiscal space to provide the much-needed social services. Generally, it is true that the aspiration for social justice remains elusive for too many because of the many unique challenges we face in our endeavour to improve our well-being and attain social justice. The General Survey report has also brought to light the global challenge to achieve gender equality at work despite having non-discriminatory Conventions and Recommendations in place. It is true to mention that there cannot be full equality at work in a broader context of existing and ongoing inequalities. For this reason, we support the call for a comprehensive change in the dynamics that cause gender-specific constraints and structural obstacles. This may require wide implementation of Conventions 111, 156 and 183 and their respective recommendations to advance a transformative agenda for gender equality at work. Broadly, we support the cause for a Global Coalition for Social Justice to balance at the global level the discourse on environmental, economic and social considerations, and we expect the ILO to take a leadership role. We also join the discourse to overhaul the global financial system to better support the real economy and decent jobs and to ensure a human-centred development approach. More importantly, we have to reflect on our governance systems both at the local and global level. As such, we join the call for ratification of the 1986 Instrument to amend the ILO Constitution to enable us to move forward with democratizing the governance structure of the ILO. It is really unfortunate that two thirds of ILO Member States have ratified the amendment and yet its implementation remains elusive and blocked by Member States of chief

industrial importance. We agree with the Director-General that this situation is at odds with our values of democracy and social justice. To attain global peace and social justice, we continue to reflect on the ILO's founding principles. We align ourselves with the belief that universal and lasting peace can only be accomplished if it is based on social justice with emphasis on a human-centred development approach. Thank you for your attention.

Mr See Leng Tan

Government (Singapore)

Conference Chair, Excellencies, distinguished guests, last month the WHO declared an end to COVID-19 as a global health emergency. I thank all workers, especially frontline workers, who helped us to pull through this pandemic. With the end of the pandemic, it is timely to redouble efforts to build back better and address structural economic issues that affect workers. The Singapore Government has committed to journey with our workers every step of the way in their careers. Together with our tripartite partners, we will do our part to ensure that growth remains inclusive and workers reap the benefits. As Singapore continues to transform its economy, the Singapore Government is committed to empower workers to seize new career opportunities. We will do so by working with our tripartite partners to build up the employment resilience and prospects of our workers. We call this career health because it is analogous and similar to physical health. Just as individuals need to take active steps to keep physically healthy, good career health involves taking active steps towards achieving long-term career goals. There are three aspects to this. First, we will empower workers with information on career opportunities that they can consider and the pathways to get there. Second, we will support workers in developing a personalized career plan, with upskilling and reskilling where necessary and taking on career opportunities for growth and development. Third, we will study how to provide better support, better assurance for displaced workers, while nudging them towards active job search as well as skills upgrading. Better career health complements our other strategies to strengthen support for vulnerable workers. So for low-wage workers, Singapore adopts a tripartite approach that combines skills upgrading, productivity improvements and career progression pathways so that wage increases are sustainable over the longer term. We call this the Progressive Wage Model. Our efforts have borne fruit. Last year, real incomes of lower-wage workers grew by 4.7%, faster than the median worker at 2.0%. This has narrowed the income gap between lower-wage workers and the median worker. By July this year up to nine in ten full-time lower-wage workers in Singapore will benefit from this initiative. Platform work has also become more common, creating more work opportunities, but it has also brought about significant challenges. Singapore recognizes that platform work can be precarious and we need to strengthen support for our platform workers. Our platform workers have told us that they value the flexibility it brings, but they also want to be better protected in a few key areas. As such, we therefore need to strike a good balance. The Singapore Government, in close consultation with our tripartite partners, will introduce legislation for our platform workers to increase their retirement savings, ensure they receive compensation if injured on the job and enable them to be represented in collective bargaining. This approach strengthens protection for platform workers while retaining the benefits for platform work. Now, Singapore has also focused efforts on improving the well-being of foreign workers, migrant workers. For instance, in April this year the Singapore Government enhanced the medical support for migrant workers by setting up dedicated medical centres across the

country and introducing an outpatient healthcare plan for all migrant workers. Under this plan, employers pay a fixed annual fee for their worker who will then have a more seamless access to a range of healthcare services such as acute and chronic care and 24-hour telemedicine services. Employers can also enjoy cost clarity on the medical expenses by migrant workers and they are better protected against unexpected healthcare bills. To conclude, Singapore's approach to uplifting our workers is aligned with the ILO's human-centred approach of advancing social justice and promoting decent work. Singapore looks forward to continuing working with the ILO in preparing for the future of work. Thank you very much.

Ms Judit Dr. Czuglerné Dr. Iványi

Worker (Hungary)

Mr Chair, allow me to begin by congratulating you on behalf of the Hungarian workers on your election. Distinguished delegates, Hungarian workers attach great importance to the message of the Director-General's report and to the objective it sets out: the creation of social justice. We agree with the statement written in the Declaration of Philadelphia that without social justice there can be no lasting peace. This is particularly true today when crises and new challenges arising from demographic, climate and technological changes are affecting the world of work. In recent years, the circumstances that determine the living and working conditions of workers have changed significantly, and many of the rules that used to protect them can no longer be applied. The COVID-19 pandemic has also accelerated the emergence of new forms of work, including platform work before the new regulations protecting workers could be put in place. We therefore consider it necessary and do support the adoption of appropriate international, European and national standards for these new forms of work, guaranteeing decent work, including fundamental rights for all workers. The current war crisis and the energy crisis have led to increased inflation which, despite the efforts made to curb inflation, is having a negative impact on Hungarian workers and pensioners too. The need for urgent wage increases, particularly for teachers and health workers, is an everyday topic and problem in Hungary. Wages in Eastern Europe, which are still lower than in the developed countries of the European Union, are pushing the wage convergence that has been expected for twenty years further away, a situation that could also be detrimental to the unity of workers in Europe, which unity is increasingly needed amid the current challenges. Tripartite and bipartite social dialogue is also an indispensable condition for creating and maintaining social justice. There is no human dignity, no dignity for workers, no dignified and decent work without a meaningful social dialogue and without listening to workers' voices and interests. Workers have to be heard all over the world. In Hungary today, there is an urgent need to significantly strengthen the role of tripartite social dialogue as well as collective bargaining and collective agreements at all levels. The dignity and respect of workers at work must be more widely recognized. We agree with the statement of the Director-General's report stating that concluding collective agreements means the respect of workers, what we really need at our workplaces. We therefore consider it extremely important that the ILO intends to treat social justice as a priority, and we support the proposal of the Director-General's report for a global coalition to this end. Thank you very much for your kind attention.

Mr Asegid Getachew Yemenu

Government (Ethiopia)

Mr President, Honourable Ministers, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, it is indeed a great pleasure and a privilege for me to deliver this statement on behalf of Her Excellency Muferihat Kamil, the Minister of Labour and Skills of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. Let me first join others who spoke before me in expressing my delegation's congratulations to you, Mr President and the Vice-Presidents, on your election to preside over this session. I wish to pledge the full support of the Ethiopian delegation to your efforts to make the 111th Session a success. The Ethiopian tripartite delegation welcomes the comprehensive Report of the Director-General, Mr Gilbert, on advancing social justice and the emphasis given to the need to build a coalition for social justice aimed at fighting growing inequalities in different parts of the world. Mr President, as indicated in the Report of the Director-General, we noted with serious concern that 685 million people were estimated to live in extreme poverty at the end of 2022. We have also noticed with serious concern that low-income countries continue to face serious challenges in providing old-age pension, living wage and social protection for workers. To this end, we share his view that the international community needs to consider other ways to help bridge the financing gap for social protection in low-income countries, including through the largely unmet official development assistance commitments, increased concessional lending and budget support, or a new international financing mechanism to complement and support domestic resource mobilization efforts. While recognizing the critical role of the ILO in advancing social justice and ensuring decent work, there is a need for the Organization to work with countries in support of their national efforts to implement their national and global commitments. Mr President, these issues of a just transition and the need for a coalition on social justice, I cannot underestimate the remarkable resilience of the continent of Africa and of my country, Ethiopia. Despite formidable challenges of natural disasters, the COVID-19 pandemic and the recurring conflicts, Ethiopia is on a promising transitional road to pursuing an inclusive and pro-poor growth policy to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development and resilience. Notwithstanding such considerable challenges along the way, thanks to their endurance and resilience, the people of Africa in general and the people of Ethiopia in particular have withstood difficulties steadily and firmly against all odds. The Ethiopian Government's policies and its 10-year development plan are anchored on the Homegrown Economic Reform Agenda and the Green Legacy toward a sustainable green economy, which are well in line with Agenda 2063 of the African Union, the Sustainable Development Goals and other regional and global initiatives and commitments. Mr President, the Ministry of Labour and Skills has adopted a pro-youth and a pro-poor approach aimed at empowering and harnessing their capacities. More importantly, the encouraging progress we have achieved in building institutions under formidable political and economic challenges is well-versed by Ethiopia's national reform process agenda that has been translated into strategic focus areas to boost research and technology, skill development, job creation and ensuring industrial peace through a conducive work environment and social dialogue. By doing so, we expect results in terms of qualified human resources, reduction of unemployment, industrial transformation and sustainable job opportunities. As we speak of social justice and of ensuring an inclusive and fair labour ecosystem, skills development through technical and vocational training, demand-driven job creation and employment through the promotion of family business, public entrepreneurship for the youth, establishing one-stop public employment service centres and establishing

the Labour Market Information System are the few outstanding institutional reform areas that the Ethiopian Government is undertaking. Mr President, with new opportunities come new challenges. As we grapple with seemingly old and existing inequalities, the world appears to bring to us now new challenges and new opportunities. I am trying to point out the power that digitalization entails in the labour ecosystem in view of social justice. As we harness the power of ICT for new skills and new opportunities, the digital divide itself is another source of inequality that requires our attention and coordination in the provision of information and communication infrastructures to ensure access and equality for our citizens. Finally, I want to emphasize that social justice is a process as it is a goal to be achieved. If we are to go further and better in this journey of social justice, we should join hands since inequalities can hardly be overcome without partnership, coalition and due synergy. I want to conclude by saying that let us keep on inspiring one another by sharing our challenges and successes to shape our future together and recommitting ourselves to multilateralism and to the work of this historic organization.

Ms Mary Liew Kiah Eng

Worker (Singapore)

Conference Chair, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, on the 5th of May this year, shortly after most of our workers commemorated May Day, the WHO declared an end to COVID-19 as a global health emergency. While we pick ourselves up on the road to recovery with hope and cautious optimism, let us always remember our frontline workers, those who lost their precious lives in the course of their duties and others who put their lives, safety and freedom in the course of duties to continue to toil long hours day and night, 24/7 with their safety at risk and with their freedom at risk as well to keep the healthcare system and the global supply chain moving during this pandemic. With a heart of gratitude, I would like to say a big thank you to all our frontline workers, the unsung heroes. Shall we give them a round of applause? The pandemic has aggravated pre-existing inequality in the labour market and set back efforts to achieve the 2030 UN Sustainable Developments Goals. There is an urgent need for greater global cooperation so that societies can get back on track to pursue social justice, in particular in protecting the most vulnerable and marginalized, end poverty, ensure equal opportunities and mitigate inequalities and dislocation. As such, the Singapore labour movement supports the DG's call to forge a Global Coalition for Social Justice. The tripartite constituents of the ILO must work together both at the national and international levels so that this global coalition can help to shape a renewed social contract with all workers, and a social contract which provides greater assurance to workers on better wages, welfare and work prospects and workplaces where every worker matters. The workplace of today is undergoing vast changes, and there is a need to reconnect with workers to understand their work-related concerns and aspirations whilst envisioning their hopes for a better future. And to this end, I am glad to mention that the Singapore National Trades Union Congress has embarked on a journey to refresh our compact with workers so that we can better understand and represent them to advance their interests. In forging a refreshed compact with workers, the SNTUC aims to co-create an economically vibrant and inclusive Singapore, where every worker can have the dignity of making a good living and improving their lives. For the upcoming years ahead of us, the SNTUC will be focusing on, firstly, scaling up our efforts on the SNTUC's initiative of Company Training Committees, strongly supported by our Government and Employers' groups, to positively impact the lives of our workers, their employability as well as the companies' competitiveness. Secondly,

doing more and better for underserved segments of our workforce, such as the PMEs as well as our youth, by becoming their trusted partners as they transit into the workforce. And thirdly, setting in place a culture of innovation within the Singapore labour movement to better serve the evolving needs of our union members. We believe that by making the SNTUC a stronger labour movement, we can be valued partners through our tripartite partners in our national efforts to build a better Singapore with a refreshed social compact to address the challenges faced by our workers. In conclusion, the SNTUC looks forward to working closely with our tripartite partners to contribute to the Global Coalition on Social Justice by sharing our experiences in refreshing our compact with workers in Singapore as well as to promote social justice to achieve the 2030 UN SDGs. Thank you, ladies and gentlemen.

Mr Neale Richmond

Government (Ireland)

I am honoured to address this distinguished gathering today and I welcome that the Director-General has chosen to focus his first report on the topic of advancing social justice. The report recalls the Declaration of Philadelphia, that social justice is reflected in the aspiration that all human beings, irrespective of race, creed or sex, 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. When we look at the world today it is clear that social justice is far from the reality of many people's lives. There are still millions of people who are discriminated against and marginalized. As we can see from the report, achieving social justice is not only reliant on but also challenged by multiple and interconnecting human activities. The volatile international context is marked by geo-strategic tensions and rising levels of inequality, with rising food insecurity, an energy crisis, climate change and escalating conflict. It is, of course, exacerbated by Russia's war on Ukraine with over 80,000 arriving into Ireland since the war began. The ILO's founding mandate, that social justice is essential to universal and lasting peace, is therefore particularly relevant today. It is also true that where there is war, social justice cannot be achieved. The Irish Government remains resolute in its solidarity and support for Ukraine. Ireland continues to welcome those displaced by Russia's war in Ukraine. This has been challenging, but the Irish people have been hugely welcoming of those forced to leave their homes and is supportive of the Government's policy in this area. We do it as it is the right thing to do. Director-General, your vision for achieving social justice chimes with Ireland's policy for international development. Our current strategy in this area, A Better World, outlines Ireland's vision of a more equal, peaceful and sustainable world. The Government is committed to increasing our development assistance so that Ireland can provide assistance to meet unprecedented need across the world and make a real contribution to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. The promotion and protection of universal human rights are at the heart of Ireland's foreign policy. The reality is that certain groups experience violations of their basic rights, especially women and girls, young people, persons with disabilities and members of the LGBTI+ community. The continued work of the ILO in addressing all forms of discrimination is therefore especially important at this time. This means advocating for policies and practices that promote equality and fairness for all. Ireland values working with the ILO on its flagship programme for social protection floors. The ILO's technical expertise in assisting Member States in developing their labour and social security systems is an essential part of the work that is required globally to reach those furthest behind. While the challenges to achieving social justice are many, we

must also be alert to the possibilities. We must be alive to green and digital transition employment opportunities and link them to training provision and in the manner that aligns with workers' needs. No doubt these fast-moving changes will be keenly discussed at this year's Conference committees, and I wish everyone well in this important work. As partners, we must work together to prepare for this new world. In that respect, I would like to acknowledge and thank our Employer and Worker representatives for their consistent engagement and support in the work of the ILO both here and at home. Director-General, your report highlights the significance and potential of the multilateral system. We welcome your ambitious vision to advance social justice and decent work through the proposed Global Coalition for Social Justice. I want to take this opportunity to reaffirm Ireland's deep and enduring commitment to the multilateral system. I look forward to next week's World of Work forum and the rich debate that will no doubt take place. Go raibh maith agaibh. Thank you.

Mr Vasyl Andreyev

Worker (Ukraine)

Dear Mr President, dear Director-General, dear delegates and guests, first of all let me congratulate the President of the Conference and you, Chairs, for the election to this high position and wish you all, and us, successful work during the Conference. We are discussing the Director-General's report of the International Labour Conference which expresses his vision of development towards social justice and decent work. It examines the continuing manifestations of injustice, inequality and insecurity, and we must counteract those now. We cannot do anything except agree with this. The report mentions Russia's aggression against Ukraine only as a component of geopolitical instability. The aggressor is deliberately and purposely shelling residential areas, hospitals, schools, churches, humanitarian corridors, critical infrastructure facilities and the electrical grid in my country. Russia has just recently destroyed the Kakhovka Dam causing the biggest manmade disaster in Europe in recent decades and endangering the lives of tens of thousands of civilians. This is a blatant denial of the mission of the ILO to promote peace through social justice. It requires a simple and transparent reaction to the aggressor. Such kind of a reaction would be the exclusion of the Russian Federation from the ILO and the closure of the Moscow ILO office which is headed and run by Russians. The war commenced by Russia is a challenge to the entire civilized world. It aggravated the cost of living crisis in all countries and worsened the position of workers in the labour market. The labour market in Ukraine suffered from the devastating war. Four million working women had to leave Ukraine. Another 6 million people became internal refugees in their own country. Millions of Ukrainians lost their jobs. Hundreds of thousands of businesses were destroyed forever. In the occupied territories, forced labour flourishes. For example, those who continue working in the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant are forced to sign employment contracts with the Russian state atomic energy corporation, Rosatom. This is a step towards increasing the risk of a nuclear disaster. Dictatorship is eliminating free trade unions, whether in Russia or in its military ally Belarus where real unionists were imprisoned for union work. It is terrible, but the so-called Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia has become a pillar of war, supported this aggression from the very beginning, assisting its government in mobilizing workers for the conscription. Even more, FNPR forces, under the armed coercion, Ukrainian workers in the occupied territories to leave Ukrainian trade unions and join their dependent structures. No business as usual possible with those non-union organizations. We cannot invite them to the ILC and work with them in the

Governing Body. Our country was not completely economically destroyed only due to the unprecedented solidarity of financial, technical and humanitarian aid from many countries of the world. The ILO, its offices in Ukraine, Budapest and Geneva, directly provided great support to organizations of workers and employers in Ukraine in 2022. With ILO assistance, we need to solve even more problems tomorrow regarding the organization of safe work, the regulation of the rights of trade unions and employers, on wages, social protection and on the format of social dialogue. But for this, we need even more support from international structures to restore peace according to the formula of President of Ukraine, Zelenskiy, to liberate the occupied territories and people held by Russia as hostages. We hope that Ukraine's progress towards EU membership will greatly assist us in adapting high international labour standards in Ukraine and its legislation, which should become a model of social justice for everyone. We are facing a huge reconstruction process in Ukraine for decades after the victory and liberation of occupied areas. This could be done properly only due to respect of international labour standards, labour rights, including meaningful labour and social clauses in reconstruction bidding, full implementation of international and national labour legislation, and intensive investment in workers' skills development. Thanks for your attention. Stand with Ukraine.

Mr Kassahun Follo Amenu

Worker (Ethiopia)

Mr President, distinguished delegates, it is a great honour to deliver a speech at this annual International Labour Conference on behalf of the Ethiopian working community and myself. This year's International Labour Conference is a special occasion for the Ethiopian delegates as it coincides with the centenary anniversary of our country's membership to the ILO. My country, Ethiopia, is the first African country to be a member of the ILO in 1923. We are proud of being a century-old member of this unique tripartite UN agency. Mr President, permit me to congratulate Mr Gilbert Houngbo, the ILO Director, for his high-quality leadership and maintaining this unique tripartite agency at its expected best level to meeting properly the challenges and the complicated dynamics taking place in the world of work. His initiation of the new and well thought project called Global Coalition for Social Justice is a testimony to this effect. In regard, I would like to let him get assured of the unwavering support of the Ethiopian working community in his leadership endeavour and wish him a success during his term of office. Obviously this Conference will give us the opportunity to address a wide range of issues of critical importance to the world of work, including a just transition, labour protection, social protection and quality apprenticeships as well as other contemporary challenges prevailing in the world of work. In this connection, I want to commend that the agendas set forth for this Conference are pertinent and properly reflect the existing crucial issues and daunting challenges the global labour market and the administration is facing. I am confident that social partners shall critically and thoughtfully discuss, reach consensus over effective ways of addressing the challenges and will come out with significant developments in the world of work. I also want to request the delegations gathered here to join the Ethiopian workers who are facing multiple challenges and uncertainties in the context of changing labour markets driven by globalization, technological advancement, climate change, demographic shifts, effects of COVID-19, worsening geopolitical tensions, and the devastation of armed conflicts. Nevertheless, with recognition of the multiple challenges, the Ethiopian workers and their organizations, in cooperation with their government and employers' associations, are managing the situation in a proactive

and resilient way by resisting, absorbing, accommodating and adapting to vulnerabilities and to recover from the effects of escalating realities of the driving factors. One among these is the peaceful settlement of the war in northern Ethiopia. The other means is the resumption of social dialogue, tripartism and bipartism, to foster and maintain a culture of respect for genuine social dialogue in order to enhance cooperation between social partners, and strengthening existing tripartite social dialogue mechanisms. In this regard, through the lens of resilience we are trying to build our ability to bounce back, to cope with and proactively prepare ourselves to manage risks. Finally, I would like to reaffirm my organization's commitment to the pursuit of the goals of the Decent Work Agenda through our sustained advocacy campaigns for the ratification and application of some key ILO Conventions that are including the establishment of a minimum wage system to protect vulnerable and marginalized workers against poverty and wage inequality, the extension of labour protection and social protection coverage for all. I thank you. God bless you all.

Mr Ghazi Hussein Hammood Al Janabi

Employer (Iraq)

Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, Your Excellency Mr Vice-President. From Baghdad, I would like to present you with my deepest and most earnest greetings. We know that the living conditions in parts of the world have been enhanced in the previous four years. However, big parts of the world populations are still living in poverty due to their government's incapacity to provide the necessary basic living standards and a systemic case of paralysis, notwithstanding the impact of globalization. As a result, we all need to work progressively towards sustainable development, even if this is happening at different paces. It is also important to safeguard what was achieved and to overcome difficulties that are leading to greater poverty and to the lack of services. This happens through the adoption of sustainable development programmes. Social protection is a human right. It allows everyone to reach a decent living standard in addition to the necessary guarantees to allow people to tap into their full potential and to provide them with the necessary social protection taking into account the necessity to adopt a better distribution of wealth to amend the market policies. Social protection is tantamount to promote the resilience of economies and populations, allowing everyone to have access to sustainable and comprehensive protection and to reap the benefits of future opportunities which goes through comprehensive social protection and a better distribution of risks and risk burdening. As a matter of fact, Iraq last year has adopted a new law on pension funds, and the ILO had played a major role in that sense, allowing us to achieve greater protection for all social factions in Iraq. The international community is also requested to look into other means that would help us bridge the financial gap related to social protection in low-income countries by committing to more capital and honouring the contributions that have not been honoured by providing more facilitated credit and allowing for greater fundraising. There is a dire need to reactivate and re-operationalize the tripartite constituents so that social justice plays a greater role in adopting policy setting and ensuring the best investment in human resources. It is also important to recognize the employers' and workers' organizations and to provide them with the necessary support so that they can, in return, provide the necessary contribution to devising common solutions through consultation with governments. As a result, these organizations are the best guarantor to renew the social contract. So reinforcing the links that exist between human development and decent work can lead to a positive and sustainable development path by promoting the educational levels,

health, food security and labour skills, by promoting productivity levels, living conditions and providing the adequate level of social protection, thus providing the necessary financial resources to low-income families. As a result, all family members could contribute to a better income. As such, children within families have greater opportunities to pursue their education and get better future horizons than their predecessors. At the same time, it is important to promote everyone's move from the informal to the formal economy because promoting formal economies is the best solution to break free from poverty, to enhance the level of productivity and to ensure the optimized use of our public facilities. In conclusion, I would like to commend the efforts exerted by the ILO in order to establish the ground rules for social justice that includes social protection and labour protection. And these are two complementary pillars to provide decent work for individuals. On behalf of Mr Aad Akkab Hussein [? 5:17] head of the industrial trade unions in Iraq, I would like to thank you all for your attention.

Mr Mohamd Feras Nbhan

Government (Syrian Arab Republic)

Your Excellency Mr President, Your Excellencies Chair and Vice-Chairs, at first I would like to extend to you my greetings and wish you success on the occasion of the 111th ILC. Wishing you successful outputs and the best possible outputs in order to achieve the ambitions of the tripartite constituents. Mr Chair, ladies and gentlemen, this version of the ILC is taking place as there are renewed ambitions about better decent work standards and better labour governance in order to promote the pillars of social justice, balanced growth and sustainable economic development, something that Syria fully supports as it seeks greater progress in that sense. Our participation in this Conference, represented by the tripartite constituents, is yet another example of how my country, an active and founding member of the ILO, is keen on achieving the SDGs, especially the goal related to decent work. And it shows how much we are attached to cooperation and collaboration to achieve the development and well-being of all peoples. Especially that the agenda of this session is quite rich and includes many topics related to social protection, just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for everyone. Perhaps the most important of which is the Director-General's report on social justice, renewing the social pact and the recurrent discussion on social dialogue and the tripartite structure towards greater social justice. Ladies and gentlemen, Syria pursues with a great deal of resolve and steadiness, and based on the cohesion between our people and leadership, on annihilating the remnants of terrorism supported internationally and regionally and on restoring peace and security all over the Syrian territories. And in order to curb the impact of the war on Syria and its negative [vgr INAUDIBLE 2:36] on the same people as well as the economic and social infrastructure, the human resources and the labour market, without forgetting the impact of the devastating earthquake. It is also important to work on ensuring the honourable and safe return of Syrian refugees who were first, as a result of terrorism, to seek other dwellings outside of Syria. This would be the main pathway to recover effective and active development prospects for all Syrians within a motivating and decent labour environment allowing everyone to participate in the development and reconstruction of their nation. This is taking place as we are enacting a number of macroeconomic and sectoral programmes that seek to promote the production cycle, the labour market and the implementation of decent work standards. Ladies and gentlemen, the Syrian labour market, as a result of some practices adopted by States funding the terrorist war in Syria and the imposition of unilateral coercive

economic measures in flagrant violation of all international instruments and in a way that hinders national Syrian efforts to achieve economic recovery and reconstruction so that the labour market has been affected by systemic terrorism, as practised by the Israeli occupation entity on the occupied Syrian territories and in the Syrian Arab Golan and the occupied territories in Palestine. In addition to the practices of the Israeli occupation entity, its racist and arbitrary measures against Syrian workers in the Syrian Arab Golan and the discriminatory measures adopted against them depriving them of land ownership, water resources and any opportunity to benefit from economic production. As a result, we would like to reiterate the fact that the Golan Heights are part and parcel of the Syrian territory, and this is an immutable and enduring reality that has been enshrined by international standards and regulations and that has been also reinforced by the will of the Syrian people to recover the full territory of the Golan Heights regardless of the aggressor's insolence. On this occasion, I would like to ask His Excellency the Director-General to exert all necessary efforts in order to ensure the practical implementation of the report's recommendations in order to provide for the full implementation of the rights of the Palestinian and Golan Heights' workers in respect of justice. The resumption of the national cooperation programme between the ILO and Syria and the re-operationalization of its office in Damascus is a positive impetus towards joint action, in spite of the economic security and political challenges facing Syrian workers in host countries. I would also like to ask everyone to support the promotion of efforts that are joined between Syria and the ILO in order to support the return of Syrian refugees from neighbouring countries. Any kind of effort or programme provided by the ILO enabling countries supporting local communities will not bear their full fruit if this is not happening in a comprehensive programme of action that is being conducted jointly with the Syrian State. In conclusion, I would wish you all success, and I would like to thank the ILO and the ILC and all those who have contributed to the organization of this session. I wish you great success. May God's prayers and blessings be upon you all.

Mr Sattar Al-Bawi

Worker (Iraq)

Ladies and gentlemen, distinguished delegates, I take this opportunity on the holding of the 111th International Labour Conference to send the warm greetings of the workers of Iraq and their organizations with the hope that this Conference be crowned with the success that we all hope for to improve the situation of the world of work and to give decent work to all. On the agenda of this Conference there are a series of technical matters that are of critical importance, inter alia, a draft to establish an international standard on industrial apprenticeships in the non-organized sector which constitutes a huge challenge for my country in particular, Iraq. Particularly when it comes to the cooperation that we have been carrying out with the regional office of the ILO in Beirut. Distinguished delegates, the recurrent discussion on the strategic objective to achieve social protection for all, in a framework of the international Declaration on the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, with the ratification of the Iraqi Parliament of this draft law on pensions and social reform, offers coverage to this category of workers who are currently marginalized or unemployed, and particularly those who work or are active in the non-organized sector and self-employed sector, giving them, too, the possibility of accessing optional social security, those who are currently not protected under the official system. We are firmly convinced that the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Ministry of Labour in my country will be taking into consideration the recommendations of the Organization in this

matter. The national programme in Iraq constitutes a vital need to find solutions for the current services and to provide solutions to those social categories who are in dire need, particularly when it comes to the vocational level and means of workers improving their skills. We are currently also working to reduce the unemployment rates. And our organization in particular has worked in a joint manner with other organization very hard to ensure that we combat the consequences of climate change which ultimately requires cooperation worldwide, particularly to find solutions to the lack of water and desertification. And finally, I wish you all a successful conference. Thank you very much.

Ms Nassima Baghli

Organization of the Islamic Cooperation

Mr President, Excellencies, distinguished delegates, I would like first to thank the Director-General, Mr Houngbo, for his first report to the Conference on the theme 'Advancing social justice' which gives a full picture of the multiple challenges the world of work is facing in the midst of converging crises that have already greatly impacted the daily life of millions of people. This situation urges us to take at all levels the necessary measures to curb this dangerous trend, where hard-won social gains are being reversed and where precarity, poverty and inequalities are gaining ground. The OIC, for its part, has embraced a strong social agenda that aims to assist its Member States in the field of socio-economic development. The OIC Programme of Action 2025 lies at the heart of this endeavour. The OIC has furthermore revised some texts in order to align them with international norms with a human-centred approach. A particular emphasis is put on women empowerment and youth. The OIC Labour Market Strategy 2025 has the objective to stimulate cooperation among Member States in addressing common labour market problems and challenges. This includes enhancing employability, protecting the workers' safety and well-being, promoting labour productivity and reducing unemployment through different actions and measurable targets. As to the OIC Labour Centre based in Baku, it aims to strengthen social development efforts, promote human capital and foster the exchange of experiences and expertise among Member States in the areas of employment and social protection. I would like also to mention that the second session of the OIC Ministerial Conference on Social Development took place on the 6th June 2023 in Cairo under the theme 'Social Justice and Social Security'. This conference aims notable to review and highlight efforts of Member States, OIC organs and institutions to eliminate violence against children, address the issue of child labour, promote the welfare and social security of the elderly and persons with disabilities and ensure their social inclusion. Speaking during the OIC Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission thematic debate on implementing business and human rights guidelines for OIC countries, held last May, the OIC Secretary-General, Mr Hissein Brahim Taha, reminded that companies need to respect human rights while exercising their business and in dealing with stakeholders, including employees, customers and communities. He highlighted that the Islamic principles guide the responsibilities of individuals and institutions towards each other and society and these principles are to be applied in the context of business and human rights. Mr President, I would like also to commend the ILO Director-General for the publication of the annual report on the situation of workers of the occupied Arab territories, which sets out once again the impossibility of achieving social justice under occupation. As the report put it, social justice requires equality, freedom and dignity. However, Palestinian workers continue to suffer under entrenched occupation. They

are facing the denial of their basic rights, continuous aggression, violence and the expansion of illegal settlements. I thank you very much.

Mr Atle Høie

IndustriALL Global Union

Distinguished President, delegates, I am speaking on behalf of IndustriALL Global Union representing more than 50 million workers in mining, energy and manufacturing sectors throughout the world. First I wish to welcome the first general discussion on a just transition at this ILC. There will be big transitions, both because of climate change and because of digitization, and these will have dramatic consequences. The only way to secure workers' rights in these transitions, creating decent working opportunities and leaving no one behind is to engage with workers through social dialogue and negotiations. The attacks on workers' rights are unprecedented, and few places more so than Myanmar and Belarus. In both these countries authorities have forcefully cracked down on free, democratic and independent unions on a massive scale. In Myanmar most unions are now banned, and many workers who were once protected by collective agreements have been fired and replaced by casual workers with no rights. More than 60 trade unionists are imprisoned on trumped-up charges, many have been forced to leave the country, and an increasing number have been kidnapped, tortured and killed. IndustriALL supports the union call for comprehensive economic sanctions against Myanmar which, in plain language, means that we call on all companies and brands doing business in the country to exit responsibly. It is not possible to do due diligence in the country, and business cannot be associated with the atrocities that are happening. We also support the demand for formal diplomatic recognition of the National Unity Government as the legitimate representative of the people of Myanmar and, of course, the release of all political prisoners. In Belarus repression of free trade unions over the past decades culminated in 2022 with the dissolution of the Belarusian Congress of Democratic Trade Unions, the BKDP, and all of its affiliates, amongst them three of IndustriALL's affiliates, and arrests and detention of more than 40 trade union leaders and activists, including leaders of all of our former and still members. In view of this escalation of repression and of free trade unionism and the persistent failure of the Belarus regime to implement the findings of the 2004 ILO Commission of Inquiry, we welcome the current discussions at the ILC under article 33 of the ILO Constitution. We urge all delegates at the Conference to support the adoption of a comprehensive set of measures to put an end to the flagrant violations of trade union and human rights in the country. The Government must immediately release trade union leaders and activists, reinstate the unions, and it must demonstrate real commitment to the implementation of the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry. President, I cannot talk to the plenary without mentioning Ukraine. I hope we all agree that the war has to stop and that the result must be that both countries retain the integrity of their borders. This cannot happen without a total withdrawal of Russian troops from the Ukrainian territory. But as we are in the ILO, we cannot but express our concern and outrage over the regression in workers' and trade union rights in Ukraine. On 19th July 2022, the Ukrainian Parliament adopted laws 5371 and 5161 despite numerous public appeals from national and international trade unions. The modification of the labour legislation means that companies with fewer than 250 employees will be able to directly negotiate pay structures with individuals, working hours and the conditions or terms of contract termination. The respect for ILO Conventions 87 and 98 must return to Ukraine for there to be a good basis to start rebuilding the country once the

war is over. Therefore, IndustriALL Global Union calls on the Ukrainian Government to withdraw all the draft laws from the agenda of the Parliament, to set up a moratorium, repeal all the anti-union legislation and anti-union laws in force, halt expropriation of trade union properties, and immediately stop intimidation and threats against union leaders. We need union unity in Ukraine for the future. President, thank you for this opportunity to address the plenary.

Mr Jose Olivera

Education International

Mr Vice-President, delegates, I speak to you on behalf of Education International, the workers' federation representing 32 million workers in the education sector. The Report of the Director-General mentions the word 'education' 20 times, particularly to emphasize the critical role that quality education must play when promoting social justice. In Paragraph 66 it stipulates that the participation of the social partners is, "Crucial for the development of systems of permanent education and learning that are efficient and anchored in equality." We, Education International, share the belief that social dialogue is key to forge public education systems that are characterized by equality and excellence, and in doing so reverse the growing process of privatizing and trading in education. However, we are struck by the fact that the word 'educator' or 'professor' is almost not mentioned at all in the 31 pages of the Director-General's report. You all know, just as I do, that without teachers and educators there is no education, and far less quality, and this has been amply demonstrated during the pandemic. To produce quality education and universal access you need a qualified group of workers that are well paid, respected and who have opportunities for career development. In Paragraph 98 of the report reference is made to the recently created high-level group of experts on the teaching profession as, "another opportunity to foster comprehensive action." The creation of this group was announced during the UN summit on transforming education in 2022. This first step is tantamount to the necessary political will to give priority to public education and increase funding for education and invest in the teaching profession. For this reason, without a doubt the role of the ILO is vital and the role it in particular plays in a high-level group of experts. We hope and trust that this group of experts will issue recommendations on the teaching profession to put together an education project rooted in social justice and protection. On this note, the teaching unions, through Education International, urge the Director-General to focus particularly on the situation and the current working conditions of teachers and the teaching assistants. An alarming growth in the dearth of teachers poses a threat to education throughout the world. The rates of those who leave the profession have skyrocketed, and the number of people who want to dedicate their lives to teaching has dropped, making it impossible to hire and retain the necessary staff that we need to strengthen our educational systems, the public systems, in a global context of extreme inequality. Mr Vice-President, distinguished delegates, the solution is obvious. There is a pressing need to give more value back to the teaching profession. And to do this, we need to increase the funding for public education, invest in educators and guarantee that they have decent working conditions with flexible working responsibilities and decent wages. In turn, it is incumbent on us to promote and protect the right of each and every student to have qualified professors and teachers, to have comprehensive curricula and be trained and educated in the right environments. To achieve all of these objectives, it is necessary for the ILO to be a leader, to guarantee through social dialogue that there are fora where unions can participate and truly impact the crafting of public education policy and to promote the

respect and full exercise of freedom of association which is being violated in an increasing number of countries. I thank you.

Ms Esther Lynch

European Trade Union Confederation

Good afternoon delegates, social partners, colleagues and some friends. We come here from the European Trade Union Confederation representing 54 million workers and their trade unions, seeking respect, respect for all workers, men, women, in all of our diversity. We are all equally worthy of protection support. We come seeking justice, justice in the form of social justice and the dire need of a new social contract to deliver that social justice in the world and in Europe. Europe must lead by example, and it is important to recognize the recent progress in promoting decent work. The EU has adopted a directive on adequate minimum wages, which identifies the principle of a threshold of decency for minimum wages to be adequate. But that directive recognizes something that all of us know. All of us know that we only get fair wages and decent work through collective bargaining, and that is why the directive sets a target of collective bargaining coverage of at least 80% of the workers by 2030 in Europe. But to ensure this becomes a reality and not a dream it needs three things. The first thing it needs is to recognize and respect and be implemented in full conformity with ILO Conventions, and this means recognizing that collective bargaining is the prerogative of trade unions. There can be no stepping backwards from that. It means recognizing our right to organize by protecting trade unions to meet with the workforce. It never means limiting or undermining our right to strike, such as is happening in the UK, and it never means convicting workers for exercising their right to strike, as is happening in Belgium. It requires all Member States everywhere and always to live up to their commitments, and that includes Ukraine, so well spoken about by my colleague from IndustriALL. And anything less simply gives cover to the worst of abuses, such as in Belarus or my own experience of intimidation when I went to Tunisia. Trade unionism is not a crime anywhere ever. International trade unionism is not a crime. But it also means taking positive steps, such as putting EU and national government spending where the decent work is. That is why the ETUC is calling for European budgets and national government budgets to only support and finance activities if they respect trade union rights and the ILO Decent Work Agenda. We call for the conclusions of this 2023 ILC to include a commitment that the achievement of the ILO Decent Work Agenda would become a universal criteria for the grant of any financial supports and that no company that refuses the right of their workforce to organize or to deny them the right to collective bargaining would be awarded a public contract. Colleagues, that is the message. Let us put the money in companies where the decent work is. Thank you.

Mr Daniel Bertossa

Public Services International

We are living through a moment of multiple compounding crises. The 30 million public service workers represented by Public Services International need a lot more than applause. They demand bold action to reshape our social and economic systems. As the DG notes, “Each crisis reveals longstanding weaknesses in our prevailing systems and policies. Beneath these fault lines lie structural inequalities.” We cannot address the obscene growth of inequality, injustice, poverty and irreparable damage

to our planet with more of the same. We agree with the DG that our global ambition must be commensurate with the scale of the challenges faced. But we will not achieve peace and prosperity though social dialogue if we are hampered by States who demand a seat at the head of the table but are not committed to the basic principles and core Conventions of the ILO. Social dialogue is meaningless without social partners who can organize freely and democratically, independent of government and employers. Social dialogue is premised on accountability, transparency and trust between the social partners. But no commitment by any government or employer can be relied upon if free trade unions are not able to independently hold them to account. All governments must respect and implement freedom of association, the right to organize, collectively bargain and the basic right for workers to withdraw their labour. The Director-General also notes how social justice requires dignity, economic security and equal opportunity. This means workers must not face discrimination or violence in the workplace or in their community. It is unacceptable that over 60 countries have legislation against homosexuality. No person is illegal, regardless of their sexuality, regardless of their origin or regardless of their political views. Social justice needs universal respect for human rights. There can be no exceptions. We urge the Director-General to give the role of public services, and the workers that provide them, the attention they deserve in any coalition for social justice. Social justice requires States to take their primary responsibility for the realization of human rights. This can only be achieved through well-funded, publicly delivered universal public services not more corporate actors driven by excessive corporate profits. COVID has shown us all that it is public services and public service workers that keep us safe and ensure our economies run. Just a few short years ago everybody applauded them and called them heroes. Yet their rewards are precarious work, low wages, unsafe work and, too often, denial of labour rights. And we will all pay the price for a COVID recovery based on more austerity, privatization and unjust solutions to sovereign debt crises. Instead, it is time for States to finally reform the broken global tax system. This means a 25% global minimum corporate tax based on global profits and with the fair distribution of taxing rights to those countries where the economic activity takes place. And we need taxes on speculation, capital gains and extreme wealth to fund new green jobs and rebuild infrastructure. And as we face new challenges from emerging technologies, we must not leave governance to corporate actors. It is time to reclaim data as a public good, limit its harmful use and build an inclusive co-governance of artificial intelligence and digital tools. Social justice requires a social redistribution of care. Caring for each other and our most vulnerable should not be a profit opportunity for corporations. We must revalue care work and redistribute it more fairly, ensuring public care for the aged, the frail, our young and our vulnerable based not on profitability but on need. Quality care requires valued care workers. They must have adequate staffing levels, fair pay, a safe working environment and basic trade union rights. And there can be no social justice without radical and swift action on the climate crisis. And this must not be left to the private actors who created the problem. Both the countries that have rapidly industrialized from fossil fuels and the corporations who have profited from this extraction must pay their fair share to mitigate the worst consequences we now all face. Workers must be involved in shaping the difficult political decisions required to build a just and sustainable transition at all levels of government, including local and regional government workers. It is time for governments to take back control of energy production and distribution, provide massive investments in public green energy and create new jobs. Social justice will only be achieved if we reinvigorate the role of the democratic state, not the market, as the key actor in shaping our collective future. Public service workers make social justice happen every single day. Navigating these

compounding crises and building a fair, sustainable and equitable world means building quality public services and supporting the workers that provide them.

Ms Melissa Barbottin

Make Mothers Matter

We thank the ILO for giving us this opportunity to emphasize the urgent need for recognizing and valuing unpaid care work in an effort to help promote social justice for mothers. We welcome the discussion on social justice and congratulate the Director-General for his report. It is regretful, however, that the concept of unpaid care work is so rarely mentioned, as well as the blatant omission of the word mother in this otherwise excellent report. At MMM, we believe that recognizing and valuing the unpaid care work is of paramount importance in helping to achieve social justice for all. Our aim is to shed light on the critical contribution made by mothers through their relentless dedication to caring for their families and communities without financial compensation. Unpaid care work, predominantly performed by women, remains an underappreciated cornerstone of our societies. Mothers, in particular, undertake an immense responsibility of care work which often goes unrecognized and undervalued in economic and social spheres. This systemic devaluation and the inequitable distribution of this essential yet unpaid work restricts women's full participation in the labour market. It is a cause of economic injustice and hardship for women, perpetuates gender inequality and impedes progress towards achieving social justice. Therefore, we propose the following measures to redress this injustice. Governments and other stakeholders must acknowledge and affirm the invaluable contributions of mothers in society. By raising awareness and highlighting the significance of unpaid family care work, we can challenge societal norms, get men more involved and combat the stigma associated with this work. Policy frameworks should be developed to ensure the economic empowerment of mothers. This includes promoting flexible working arrangements, offering paid parental and other care leave to both men and women, establishing fair wages for care-related professions, and providing adequate financial and social support for caregivers, such as tax benefits or other social security schemes. To achieve social justice, it is essential to redistribute care responsibilities more equitably amongst all members of society. Redistribution between men and women is key. Governments should also invest in high-quality, accessible and affordable childcare services, elder care support and other social infrastructure to assist mothers and other caregivers and encourage a more balanced distribution of care work. Encouraging the education and skills development of mothers is vital for their personal growth, the well-being of their family and their economic empowerment. Governments and employers should invest in programmes that enhance their knowledge, promote lifelong learning and provide opportunities for career advancement. The skills that mothers develop through the work of caring for their children and managing a home are also valuable skills that must be recognized by the labour market. Achieving social justice for mothers requires collaboration between governments, civil society organizations, employers and communities. By forging partnerships, sharing best practices and engaging in dialogue, we can foster a supportive environment that values and respects the unpaid care work performed by mothers. "There is no such thing as a woman who does not work. There is only a woman who is not paid for her work," writes Caroline Criado-Perez in her 2019 book Invisible Women. Unpaid care work is work, a fact which was recognized by the 2013 resolution of the International Conference of Labour Statisticians. Every unpaid caregiver, especially mothers, should therefore benefit from inclusive social protection and security. Last but not least,

mothers face specific discrimination linked to maternity. These include discrimination in recruitment and access to employment, in promotion and access to decision-making positions, and a motherhood wage gap which is even wider than the gender pay gap. Acknowledging and addressing this motherhood penalty in the world of work is also part of the policy package to recognize and support unpaid family care work. By embracing these measures, we can create a more just and inclusive society that recognizes and values the tireless contribution of mothers. We need to work together to transform societal norms, eliminate gender disparities, in particular in accessing decent work, and build a future where unpaid care work is valued, equitably shared and fairly compensated. Thank you.

Ms Andi Cipta Asmawaty

Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development

Dear Chairs, Director-General, distinguished delegates, good afternoon. Thank you for accommodating the space for us to deliver our statement in this plenary, and power to all of us, sisters, feminists, comrades, workers, farmers and also unions. We believe that we can go beyond what people, including the ruling class, expected 100 years ago, that women can lead, women can take on powerful positions and be decision-makers in unions and also non-unionized mobilization. Women can and should influence any strategic agenda and policies, and we will continue to do what needs to be done to agitate, mobilize and organize and also bring cross-movement solidarity to amplify the voices of grassroot women workers. Dear Chairs, APWLD is the leading network of feminist organizations and individual activists in Asia and the Pacific. Our 295 members represent groups of diverse women from 30 countries and territories in Asia and the Pacific. Over the past 35 years APWLD has actively worked towards advancing women's human rights, including labour rights and rights to decent work as well as development justice. On behalf of APWLD, I am delivering this statement to express our concern about the situation of women workers in Asia and the Pacific region and to request your attention to bring this concern to this Conference, the 111th International Labour Conference. Women workers are very clear on what we are up against. We are against the capitalist monopoly that, in the name of profit and growth, exploits women's labour and sends women into the labour force without honouring our dignity and respecting our human rights. We are against patriarchy that does not only reduce women's value as a second class but also commodifies women's bodies and works for capitalist gains for profit. For so long, corporate greed has preyed upon women workers' blood, sweat and tears, heavily relying on systemic discrimination and devaluation of women's labour power. Three years after the outbreak of COVID-19, or pandemic, we continue to witness how capitalism and globalization have operated, driven and exacerbated crises in precarious work and the significant increase in labour flexibilization that leads to growing inequality. We continue to witness the struggle of women workers in migration to get protected and enjoy their rights and the declining wage share to corporate profits. Unfortunately, we were right that globalization only deepens the systemic violation of the rights of women workers. Dear Chairs, Director-General, distinguished members, we call on all of us to commit, first, to actively promote decent work for all workers, including informal workers and migrant workers, living wage and rights to organize. Plenty of evidence shows how women workers are strenuous to claim and exercise their rights. The union activities were restricted in many factory areas where women work. In Bangladesh at least 3,000 workers were dismissed when they exercised their freedom of association and collective bargaining. Second, to

implement ILO Convention No. 190 in eliminating violence and harassment in the world of work, we must strategize for more ratification in the countries and bring women workers' situations, their experience of violence and resistance to be more prominent in the ILC discussion. Third, to ensure human rights-based policy coherence in labour policies, regulate private sectors, including the global supply chain, and hold the governments, especially in the global north countries, accountable. The extra-territorial human rights obligation of Member States must underpin the implementation of the ILO core Conventions to protect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all workers. Lastly but not least, to recognize women's leadership in the labour movement, including women in the union and non-unionized mobilization, to ensure women enjoy their full and effective democracy and political rights, including the right to actively exercise their political rights in the decision-making process, both in private and public life, by taking affirmative action and positive measures to encourage their leadership space and to eliminate the structural barriers that deepen gender injustice. Instead of recognizing the essential work of human and labour rights defenders, the authorities continue to target workers and labour rights activists under repressive laws. Consequently, the rights of workers to exercise their democratic rights, such as the right to peaceful assembly and freedom of association, have been consistently cracked down in many countries across Asia and the Pacific region. We demand social justice for human and labour rights defenders who have been detained and targeted. Again, dear Director-General, dear Chairs, dear distinguished delegation, in this privileged space, we hope we are able to strengthen our solidarity and power among us. Long live international solidarity. Long live working class women across the globe. Friday, 13 June 2023, on behalf of the Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development, Andi Cipta Asmawaty. I thank you.

Mr Maksim Pazniakou

International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations

Distinguished delegates, for me it is a big honour to be speaking on behalf of the IUF and the independent trade unions of Belarus. Belarus is a country where, since 1995, the annihilation of the workers' movement started and violations of reversal of human rights began. In three years almost all public organizations that were non-state have been destroyed, independent media considered extremist. There are almost no rights like the right to personal inviolability freedom, inviolability of private life, freedom of thought, expression, freedom of information, freedom to create civil society organizations or hold events. 15,000 people have been made political prisoners. The ILO's efforts to build cooperation with the Government was destroyed in 2022 when the Belarusian Congress of Democratic Trade Unions and all independent unions were disbanded by the regime. Now we have 41 trade union leaders and activists under criminal prosecution proceedings or have been already sentenced to up to 15 years. Some have been considered extremists. Can you imagine in the middle of Europe in the twenty-first century trade union work is considered extremism? There is Alexander Yaroshuk who used to be on the Executive Committee of IUF and the Vice-President of the International Trade Union Confederation, a member of the administrative council of the ILO. The Director-General's report of the ILO clearly says that no social justice can exist in society where there is a violation of basic human rights. And we are desperate for support from the ILO to recreate conditions for social justice and basic human rights in our country, and our government is always talking

about the need for certain rights. We are asking delegates of the ILC to support us for implementation of article 33 of the ILO's statute by the Government of Belarus. You have an opportunity here to contribute to building a system where fundamental principles of the ILO cannot be violated without consequences. It is your opportunity to support those risking their personal freedom to uphold the ILO's values, that is fighting for freedom of association. It is a chance for ILO members now to be united and show solidarity in their actions to protect the freedoms and democracy and social justice. Thank you.

Mr Henrik Munthe

Employer Vice-President (Norway)

Thank you all for your contribution to today's proceedings. As most of you probably know, there will be no plenary sitting tomorrow. But, you can be relieved, both on Monday and Tuesday there will be long plenary sittings. So then the sitting is now closed, and I wish you all a pleasant weekend. Thank you.

▶ Monday, 12 June 2023

Mr Ali bin Samikh Al Marri

President (Qatar)

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to this tenth sitting of the 111th Session of the International Labour Conference. We have a busy day ahead of us with over 70 speakers on our list of the general discussion of the Report of the Director-General and of the Chairperson of the Governing Body. This sitting will also include the presentation, discussion and approval of the Report of the General Affairs Committee, including the adoption of its resolutions. Therefore I would like to bear in mind that I will be very strict in managing of the time allocated to each speech, which cannot go beyond a strict five minutes. I am also aware that the secretariat is managing as best as possible the space limitation in the plenary room due to building renovation work in the Palais des Nations. Therefore, I kindly ask for your understanding and cooperation to make the best of this space limitation according to the instruction from the member of the secretariat in the room. In this regard, I kindly ask that you please do not move the nameplates in the room, otherwise the camera will be unable to locate the speakers. Finally, may I remind participants who are unable to enter this plenary room that they can follow the discussion from Room 26. Distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, we shall now resume the discussion of the Report of the Chairperson of the Governing Body and the Director-General following the list of speakers displayed on the screen. I would like to call on the first speaker on my list.

Mr José Abugaber Andonie

Employer (Mexico)

Good morning. I would like to wish a good morning to everyone here, to the Director of the Organization, Gilbert Houngbo, and also to the representatives of workers, employers and of the governments of the ILO members. Thank you very much for giving space to the Confederation of Industrial Chambers of Mexico at this plenary session. I would also like to give a warm good morning to all of you here present. I was very interested to read the report that was given to us by the DG of the ILO on the 5th of June, and we believe it is important that we create a coalition for social justice which comprises international organizations which work to achieve social justice, which unfortunately is missing still in many parts of the world. We have to work together so that we can improve the economic conditions and hence the lives of thousands of people who do not have social security and who are earning below the poverty level. In Mexico, we have not overcome this problem, but we are working together with the Government and the private sector so as to create more formal jobs and so as to improve pay and conditions, and in that way improve the living conditions of our fellow citizens, and this is important for us. Just a few days ago the Mexican Institute of Social Security said that on the 31st of May we had the largest number of jobs in the formal sector in our country: 21,862,909. So we are making progress here but we still have a lot to do, particularly if we take account of the fact that there are more than 58 million people working in our country, of which 55% are still in the informal sector. This is very much something that is in our national interest, but the Government and employers are working together so that we can bring workers into the formal sector. Ladies and gentlemen, as president of CONCAMIN and a delegate for the employer sector here at this assembly, I would also recognize what has been

proposed by the Director, the Global Coalition for Social Justice, which we see as an initiative which is bold. We believe it is vital that we have a realistic proposal which is based on sound foundations so that we can work on matters such as productivity, skills and the sustainability of companies. For centuries, social justice was defined by different authors in different ways. However, they all agreed with one thing: human rights and equality of opportunity. In our organization, CONCAMIN, we interpret social justice as an imperative so that we can achieve equity and equality. So we have to step up our efforts in this area so that we can improve the quality of jobs and so that people can realize their potential so as to bring a society which is more prosperous, fair and at peace. And you can rest assured that we will ourselves follow what is set out by the Director-General: job creation, social protection, public-private partnerships, skills and educational systems, innovation and entrepreneurship. I would also say that on the 23rd of May of this year CONCAMIN joined the Global Business Network on Forced Labour, and it became the first Mexican organization to join that network and only the second in Latin America. And again I would like to thank you for giving me an opportunity to be at this plenary session, and I would also repeat the undertaking of the 125 chambers of our organization for human rights, access to opportunity and fair distribution. Thank you, Chair.

Mr Luis Miguel De Camps García

Government (Dominican Republic)

Good morning, delegates to the International Labour Organization and the International Labour Conference, government representatives and workers' and employers' representatives, honoured members of the bureau. We would like to greet the Secretary-General of the ILO. Ladies and gentlemen, after years of difficulties at a world level, the International Labour Organization has been able once again to organize the International Labour Conference without any limitations on attendance and has created an important space to make progress in acting in the most important tripartite structure of the world. We welcome tripartism as the founding fundamental core of the ILO and of all of our nations. In our country, the Dominican Republic, social dialogue has been and continues to be what has made it possible to achieve strategic success at a national level. And it has been fundamental for our progress, and we think that it is going to continue to be a guarantee that we are able to achieve success in realizing our aspirations. As a demonstration of that, in labour legislation we have produced a regulation for teleworking and labour protection there that sped up during the pandemic. But also in the last 33 months we have had more than 20 pay rises, achieved with tripartite consensus, and nearly all of them above the inflation rate. During this period, we have also increased the minimum wage by more than 42% while accumulated inflation during this period was 20.95%. So that means that through tripartite social dialogue Dominicans have been able to achieve an increase of more than 21% in the real value of the minimum wage. This is an increase in the quality of life. This is social justice, and this is a strengthening of our national social fabric through dialogue. We have also seen an increase in the access of Dominicans to decent employment, freely chosen. We have seen an increase in coverage in health insurance. 98% of Dominicans now have insurance coverage, and through consensus we have also seen an increase in coverage of work-related risk insurance and there has been access provided to billions of pesos of contributions provided by workers and employers to provide pension cover. We are committed to continue strengthening people's feeling of social belonging, which is something that happens through inclusive development and participation in development through social dialogue.

There are various reform processes currently underway to achieve that on the basis of dialogue, and we hope that there will be significant advances in the near future. We are aware that it is the strengthening of the social, economic and political structure of our country that has made it possible for our country in the past, and now more than ever, to distance itself from the risks of populism which can erode what we have achieved in the past. And this is the path ahead for us to assure that we maintain our achievements, and we call on and encourage all members of this International Labour Organization to redouble our efforts to promote the results that bring us together here. Once again, we send out an alert to the ILO about the need to look at the regulation of delocalized work which promotes informality and destroys national social insurance systems. We are not suggesting nor do we intend to try to deny or counter the new realities of work, but we need to find innovative, flexible and modern solutions which will make it possible to reconcile human and economic development with the rights of workers and employers. We are not talking here about the platform economy, but we are talking about cross-border labour relationships which have been made possible through advances in communication. We see regulation here as a starting point to address that given that we are convinced that that will be less damaging to tripartism and this discussion will make it easier to find consensus. We need to start before it is too late. We should not fall into the trap of waiting and then reacting at a later stage. While we do that, millions of people would suffer and trillions of dollars would be lost to the world economy. We would finally like to take advantage of this opportunity, on behalf of the Dominican Republic, to express our thanks for the invitation to the social justice summit that the Director-General has organized. We welcome its objectives, and we would signal our interest to be involved in this ambit as well, in the construction of the measures that will provide sustainable improvement to the lives of our peoples, which they do not just want and call for but which they also deserve. Thank you.

Ms Lesly Sarahí Cerna

Government (Honduras)

Chairman, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, since the ILO adopted the Centenary Declaration in 2019, the world of work has undergone serious changes. These socio-economic consequences of COVID-19 are still affecting us, and our collective actions have to go beyond the various challenges that could well reverse the achievements made as we move towards Agenda 2030. Injustice has increased, and this has meant a lot of people have lost their jobs or they are now in the informal sector, and this is perpetuating the cycle of poverty and hopelessness, and we also do not have basic things such as health and education. Particularly the most vulnerable groups do not have access to these services, and for many years they have been systematically excluded from decent work and social protection. We have to deal with these scourges, and this means that we are going to have to spend more on social spending. And this can only be done if we have a balanced contribution from all players in society for whom solidarity and a fair taxation system has to be a moral imperative which benefits everyone and the well-being of all under national productivity. The transformations have also been new opportunities so that people can join the world of work and the labour market. There is distance working, temporary working, and there is the platform economy. And these are new systems of work, but if there is no protection though, these could make people more vulnerable and they could increase inequality. Just a year ago, on this very tribune, I am happy to say that we, led by our president, are still taking action and getting positive results so that we can bring many

thousands of Hondurans who lost their jobs, so that we can bring them back into the world of work, because of COVID and because of the various shocks we have suffered. We have undertaken certain actions, and there are very different challenges in different sectors of the economy, and particularly we have tried to concentrate on the most vulnerable and on small and medium-sized enterprises. We are also looking at how we can create jobs. We have tried to eradicate child labour. And here, thanks to what we have sown, we have now managed to also glean various advantages here both in terms of workers and international cooperation. We have a system which is based on a much more humane approach which is based on solidarity and which is closer to what we need in terms of jobs, social security and decent work amongst the population. We have a system in place for the next ten years and we want to bring in a job which is decent and which respects the basic labour rights and which brings social justice to all. With the support of friendly countries, we have acted in the Government as a link between workers and companies. And we also have a system for temporary work abroad and this has helped many workers find work and decent pay. Not only does this work to promote the principles of this organization but it also helps us work together for the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. We have to make sure that what we do now does not jeopardize future generations. For the first time in the history of our country, we have got a clear snapshot of the prevalence of child labour. This was a national survey that we carried out, and thanks to this we can be more effective in our work to reduce child labour. For many years the state perpetuated injustice with indigenous peoples and those of African descent, and we also have to make sure that we respect their background, their customs and traditions. So we have now welcomed a direct contact group under Convention 169 on indigenous peoples, and the undertakings that we have entered into have now been something which builds bridges so that we can also cover social provision, jobs and labour inspection. And also we have worked in the Mosquito areas. So it is important that we also look at the Global Coalition for Social Justice, and we would like to thank the ILO Director Houngbo for the work which they have done. I would like to thank him for his wise management in difficult times, and I can tell you that we are very keen to be part of constructive dialogue and be very much involved in these ongoing efforts. Thank you very much.

Mr Ismael Drullet Pérez

Worker (Cuba)

Good morning. Mr President, allow me to congratulate you on your election. Honoured delegates and guests, Your Excellencies, I bring fraternal greetings from Cuban workers and from the organization that I represent, the Workers' Central Union of Cuba, CTC, which looks back on a rich history of struggle in defence of the rights of workers and for the highest level of social justice for everyone. Director-General, economies are suffering the negative impact of an increase in poverty, unemployment, social injustice and the loss of workers' rights that had been conquered over the past through which a new world economic order is being imposed. Only with global and regional integration, fair distribution of raw materials and full respect for human and labour rights will we be able to save humankind. For Cuba, the economic trade and financial blockade that is imposed on us by the United States continues to be the main obstacle for social and economic development and is the main weapon that is being used to affect the stability of the country. At the moment, my people are going through difficult times. The economy has been suffering very much. The United States has strengthened its strategy of aggression against Cuba with its inclusion in the

illegitimate list of countries sponsoring terrorism. However, the majority of our workers and our people have not just been resisting these attacks but participating creatively in solutions to the most serious problems. The year 2022 was an extremely difficult year for Cuba. We were victims of two very big fires and we saw the destructive impact of a serious hurricane that affected the west of the country. In this context, within the country there were three elections in the course of only six months which showed the trust of the people in the emancipative project of social justice, expressing their unlimited loyalty to the most genuine values that arise from our history enriched by generations of Cubans. We would like to thank our friends around the world and those who at such difficult times came with messages of confidence, of fraternity and hope, and above all confidence in the final victory of the people of Cuba. Recently we celebrated the 60th anniversary of international cooperation and of the Cuban medical brigades. More than 605,000 people have represented Cuba in 165 countries across the whole world, including developed countries. At the moment there are 57 medical brigades involving more than 22,000 people providing solidarity and support across the world. We, Cubans, confirm our immutable commitment before all nations to continue to hold high the flag of international solidarity, honouring the humanist legacy of emancipation of the leader of the human revolution when only 20 years ago he said, “Doctors and not bombs.” We are fighting for a different world of equal rights and duties for all, calling for peace and cooperation, solidarity and dialogue for the solution of conflicts. Thank you very much.

Ms Barbara Socha

Government (Poland)

Mr President, Mr Director-General, ladies and gentlemen, I would like to thank the Director-General that, in these difficult times of compounding crises when we face unjustified Russian aggression against Ukraine, rising food and energy prices, persisting impacts of the COVID-19 crisis, climate change and more, he invites us to discuss social justice and address social injustice. The global community should underline the need to build a just world. A Global Coalition for Social Justice, based on dialogue, international and interregional one, dialogue between individual countries and finally social partners, is a step in the right direction. In his report, the Director-General explains that social justice is about universal human rights and capabilities, equal access to opportunities, just transition and fair distribution. I would also add that it is about solidarity among generations, in the societies and among countries. A just society supports families in their quest to bringing up future generations. A lack of work-life balance, especially for parents with caring responsibilities, has a negative impact, especially on women’s employment. The significant number of women act as informal carers. Better use of work-life balance measures by both parents will have a positive effect in reducing the amount of unpaid family care work carried out by women and leave them more time for paid work. Therefore, in Poland we introduced the new regulations on leave and flexible work arrangements to the Labour Code. Additionally, to enable parents, in particular mothers, to return to the labour market and to support a sound development of little children, the Polish Government undertakes measures such as programme Toddler+ providing care to children under three. In the result, the number of children covered by institutional care increased three times in the last seven years. Decent work is a concept inherent in well-being and social justice. Equal opportunities in access to a good and well-paid job depends on the level of education and the possibility of supplementing qualifications throughout life. The Director-General raised the importance of issues of lifelong learning, employment

assistance offered by employment services and active labour market policy as well as social protection. We share the statement about the necessity and the universality of these key elements for social justice. Justice and decent work are guiding principles for our policy. We implement a wide range of instruments in the employment policy, which are also conducive to acquiring qualifications and skills on the labour market. The National Training Fund was established in Poland to support companies in the process of training both employers themselves and their employees in accordance with the needs of the market, building the potential of professional mobility. After the COVID-19 pandemic, safe and healthy working conditions gained importance in advancing social justice. This was one of the reasons to add the right to a safe and healthy working environment to the fundamental principles and rights at work during last year's Conference. The Polish Government supports all actions aimed at improving the situation in terms of ensuring healthy and safe workplaces for all employees. This will contribute to reducing the number of accidents at work, including fatal and serious ones, and the number of occupational diseases, thus reducing the costs of these accidents and diseases. This year, during the World of Work Summit, the Conference will be forging a Global Coalition for Social Justice. We lend our strong support to bridging the global inequalities gap in all its dimensions. The best way to reduce these inequalities seems to be by accelerating the implementation of the UN Agenda 2030. Peace, justice and inclusion are key enablers for sustainable development. They are also crucial for strengthening trust between people and institutions at national and international levels, the so-called social contract. A new social contract is indispensable to meet the need to rebuild trust between and amongst countries, institutions and people. Certainly, the Coalition is an important opportunity to integrate social dialogue more firmly into a multilateral system and to attain the social dimension of sustainable development. I wish you, Director-General, all success in this endeavour. Thank you very much.

Mr Richard Ramoeletsi

Government (Lesotho)

The President of the Conference, Vice-President, the Director-General of the ILO, distinguished delegates, I wish to convey greetings to you all from the Kingdom of Lesotho. I also once more congratulate the Director-General for assuming his position and making history in our organization as the first African to lead the ILO. I had the honour and privilege to address him at a SADC consultative meeting which was facilitated by the Director of the Decent Work Team in Pretoria. I wish to thank him for submitting a well-crafted maiden report, brief and yet rich and relevant with content on the issues that the ILO and its Member States should be seized with in order to build back better after the COVID-19 pandemic which ravaged the world. Since its establishment in 1919, the ILO contributed to building the economies of the world which had been destroyed by World War I. Indeed, during these times such as this, we should not lose sight of the fact that workers need more protection than ever. As such, the DG's vision on advancing social justice and decent work for all will build on the foundation that had already been laid towards attaining universal peace as opposed to reinventing the wheel. In the interest of time, allow me to share my thoughts with you on the salient issues in the report on how social justice can be advanced. First, allow me to address the issue of ensuring equal opportunities for all. Ladies and gentlemen, it is only when we understand that if we do not enable our people to have equal opportunities that we perpetuate inequalities which will fuel exploitation of those who are at the grass roots. I therefore support the effort made by the ILO to

enhance the capacity of the Member States in developing and implementing pro-employment and macroeconomic policies which will promote the creation of decent jobs. Coincidentally, the report has alluded to increasing informal economy as well as care work because of shrinkage of formal jobs. Mr President, the report also points to the decent work deficits and failure to recognize the value of care work, thereby rendering the most vulnerable to be more exposed to exploitation than ever. Indeed, in my own country the manufacturing sector, which used to employ a number of women, is shedding jobs due to a shortage of orders from the buyers. It is in this respect that we have to intensify employment strategies such as apprenticeship programmes that will equip the youth with employable skills to enable easy entrance into the labour market. Protecting workers through improved legislation, efficient law enforcement and efficient dispute resolution is more critical than ever. Our Government's political will in this regard, is evidenced by the recent ratification of Conventions 151, 187 and Convention 190. For the first time in the history of our country, the Government has resolved to give public servants full rights to freedom of association and collective bargaining as well as full protection of labour standards. It is for this reason that I support the Director-General's call for a well-resourced labour administration system. The historic underfunding of ministries of labour should be discouraged. Last but not least, social security should be cherished as a safeguard which helps to provide workers with income security in times of need. For this reason, Chairperson, I wish to inform you that I am planning to support portability of social security benefits for Basotho migrant workers in order to ensure that their income and food security are maintained, thereby ensuring that during their retirement they can still live decently. To conclude, I wish to pledge my support to the ILO as well as the UN team to ensure that all outstanding bills on working conditions, occupational health and safety, and social security are finalized under the theme of a speedy service delivery coined by the Government of Lesotho and the UN Cooperation Framework. I thank you for your attention.

Mr Utoni Nujoma

Government (Namibia)

Mr President, I am honoured to speak on behalf of Namibia on the reports of the Director-General. We congratulate you and the Worker and Employer Vice-Chairs upon your election to steer this International Labour Conference. I thank the Director-General, Gilbert Houngbo, for his brilliant exposition of the components, challenges and the way forward in the quest for social justice. Mr President, the Republic of Namibia was established in 1990 with the objective to achieve social justice for its people after their long and bitter struggle against colonialism and apartheid. Although much progress has been achieved since independence to improve the lives of our people, Namibia still faces many of the challenges identified by the Director-General, including poverty, high youth unemployment, extreme inequality, a high level of informality and the effects of climate change. Our determination to overcome these challenges has been evidenced by accelerated action to conclude current programmes for social justice and to expand the Namibian economy into areas that create employment and support sustainable enterprises. The Namibian Government will introduce this year a wide range of amendments to the labour, social security and employment equity legislation to align with the new dynamics of the labour market, to strengthen labour institutions, and to expand labour protection of informal economy workers. The reforms include the expansion of social security protection, an appellate arbitration tribunal and stronger maternity protection. Namibia will finalize

comprehensive legislation on occupational safety and health and ratify relevant ILO OSH Conventions in order to effectuate the fundamental principle and right to a safe and healthy working environment. In addition, major projects to reduce inequality and improve household income will be finalized this year, including introduction of the national minimum wage, establishment of the social security National Pension Fund and design of the Unemployment Insurance Fund. Mr President, Namibia is working all out with the ILO and the UN Resident Coordinator to become a pathfinder country in the United Nations Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions. We expect to be able to demonstrate that with political will, whole-government coordination, innovation and courage, it will be possible to significantly and measurably reduce youth unemployment, to make an impact in closing social protection gaps and to entrench employment creation, including skills development and social protection of our people at the centre of our national policymaking and planning. In this regard, Namibia welcomes the anticipated adoption by the Conference of a new international labour standard on apprenticeships. Namibia has taken on the bold project of becoming a global hub for the production and export of green hydrogen and ammonia and recently signed an ambitious international feasibility and implementation agreement. This project and its spinoffs can contribute to employment creation and enterprise development at home. Namibia, in collaboration with the German Government, has already embarked upon a five-year scholarship programme for Namibian Youth for Green Hydrogen. Mr President, Namibia embraces the Director-General's vision of a Global Coalition for Social Justice. The global coalition can elevate social justice as a global imperative that can be achieved with the utmost multilateral cooperation and policy coherence. We agree that full involvement of employers' and workers' organizations in the coalition must be ensured and that tripartism and social dialogue must be an integral part of the multilateral efforts to build the human-centred future to which we aspire. Finally, Namibia expresses its profound unhappiness that the situation of Palestinian workers in the occupied territories remains intolerable. We call for immediate meaningful dialogue to achieve a two-state solution and to establish social justice for Palestinian workers. Merci beaucoup.

Ms Brenda Mwika Tambatamba

Government (Zambia)

The President of the 111th International Labour Conference 2023, Director-General of the International Labour Organization, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen. Zambia joins the ILO global fraternity in welcoming the ILO Director-General's report that emphasizes the need to forge a coalition for social justice to fight growing inequalities during his address to this Conference whose theme is advancing social justice. This is particularly so in the wake of the Fourth Industrial Revolution which promises a radical transformation of production methods, rapid demographic changes and the imperative need to decarbonize the economies, hence the focus on green jobs and sustainable enterprises. To ensure a fair and just transition, the focus of Zambia's eighth National Development Plan is on economic transformation and job creation in the agriculture, mining, tourism, energy and manufacturing sectors. Investments therefore continue to be made in information and communication technology, ICT, as well as science and technology to support digital transformation and innovation, including the digital platform economy. All these interventions will contribute to the creation of decent jobs, particularly for the youth whose unemployment levels are disproportionately higher. Mr President, post COVID-19,

Zambia is mindful of the need to place social justice as the key cornerstone of national economic recovery. In so doing, we will ensure that the future we forge for our children, future generations, is one which is human-centred. In this regard, we look forward to the development and launch of a global coalition on social justice in the furtherance of the Decent Work Agenda upon which the mandate of the ILO rests. In order to enhance distributive justice in the pay system in Zambia, as an example of what we are doing, my government last year enacted into law an act to provide for the establishment of the Emoluments Commission with the mandate of rationalizing and harmonizing conditions of service across the public sector to ensure fairness, equity and justice in the pay system. This complements the Employment Code Act to promote non-discrimination, equal pay for work of equal value. Mr President, on the report on equal access to opportunities for employment and productive activity, Zambia is committed to providing equal access to employment for all in line with the republican constitution, employment laws, ILO Convention No. 122 and Sustainable Development Goal No. 8 which places emphasis on decent work and economic growth. The third dimension encompasses the broader notion of fair distribution, Mr President, whose primary focus is a just share of the benefits of economic growth, with attention to the most disadvantaged or vulnerable in our society. In this regard, Mr President, the Government of the Republic of Zambia has prioritized the country's decentralization agenda by decentralizing functions from central government to the subnational levels to enhance public service delivery. Mr President, this process has been coupled with an increase in allocation of resources from a paltry $80,000 in the 2021 budget to $1.5 million this year, 2023, for each of the 156 constituencies in the country to ensure we deliver on justice. As I conclude, Mr President, I call upon the ILO not to relent in the pursuit of decent work through social justice and dialogue and to protect the ILO's distinctive comparative advantage which is tripartism. Mr President, I thank you.

Ms Laura Peña Izquierdo

Employer (Dominican Republic)

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. As representative of the employers of the Dominican Republic, allow me to recognize the contributions of the International Labour Organization to this quest for sustainability and well-being in our countries. At the same time, we would like to highlight the pertinence of the Global Coalition for Social Justice, the Director-General's initiative, based on the principles of this house, whose aim is to unite our efforts to reduce inequality through public policies based on the individual. In this sense, we think that the coalition proposed has the strength of being based on social dialogue, which is the ideal consultation mechanism for interchange between governments, workers and employers seeking pluralist and stable societies. And we would contrast that at the same time with ideas of class confrontation, the confrontation of the interests between classes which have to be superseded. Similarly, we recognize the contributions of the International Organisation of Employers seeking the creation of an appropriate economic environment through a system of free enterprise which provides value for everyone. We are particularly interested in the issues being addressed at this Conference which make it possible to discuss social and labour issues that are important for all of us as apprenticeships, the transition to an environmentally sustainable environment, social protection and, as is traditional, the strengthening of compliance with rights in the Committee on the Application of Standards. In a vulnerable, uncertain, changing and ambiguous situation, such as that that we are going through today, the contributions of the ILO have to aim to seek tripartite consensus on the measures and policies which

will create more and better jobs and, of course, more and better sustainable enterprises. ILO actions embedded in this framework will enable us to achieve the objectives that we have all set out and to achieve the objectives set out in the sustainable development objectives and the materialization of the Global Coalition for Social Justice. We hope that contributions such as we have been talking about will provide solutions for the distortions that we see in the labour market in the Dominican Republic where we have a 58% level of informality, approximately, and labour legislation has failed to keep up over the past 30 years since it was passed. It has become rigid and is not adjusted to the country's social and economic situation and the requirements of development that have grown over time, particularly looking at technology and everything that is implied by artificial intelligence, automation and robotics. On this point, the employers of the Dominican Republic plead in favour of, are promoting and are actively involved in the modernization of the Labour Code and its flanking standards so that the expectations of sustainability, well-being, competitiveness, productiveness and progress are reflected in it. This is a priority for us. We trust the strength of social dialogue that we can see in our country to come to balanced and fair provisions which will guarantee the rights of our enterprises and our associates and, at the same time, return competitiveness to we who create prosperity. As we have said on many different occasions, we reiterate our commitment to promote such an agreement through dialogue and negotiation. Finally, allow me to recall that lasting peace can only exist when well-being is promoted with justice. This well-being has to be based in the true respect for policy at a public and private level which will promote respect for institutions, transparency and the creation of formal employment in socially responsible and environmentally sustainable enterprises. We reaffirm that tripartite consensus requires and depends on the consolidation of the employers' sector as an essential factor, indispensable to create prosperity and stability in all nations. Thank you very much and have a good day.

Mr Adama Kamara

Government (Côte d'Ivoire)

Chair, on behalf of the Ivorian Government at this 111th Session of the International Labour Conference, I would like to congratulate the Director-General of the ILO for the reference of his report 'Advancing social justice'. This sets out the four dimensions of social justice which are respect for human rights and access for all to those rights, equal access to employment and all activities that produce revenue and productivity, equitable share of the fruits of growth and also the involvement of technological development, environmental and demographic development. We have to look at decent work and social justice and how they go together as well as looking at structural reforms which the world of work aspires to so as to boost the resilience of our societies. For my part, it is clear that if social justice were a case at a court, the judge would be social dialogue and the lawyers of the parties would be the Heads of State and their action is to favour harmonious development between nations. And therefore this is very much the idea between our development policy, which has been brought in by His Excellency Alassane Ouattara, President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire. And this is a vision which is based on our programme 'Côte d'Ivoire based on solidarity', which brings together these four dimensions of social justice so that all in the country can benefit from this at the very heart of state activity. We are looking at the accelerator role played by social protection, and we have decided that this will become the third religion of our country so that we can make quick headway in this area, [vgr INAUDIBLE 3:14] social justice for all, and a number of actions have been

undertaken by our government to do this. We now have new social protection systems such as universal sickness coverage, the coverage for self-employed workers and also a retirement system based on a fully-funded system so that we can also look at how we can extend social protection so that we can make good the injustice for those who are indigent and those who are self-employed. We want to make good those shortcomings. We are also looking at how we can work through monetary transfer. And thanks to these monetary transfers for the most poor, 227,000 households have been able to benefit and increase their income. We are also looking at the regulatory environment, and we now have Order 2021 which has amended our Labour Code. From 2019 to 2023 we have ratified two Conventions and two essential Protocols, and these are very much in line with the basic rights of work. We have also created technical committees for vocational guidance and retraining for the public and the private sector, and we also have to help those who are disabled to get into the world of work through provision of funding. We have also looked at how we can work with the private sector. We have upgraded the minimum wage on two occasions in ten years. And in the public sector, in over five years we have signed two social agreements so that there are certain advantages in those agreements for those who work for the state. And all these actions mean that our president has been a major mover of social justice in our country, in a country where social dialogue is becoming consolidated more every day. And therefore I am very happy to thank the ILO for its support, thanks to which we have strengthened social dialogue and tripartite dialogue in our country and we are able to provide solutions to the most vulnerable amongst our workers, particularly migrants and, in particular, domestic workers. Chair, may I conclude by saying that I would like to say that a world coalition is more than ever necessary so that we can accelerate mechanisms to fight against social injustice and so that we can have better coordination between national policies. And therefore it is quite right that Côte d'Ivoire recognizes and welcomes the high-level summit on social justice which is to be held as part of this Conference. Thank you, Chair.

Mr Kyeung-Soo Yang

Worker (Republic of Korea)

Chair, Vice-Chairs, distinguished delegates, 'Advancing social justice' is the title of the first report from Director-General Mr Gilbert Houngbo. When it was established amongst the ruins of the war, the ILO declared that universal and lasting peace can be established only if it is to be based on social justice. The reality of today, more than 100 years later, recalls the Organization's raison d'être. At a global scale, we have seen an increase in uncertainty, inequality and insecurity, which are high and rising. I welcome the Director-General's proposal that we discuss advancing social justice, the cornerstone of the Organization. The Director-General's report provides a definition of social justice to set out our shared goal in detail. Last May, the 1st of May 2023, the late Yang Hoe-dong, a KCTU member in the construction sector, set himself on fire as a demonstration of his dignity and self-respect. In Geneva, Worker delegates from different countries are now wearing black ribbons to commemorate him. He met an untimely death, and the reason for his self-immolation is deeply disturbing and outrageous. The late Mr Yang and his colleagues sought to improve poor conditions in the construction sector and on building sites through the trade union movement. Construction sites in Korea are extremely hazardous. Two fatalities are reported every day. There are no adequate toilets and break rooms provided. Wages are systemically delayed. If people cannot work at weekends or in the rain, they simply do not get paid. The Korean construction workers union that was working to improve their working

conditions was labelled as organized criminals by the Government. Collective bargaining is considered to be a crime of coercion and intimidation. So far 1,200 construction union members have been summoned and interrogated by the police and 19 of them are in jail. The late Mr Yang left a suicide note saying that his self-esteem could not tolerate this. Amazingly, the destruction of dignity that led to his death is being perpetrated in the name of the rule of law, which the Director-General's report presents as one component of social justice. Trade union activities are being carried out in the same way as they ever have been under the same legislation as ever. But a different application of the legislation by the new government has made all previously legitimate activities illegal. According to the Government, the rule of law in labour relations means obedience to the law by both employers and workers. However, no employers are being summoned and arrested. This is not the rule of law but the use of law as a means of repression. The Director-General's report reaffirms fundamental principles and rights at work as enabling rights for social justice. However, the distorted rule of law is working backwards to destroy fundamental rights. The Government has required trade unions to submit their accounting records in a detail that goes beyond what is required by the law. When they refuse, the Government fines them and cuts off support. This is unfair, unjust interference. The Government excludes the KCTU and the FKTU from committees discussing social security by dismissing or not appointing the members nominated by these confederations. Moreover, FKMTU General Secretary Kim Jun-young, a worker member of the Minimum Wage Council was detained after being attacked by the police and left bleeding while staging a sit-in protest for subcontracting workers' rights. The Government is issuing correction orders on collective bargaining agreements and union constitutions while unilaterally pushing legislative changes to regulations on working hours and the wage system, excluding trade union participation. Fundamental principles and rights at work are being destroyed by the Government. In this situation, the KCTU is going to stage a general strike in July to stop the Government's policy attacking workers and neglecting people's livelihood, taking steps backward in democracy and threatening peace. The KCTU is demanding the resignation of the President. However, the Government will declare this strike illegal because current legislation considers a strike against government policy as an illegal strike. Korea ratified Conventions 87 and 98 in 2021 but no implementation measures have been passed. There is a bill to revise the Trade Union Act pending before the National Assembly. This bill reflects only a fraction of the many recommendations that have repeatedly been issued by the ILO Committee on Freedom of Association and the UN CESCR. But the Minster for Labour has expressed his objections to the bill, and the ruling party and the President are threatening to veto it. This amounts to a repudiation of the ILO Conventions. The supervisory mechanism on the implementation of Conventions 87 and 98 will begin this year. Thorough monitoring and supervision are urgently required. Not only in Korea but also in Belarus, Hongkong, Myanmar and Peru, workers are in jail and facing criminal sanctions for taking the leading role in advancing social justice. Advancing social justice is a common goal of all ILO constituents but is not a crime. Stopping repression and releasing the imprisoned workers is a starting point for advancing social justice. Thank you.

Ms Florence Bore

Government (Kenya)

The President of the 111th Session of the International Labour Conference, Your Excellencies, colleague ministers, representatives of workers and employers,

distinguished delegates. Kenya welcomes the Director-General's report on advancing social justice, which is timely as the world grapples with multiple and interconnected crises which threaten to undo the gains so far realized in our common effort to fulfilling the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2030. The current situation brings to mind the origins of the ILO, its mandate and the key role it has played at critical junctures in its pursuit for social justice. The driving force then and today remains the same: to secure the well-being of all humanity without discrimination. This call was reaffirmed in the 2019 Centenary Declaration and whose direction we seek to advance. Mr President, the people of Kenya, in recognizing the desire for a social and just government based on essentials of human rights, equality, freedom, democracy and rule of law, participated in making, adopting and enacting a new constitution in 2010. The constitution expressly charges implementation of the Bill of Rights as a fundamental duty of the state and every organ of state to observe, respect, protect, promote and fulfil the provisions of our constitution. Article 41 recognizes industrial relations rights which underpin every person's right to fair labour practices, fair remuneration, reasonable working conditions, right to form, join or participate in activities and programmes of trade unions and employers' organizations, the right to strike and the right to engage in collective bargaining. This is key in realization of socio-economic rights that have been established in article 43. In line with this, Kenya has ratified 52 ILO Conventions and continues to make efforts to fully domesticate their requirements. Mr President, these constitutional imperatives are a driving force to advancing social justice and attainment of the four pillars identified in the report. That is a) universal human rights and capabilities, b) equal access to opportunity for employment and productive activity, c) fair distribution and just share of benefits, and d) just transition. Like many Member States of the ILO, Kenya is grappling with socio-economic and environmental challenges such as high inflation, youth unemployment, environmental degradation and informality. To strengthen governance structure and ensure policy coherence in the labour sector, the Government of Kenya, with the support from social partners, initiated a reform process of the National Labour Board and other labour administrative institutions. It has also taken up the mantle as a lead in labour law and policy reviews. Mr President, the Director-General's report complements the current government policy direction articulated in the bottom-up Economic Transformation Agenda 2022-2027. This policy has a human-centred approach and aims at ensuring that markets work for all, targeting the masses and vulnerable categories in society. Hence, it has created pathways to improve abilities and access to agriculture, promote micro, small and medium enterprises, access to affordable housing and settlement, as well as healthcare, digital superhighway, environment and climate change. Mr President, Kenya, being aware of the important role of employment in securing material means and enabling individuals to lead dignified lives, has established various affirmative action funds to promote entrepreneurship among young persons, women, persons living with disability and other vulnerable groups. It has also increased funding of social protection programmes which include social insurance to workers in the informal economy, cash transfer programmes for orphans and vulnerable children, older persons, persons with disability and microfinance to ensure that no one is left behind. Mr President, we have embarked on an ambitious programme of labour migration to facilitate employment of many young unemployed Kenyans beyond our national borders. The Government of Kenya is keen to enter into bilateral labour agreements to ensure fair and ethical recruitment and orderly and safe migration. We continue to put emphasis on building employability skills and competencies for our people, for both local and international labour markets. We have revitalized the technical and vocational education and training, TVET, centres across the country and promote recognition of

prior learning. We are also working on an integrated labour market information system for improved access to labour market actors. Mr President, as I conclude, let me state that the Kenyan Government's efforts to address social justice in the world of work are expressed comprehensively in the third-generation Decent Work Country Programme 2021-2024 which was launched in November 2021. The pillars of the programme, which are human capital development, sustainable economic growth, and social dialogue and tripartism, will go a long way in eliminating deficits to decent work. We thank the ILO Office for its commitment and indomitable support to Kenya to date. Finally, on behalf of the Government of Kenya, we join the Director-General in the call to all governments, workers and employers to form the global coalition to achieve these global goals. Kenya chooses to be at the vanguard and commits to use all means necessary to advance social justice. Colleagues, it is time to act decisively, and together we must stand up for what is right. Social justice for all. Asante sana, thank you very much, merci beaucoup.

Ms Margarida Adamugy Talapa

Government (Mozambique)

President of the Conference, Director-General of the ILO, representatives of governments, of employers and of workers, ladies and gentlemen. It is a great honour for me to be here to speak on behalf of the Republic of Mozambique and of the delegation accompanying me and for myself, and I would like to express my gratitude for the privilege that has been given me to address this august assembly. Allow me particularly to salute His Excellency Filipe Jacinto Nyusi, President of the Republic of Mozambique, who has been selflessly working to direct the country in a difficult context characterized by the frequent occurrence of extreme climatic events and terrorism in some districts of the province of Cabo Delgado. I would like to take advantage of this opportunity to greet the Director-General of the ILO, Gilbert Houngbo, and his team and congratulate them on the work of this prestigious organization. Director-General, I would like to congratulate you on the subject chosen for your report entitled 'Advancing social justice', which you address in a clear-minded way setting out its four dimensions, namely universal human rights and capabilities, equal access to opportunities, fair distribution and just transition in the construction of resilient societies and economies. Addressing these four dimensions shows us that it is necessary to redouble the efforts that we make to guarantee the consolidation of the objectives set out when this organization was founded, spelled out in the universal Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and in other similar instruments in a world that is currently being affected by various kinds of events which have affected in particular developing economies, determining the situation in which we attempt to create more employment opportunities. Ladies and gentlemen, since 2017 the Government of Mozambique has been implementing an employment policy which is based on the materialization and realization of its governmental programme. The fourth pillar of this policy prioritizes the promotion of decent, productive and sustainable work, focussing on the respect for workers' rights. The Government's commitment to speed up the implementation of the employment policy has been demonstrated by the creation of institutions which work in a coordinated way to make this global objective viable, namely the creation of the Secretary of State for Youth and Employment which concentrates on the implementation of active employment measures, particularly addressing young people; the national authority for vocational training, which concentrates on making sure that technical and professional education is relevant and appropriate; and the Labour Market Observatory, whose focus is on

producing information about the labour market. The fight against the worst kinds of child labour is also an ongoing work with tangible results which have arisen from the formulation and implementation of an appropriate action plan which has prioritized awareness-raising and training for the relevant players in the area. Ladies and gentlemen, Mozambique reiterates its commitment to continuing to promote decent work, and as a demonstration of that there is a revision of the Labour Code. This has already been submitted to the Assembly of the Republic. As a follow-up to the decision taken by this house last year integrating Conventions 155 and 187 on health and safety at work into the fundamental Conventions, our government has already submitted a proposal to ratify this to our parliament. In social security, we are continuing to extend it to workers that were in the past not covered. I would like to wind up by taking advantage of this opportunity to thank the ILO for the activities that it had been involved in in training our people, for the technical assistance they provided and their help in working on the actuarial study and the study on the model to fix the minimum wage and in the mobilization of resources to implement the project of MozTrabalha II, our labour project which aims to promote the implementation of our employment strategy. I hope that this Conference will work smoothly, and I wish all of us success in our work in this honourable house. Thank you very much.

Mr Mohammed Al Obaidly

Government (Qatar)

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate. Excellency Mr President, distinguished Vice-President, Excellencies, ministers, heads of delegations, ladies and gentlemen. At the outset, it gives me pleasure to extend our sincere congratulations to you, sir, for your election to preside over the 111th Session of the ILC. We wish you success in all your endeavours and that this Conference would be able to attain its objectives. Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I would like to extend my thanks to His Excellency the Director-General, and we commend the excellent choice of the theme of the report, which is advancing social justice for decent work, and that in view of the unprecedented challenges that are faced by the world of work today as a result of the various economic and social crises. Those crises have led to a climate of uncertainty. It was diagnosed very accurately in the Report of the Director-General which sheds light on the vital role played by the ILO during the current stage. We would like in this respect to underline the importance of strengthening the role of the ILO towards more cooperation and partnership along with efforts from governments and employers' and workers' associations alike. And that in order for us to define our priorities and formulate the policies that would enable us to determine the framework of work and labour nationally and internationally so that we could promote further social justice and to encourage decent work and social protection. Excellency Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, in order to attain the objectives of our vision in Qatar 2030, the state has continued with all its efforts in order to step up the capacities of our labour force and develop the skills of the labour force so that the skills would be acquired in response to the various changes that are taking place in the world of work. And this would enable us to move to a more competitive economy that is predicated upon knowledge. Also, we have made every effort to encourage the youth in Qatar, of both the sexes, to engage in entrepreneurship and to develop small and medium enterprises. In addition, we have attracted skilled migrant labour. The State of Qatar, during the past period, has introduced major reforms in the Labour Code and, in a very short space of time, Qatar was able to attain significant results and take positive steps towards the strengthening of decent work and in order to support the principles of

labour to make them in line with international standards. That was recognized by many human rights organizations and UN system organizations. In this respect, we would like to underline that the State of Qatar it committed to continue building upon the achievements that we have already made. Currently, we are cooperating with our international and local partners in order to strengthen those achievements and to complete the effective implementation of the legislations that have been recently enacted as well as the formulation of a strategy for sustainability, drawing upon lessons learned. Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, we have also read with attention the report of the DG on the situation of the Arab workers in Palestine and the occupied territories. We see how much suffering they are exposed to because of the expansion of the settlements and because of closures and restrictions of movement, and that in addition to the compounded economic crisis. And therefore we call upon the ILO to continue making efforts to put an end to the suffering of the Palestinian workers and to promote the implementation of all international resolutions towards ending the occupation. In conclusion, I would like to thank once again His Excellency the President and the Vice-Presidents as well as the Director-General and all those present, wishing you success and wishing us to attain our objectives. Thank you very much.

Mr Henrik Munthe

Employer Vice-President (Norway)

Ladies and gentlemen, we are about to start. Could I please ask you to take your seat or leave the room? Please sit down or leave the room, I kindly ask you. Once more I kindly ask you to sit down or leave the room. Keep quiet. We are about to start this afternoon's session. Once more, please sit down or leave the room. Afternoon. So we have to get started. We are late already, so once more, please sit down. So good afternoon, distinguished delegates. It is my pleasure to open the 11th sitting of this session of the International Labour Conference. My name is Henrik Munthe, and in my capacity as the Employers' Vice-President I will chair this first part of this afternoon's session. This afternoon we shall then continue with the general discussion on the Report of the Chairperson of the Governing Body, the Report of the Director-General and its appendix. These two reports and the appendix were presented in plenary on Monday and have been the topic of our plenary discussion since Tuesday. As has been done for the last few days, I shall follow the list of speakers as it will be displayed on the screen. Kindly note that the result of the electronic votes which opened this morning will be announced at the end of this sitting. And before getting started, I remind you that the speaking time is five minutes. As I said, there is a long list of speakers, so we will be very strict on the speaking time. And once again, I ask you kindly to keep quiet when you are in the room. And then it is my pleasure to give the floor to the first speaker this afternoon.

Mr Vytautas Silinskas

Government (Lithuania)

Chairperson, Excellencies, distinguished delegates, it is a great honour for me to address this plenary today. Dear Director-General, on behalf of the Republic of Lithuania, I would like to extend our heartfelt congratulations and a warm welcome to you on the occasion of your first International Labour Conference as a Director-General. We are honoured to have you leading the charge. Lithuania strongly supports the Global Coalition for Social Justice initiative and its ambition. No social justice can be

achieved if any of its four dimensions mentioned in the report are taken out. Any diminishing of the recognition of the needs and rights of persons who disproportionally experience violence, harassment, discrimination and exclusion should not be tolerated as it goes against our commitment to fundamental principles and rights at work. Dear Chair, Lithuania supports the decision concerning the measure options for Belarus under article 33 of the ILO Constitution and Conventions 87 and 98. Systematic violations made by Belarus of the rights of individuals to the freedom of association, collective bargaining, et cetera, are unprecedented. Belarus has ignored its obligations under the ILO Constitution and international treaties for more than the 20 past years. It even worsened further since Belarus' involvement in the Russian war against Ukraine. Dear ILO constituents, dear colleagues, Lithuania firmly believes that the subregional office in Moscow must be relocated. Russia's unprovoked and unjustified war against Ukraine grossly violates international law and is incompatible with the aims and purposes of the ILO. Other UN agencies have already made such a decision. Lithuania supports the ILO Office for its continued dedication to support the tripartite constituents of Ukraine and the decision to reassign the responsibility for Georgia to the ILO Budapest Office. However, Russia's office relocation requires appropriate ILO attention and immediate action. As the preamble of the ILO Constitution states, universal and lasting peace can be established only if it is based on social justice. Thank you.

Ms Renate Hornung-Draus

Employer (Germany)

Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, delegates, colleagues, I am speaking today as a delegate from the German employers. I would have liked to speak at greater length about the contribution of employers to decent work and I would like to talk about the term of productivity sustainable enterprise and the reduction of the informal sector. I would have liked to have said something about the importance of the Centenary Declaration regarding the major challenges that we face in the world of work but also those that are faced in the multilateral system worldwide. Even more so because this Conference is the first Conference under our new Director-General, Gilbert Houngbo, and it is he who has the idea of the Global Coalition for Social Justice, which is a very good pointer to the future. The ILO, however, looking at the biennium 2022-24 is now facing an existential crisis which we could only solve just a few short moments ago. Now I am very pleased of the agreement that we got just a few moments ago at ambassadorial level, and I trust that this will mean that the Programme and Budget for 2024-2025 can now be agreed as quickly as possible and that this organization will then be able to act. It would have been a great pity if this organization, which just four years ago celebrated its centenary and therefore is the oldest of all multilateral organizations in the world, it would have been a great pity if it could not have acted post 2024, particularly given the fact that the ILO makes a very important contribution to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations. It can do that work. It must do that work. Full, productive employment, skills, sustainable enterprise, labour protection, health and safety in the world of work, all of these are the actual pillars of the ILO and these are vital for us to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations. Looking to the future, the special nature of the ILO is thanks to its tripartite nature. It is the only organization where representatives of employers and workers are constituents alongside governments with the same rights as those. And they build a bridge between the abstract world of diplomacy and the actual grassroots level of the economy, of business and of social societies in all their

rich diversity. As social partners, and we are social partners who are responsible for fashioning the working conditions in our countries because we negotiate them, and these agreements often come about after a long conflict, but in the last 100 years we have learned quite a few lessons. Beings of a feeling of superiority and claiming that you are always right and trying to address that in moral clothes would mean the death knell of diplomacy. It would be the end of consensus and it would be the end of an ability to compromise. Dogmatism would be the very end of any constructive progress. It is only if we do not use such superiority and if we accept what the others say and if we can actually do something to forgo blame games that we can protect multilateralism. But at a time though when we have a hyperventilating media, that it is not easy. But only by doing that will it be possible for all of us within the United Nations to work according to the challenges that we have. We need to have a good profile, and those should be the lessons that we have learned from recent months and from recent days, and these should be a lesson for all constituents. Thank you.

Mr Dara In

Government (Cambodia)

Mr Vice-President of the Conference, Excellencies, Secretary-General of the Conference, distinguished delegates. My delegation wishes to extend our sincere congratulations to the President and the officers of the Conference for your appointment. We further extend our profound gratitude to the ILO for its contribution to Cambodia's socio-economic development through its programmes designed to promote social justice and decent work for all. Indeed, in these times of unprecedented challenges, from the pandemic's aftermath to escalating living costs, climate change and global debt crisis, social justice becomes more pronounced and relevant than ever and it forms an integral part of the foundation for universal and lasting peace. With this in mind, we gather here today to navigate these complexities and seek common solutions. In order to address inequalities that persistently impact individuals globally, we should strive to develop and implement practical solutions. The responsibility falls upon us to create enabling environments that are conducive to individuals and communities in identifying and addressing social justice issues together. Our collective aim is to ensure that everyone can have access to services and resources that provide them with opportunities for decent outcomes and living standards. Given these considerations, we commend the Director-General's comprehensive report entitled 'Advancing social justice'. Mr Vice-President, it is evident that effective skill development is a cornerstone in the pursuit of decent work. To this end, Cambodia has introduced several robust policies, including the Industrial Development Policy, National Employment Policy, national policy on technical and vocational training, and policy on Cambodian labour migration. Moreover, Cambodia's unwavering commitment to achieving social justice has been consistently demonstrated through our tripartite mechanism, social dialogue and the concerted effort to ensure equal access to education, employment and healthcare for all. In line with this, we actively collaborate with international communities and development partners, especially the ILO. They play a fundamental role in coordinating the implementation of various programmes such as the Decent Work Country Programme for Cambodia, Better Factories Cambodia and Decent Employment for Youth, amongst others. We are also proud to announce that later this year, under the insightful leadership of our Prime Minister, we will roll out free technical and vocational training for 1.5 million youths and workers from poor and vulnerable families. This initiative seeks to equip our youths with at least one practical skill to ensure their access to full, productive and

freely chosen employment. In spite of disruptions posed by the pandemic and the global recession, Cambodia remains resolute in improving workers' living standards. Our commitment is exemplified by our efforts to ensure annual increases in the minimum wage across key sectors, expand social protection and strengthen labour protection. During this critical juncture, the ILO's missions and mandates have become increasingly indispensable in advancing social justice and promoting decent work for all. Recognizing this, Cambodia endorses the recommendations outlined in the Report of the Director-General. We believe that these will contribute to an inclusive path towards achieving the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and uphold the historic mandate of the ILO in the quest for social justice. In conclusion, we firmly believe that by adhering to the ILO's fundamental principles of tripartism, social dialogue and a human-centred approach, we can overcome the challenges that lie ahead and uphold the founding mission of the ILO. We express our strong hope for the governments, international organizations and social partners to provide their support for the Global Coalition for Social Justice by taking robust steps and initiating transformative actions for sustainable socio-economic development. I thank you.

Ms Khadija Ezzoumi

Worker (Morocco)

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful. Ladies and gentlemen, it is a pleasure to take the floor on behalf of the Moroccan trade union movement before this august body. And perhaps I am the first woman who has taken the floor for the Moroccan unions, and I am extremely proud to do so. We are proud of the social dialogue and the tripartite system that brings together governments, employers and workers in our country despite the difficult international context. And we have seen some recurrent problems and we also see that there are the issues in Morocco because of the difficult problem caused by the climate, particularly the long-term drought. Despite these problems, we face problems but we feel that, thanks to dialogue, we are able to surmount those difficulties. Our movement has given a firm commitment, an unflagging commitment to the legitimate demands of the working class, and we call upon our government to be mindful of those demands. And we have to recognize the progress that has been made by our government despite the difficult international climate which has been marked by inflation. We would say that social dialogue has been institutionalized in our country, and we now have been meeting since May and we want to build upon what we have achieved thus far so that we can be operating according to clear law. It is important that we make clear the demands of the working class and we put those to the Government, and these discussions have helped us understand the position of the Government and some of the constraints that they face. There is now a mature system in place that, despite difficulties, we have the agreement of April 2022 which provides a road map for relations between trade unions and the Government on a number of priority issues. Given what has happened in our country, I have to express the gratitude that has been done in our country regarding social protection, done under the aegis of our King Mohammed VI, and also what is done in the area of social protection. And this is a historic achievement here, and this is something which has extended compulsory medical coverage to all citizens, and this also covers even those families where people are out of work. And we have carried out and achieved important objectives regarding higher education, also healthcare, and also we have worked in the educational field so that we can create a fair system for all constituents. And the most difficult thing has been protecting purchasing power for all citizens, but we have to note that the war in Europe has had a negative effect and that

has meant there has been a rise in the cost of commodities on the international market and that this has boosted inflation. We would note that the Government has taken a number of steps here so as to approach the compensation fund. I have not got time to go into all the fine details of the progress that has been achieved, but despite the demands that we have made and our struggle, we have had an open dialogue with our government so that we can [vgr INAUDIBLE 5:12] the main priorities for our countries. Amongst the draft bills that are under discussion there is one on strikes, one on working time and one on trade unionism. And we do not want any attacks against workers, because workers' rights are enshrined in our constitution, and we see this as a way to make sure that workers are protected and we can also protect people against injustice. It is important that we guarantee freedom of association throughout the productive system. The consequences of inflation mean that we have been forced to think very seriously about having a general pay increase. The Moroccan trade unions have worked together with the Gov and employers so that we can look into these challenges that we are currently facing. And these have a particular effect for the working class, and we are certain that we will be able to deal with anything that might harm workers. We are looking at the reform of these fund systems but we cannot allow that to reduce purchasing power. We also note what has been said by the Ministry of Finance, and it is important that this be done in a way that protects workers.

Ms Ida Fauziyah

Government (Indonesia)

Assalamu alaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh. Mr Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, let me begin by congratulating Qatar on assuming the presidency of this Conference. Indonesia appreciates the topic of the Report of the Director-General concerning advancing social justice. It highlights the importance of advancing social justice and promoting decent work to get us back on track to attain the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. For us, social justice is a part of Indonesia's five fundamental principles which our forefathers designed to achieve welfare for Indonesian people. Furthermore, Indonesia fully supports this agenda to implement comprehensively and leave no one behind. Along these lines, let me share Indonesia's views on the report. First, ensuring access to full and productive employment and lifelong learning is critical. The ILO and its constituents should continue developing skills strategies that strengthen lifelong learning. Also, broader collaboration between the ILO and its members is needed, notably to accelerate sectoral skills and suitable education and training programmes for priority areas in the future. Second, revitalizing labour market institutions for fair outcomes is essential to reduce inequalities. We should remain committed to social dialogue to ensure that workers in vulnerable situations, such as migrant workers, agriculture and health sector workers, workers with disabilities as well as women and youth workers receive a sustainable and equitable distribution of benefits. Third, improving the quality of the world of work through protecting workers and making transitions equitable is critical to ensure that all workers benefit from the employment opportunities. We also need to ensure workers' access to comprehensive social protection, through domestic resource mobilization and greater international cooperation. During our Chairmanship of ASEAN 2023, Indonesia put forward strengthening protection of migrant workers and combating human trafficking as well as ending sexual violence at the workplace as the regional agenda. At the national level, Indonesia commits and delivers. First, we have enhanced our labour programmes, policies and strategies that contribute to the fall of our unemployment rate, accelerate decent work, amplifying protection for all workers

and improving the labour market to be more inclusive and sustainable. Second, we strengthen lifelong learning by revitalizing vocational, both on education and training, as well as generate an updated and extended G20 Skills Strategy under Indonesia G20 presidency last year. This year's ASEAN Chairmanship, Indonesia also pushes forward ways to enhance competitiveness, resilience and agility of workers in ASEAN through harmonization of skills training standards and professional certification systems. Third, we continue to promote social dialogue with key constituents based on respect for freedom of unions and recognition of the rights to collective bargaining in formulating policy and regulation such as the Job Creation, or Cipta Kerja, Law. The law is intended to create and increase job opportunities in order to more absorption workforce and to provide better protection for the workers. Last, the social security reform has provided access to comprehensive social protection for all workers. This is a clear realization of Indonesia's priority to achieve justice for all its people, notably workers. Mr Chairman, before concluding my remarks, let me underline once again Indonesia's full commitment to support the work of the ILO. In this regard, I would like to emphasize for all constituents of the ILO to embrace the spirit of constructive engagement, cooperation and trust, and for the Office to avoid divisiveness by listening and accommodating concerns of all its members in a balanced and fair manner, based on international consensus. I thank you.

Mr Alexey Vovchenko

Government (Russian Federation)

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. I would like to start by thanking the ILO for organizing the International Labour Conference. As the Director-General said in his first report on the path towards social justice, we are faced with difficult realities, the pandemic, unemployment, occupational accidents, problems with remuneration moving in the wrong direction, without losing sight of the objective of decent work for all. The Russian Federation shares the idea of arriving at a situation of social justice with social protection for everyone. The pandemic has had a significant effect on the social and economic situation in countries. However, in our view, the Russian Federation has been able successfully to face up to this challenge. For example, we changed the Labour Code, in particular to take account of teleworking, that for the first time. And thanks to information technology many jobs can be done through electronic means, and actions have been taken to make that possible. Ill workers need to be given an opportunity to get a job through training that will make this possible, and that has been made possible through a programme for retraining of unemployed people, also addressing in particular women and those on maternity leave. As is rightly said in the Director-General's report, social protection for families is an indispensable part of social well-being, and we pay particular attention in a targeted programme that we target those who are in most need. The programmes are linked to the minimum wage, which goes up every year. In 2020 the minimum wage was increased, and it is this that makes it possible to fight against injustice. In the Russian Federation we have also updated our labour code in the area of labour protection, the idea being to create a new preventative model for workers' safety. We have also taken significant activities to address unemployment. The unemployment level is now around 3.5%. That is due to measures to improve the labour market. There are other measures specifically addressing young people joining the labour market for the first time, and last year we started a series of measures to fight against clandestine employment. Various measures were taken to support the labour market, addressing employment. We agree with the Director-General in his report that tripartism is the key to finding

effective solutions. This is true. Last year the tripartite committee of the Russian Federation for regulation of professions looked at more than 100 regulations which were then passed by that commission. The development of human potential and the provision of decent work and social justice are things that we are working on continuously. I would like to bring up an initiative that a colleague of ours from Venezuela has brought up, presenting many theses based on the Charter of the United Nations, the group of countries involved in that initiative, and we entirely support that initiative, working against arbitrary coercive measures addressing individual countries. That is not just an attack on the sovereignty and the principle of non-interference in the independence of countries but it also has a cost as far as labour relationships are concerned, as far as the stability of the supply chain is concerned, as we have seen, and negative effects on the standard of living. Social justice will be impossible without international cooperation. Thank you.

Mr Donggeun Lee

Employer (Republic of Korea)

Mr President and distinguished delegates, I would like to begin by congratulating the President and the Vice-Presidents on your election. The pandemic is finally over, but before we have fully recovered from the impact we are confronting a complex crisis, including growing geopolitical conflicts, escalating food and energy prices and climate change. In this context, this year's DG's report is very timely. Countries around the world are struggling with slow economic growth and severe unemployment. According to the DG's report, globally 270 million people are unemployed and one out of five young people are not in education, employment or training. Moreover, the pandemic has accelerated changes in the way of working, and technological development such as AI and robotics is rapidly reshaping the industrial structure and forms of employment. Such transformation presents challenges but also many opportunities for us. To successfully respond to these changes and grab the new opportunities ahead, first we should not stick to vested rights and old practices. For this, it is very urgent and imperative to make the labour market more flexible by reforming rigid regulations. Second, we must foster sustainable enterprises and support them to create more jobs. Jobs are key to securing material well-being, addressing inequalities and promoting social inclusion. Hence, ILO Member States and the international organizations have to join efforts to create an environment that encourages private companies to actively invest and create more jobs. Third, in Korea the number of work days lost due to strikes is higher than ones in other countries, and the labour laws and regulations lag behind the global standard. The union repression allegations against the Korean Government, raised by unions, are unilateral claims. In Korea, unions' violent protests and illegal acts cause enormous inconvenience to the public, which makes people turn away from unions. In fact, the Korean Government is striving to establish the rule of law in industrial relations. By doing so, the widespread illegal acts of construction unions and unions' accounting fraud as well as interference in hiring processes have been greatly improved. People in Korea support such government efforts. Last but not least, it is important to improve industrial relations and labour laws and regulations in a balanced manner. In this regard, I am greatly concerned about the revision bill in Korea seeking to expand the scope of employers and the concept of labour disputes without clear definition and standards while employers' right to claim damages for unions' illegal acts is severely restricted. If this revision bill is passed without having sufficient consultation or agreement between the Government, the employers and unions, it would undermine industrial ecosystems

and eventually cause more confusion at workplaces. I would like to ask the ILO to respect diverse positions and take into full consideration the various opinions of all stakeholders. Mr President and distinguished delegates, I sincerely hope that this year's ILC will provide us a valuable opportunity to share our experience and wisdom for advancing social justice. Thank you very much.

Mr Alexander Shokhin

Employer (Russian Federation)

Ladies and gentlemen, on behalf of the employers from the Russian Federation, I would like to welcome all delegates at this 111th ILC. We share the concerns and the challenges which are shared around the world. As the Director-General said in his report, we have to bring progress to social justice, and decent work is the very engine room of that. This is basically a vitally important part of it. We also have seen that in Russia in recent years there has been a major change. There were not enough jobs and there was unemployment, and now we see that there is a structural lack in the manufacturing sector and we need to try and remedy that. And we are using that by working with investments and also with the employers' organizations so that we can create a real link between a training system which then trains people that industry needs. And we are trying to make this more professional and we also have engineering colleges so that we can train people and they can bring the skills that companies need. Also self-employment has been encouraged, and people have also been working on the platform economy. And we believe it is important that people move from the informal to the formal sector. The Conference is looking at very important issues such as apprenticeships. We are looking at worker protection. We are also looking at moving to a sustainable green economy, and all of these issues are very important and they are also very important for Russian entrepreneurs. And we support the notion of partnership, which is at the very heart of the ILO. In the Federation's Constitution, in 2020 we included this, and we want employers to be part of employers' organizations, and also we have given support to the trade unions that they be part of such organizations. The employers' union is involved in bringing economic development in the country, and we will certainly take inspiration from the experience of other countries as well. We remain a member of the ILO. We are very sorry that our technical cooperation has been brought to an end, because that closes the door on a number of forums that we were involved in. But despite that, our country will still observe and respect international labour standards and it will undertake new mechanisms so as to guarantee decent work and to assure social justice. Finally, I would like to quote one of the founding fathers of this organization. Albert Thomas said this in 1926. He said that, "Despite all the problems, despite the wars that tear the world, despite all these difficulties, we are convinced that, thanks to the ILO, social justice will become a reality worldwide." Given the current situation where the world is suffering economic and political crises, the reality of those words, the truth of those words rings true. And here we are looking at a Global Coalition for Social Justice which is well reflected in the DG's report, and we believe that in this way we will be able to bring social justice, we will be able to build upon it and we will be able to bring in policies so that we can relaunch multilateral cooperation. On behalf of the employers of the Russian Federation, I wish you all a successful Conference, and I congratulate you also that you have been able to adopt the budget. Thank you.

Mr Luiz Marinho

Government (Brazil)

Director-General, Gilbert Houngbo, Mr Vice-President of the 111th International Labour Conference, Your Excellency Munthe, colleagues, fellow ministers, ladies and gentlemen. Two initial comments. Today is the World Day against Child Labour. And on the 28th of June we are going to have International LGBT Pride Day, and in Brazil we had the seventh Pride parade which included a large number of people. I congratulate everyone here and I would like to congratulate Director-General Gilbert Houngbo and his mandate at the head of this house and his first Conference. Our government is present once again as the Ministry for Labour and Employment. This ministry itself had to be reconstituted, having been abolished, and we are all very pleased to be back. Brazil has voted. I would like to thank the Director-General, Gilbert Houngbo, for his report on advancing social justice, which offers useful guidelines to make social justice advance at a national and a global level. We were pleasantly surprised to find that the Conference is addressing a central issue that our government has always been concerned with, to fight inequality and the fight for social justice. We are joining the search for social justice and are working to eliminate poverty, fight against exclusion and prejudice and to promote full employment, decent work, the adoption of social protection measures and the use of collective bargaining and respect for the fundamental rights and principles at work. This has been expressed by various actions that our ministry has also got going in a few more than five months in government. Firstly, we sent a project to increase the real value of the minimum wage to Parliament. We have recreated and revitalized the tripartite councils that monitor government and ministry policies. We have set up a tripartite group of work to promote working relationships and collective bargaining. Fourthly, we have installed a national tripartite roundtable to regulate work in platforms and applications. And fifthly, we have already got a proposal adopted by Parliament on legislation for equal pay between men and women. Sixthly, we have sent messages to the National Congress to ratify ILO Conventions, namely 156, 190, 187, 129 and the Protocol to Convention 29. Seventhly, we had various actions to rescue workers in situations analogous to slavery and in situations of child labour, among others. But this is only the start. Faced with so many challenges in our country, facing a world of work which is changing ever more quickly, we have the conviction and the leadership of our beloved President Lula who, as you will all be aware, has its political roots in the fight for justice and the rights of workers to continue to follow a project for a better country and a better world. This is what we are looking for with productive relationships that are more just for people and the planet. We closely followed, with a lot of attention, the Director-General's project for a coalition for social justice, and we congratulate him on this initiative. This platform, bringing together various different organizations, could be an opportunity to join forces among the different agencies of the United Nations, the OECD and international financial organizations. Inequalities across the world and their impact on workers are of primordial importance, and we need to centre them in the political debate that we have to get into to face up to the challenges in the world of work. And if we are talking about what is essential to development, we have to talk about dialogue and partnership. There is no social justice without freedom of association and collective bargaining. Governments should promote an environment which makes it possible for workers and employers' organizations to find solutions together and build trust. Robust and effective social dialogue makes it possible to find inclusive paths for development with fair opportunities for all to guarantee just transitions in the face of the changes in the world of work as well. Although we made a lot of progress in the

past, the pandemic and the setbacks resulting from the incapacity of prior governments mean that Brazil needs to reconstruct to move towards equality and opportunities for all. We have to see social justice as an indispensable factor to achieve fair and resilient societies and maintain lasting peace. I wish this Conference every success. It is a privileged space at a global level to discuss the ways that we can advance the Decent Work Agenda and social justice, and Brazil will no doubt be one of the champions that you see in the realization of its decisions. So, I would like to embrace everyone and thank you.

Ms Betty Ongom Amongi

Government (Uganda)

Mr President, Excellencies and heads of delegation, distinguished delegates. We gather here once again, physically, to dialogue on how social inclusion should be placed at the centre of our labour policies. We recognize that the COVID-19 pandemic has pushed the world into a global crisis never seen before. Overcoming the social inequalities laid bare by the pandemic calls for vigorous public action combining the intensity of a short-term response with long-term goals. We have noted that many unique interactions and drivers of vulnerability existed before the pandemic, each unique. We therefore call that, in addition, income inequality made worse by a pandemic increased the negative impact of drivers, mostly on women and girls. The hardest hit are the informal economy whose businesses cannot recover without government intervention. Unfortunately, the world is not on track to meet the most fundamental goal of eradicating extreme poverty and achieving global social justice, and without decisive action, the number of people living in extreme poverty is expected to reach 600 million, or 7% of the total population by 2030. We must therefore recommit to drive social policy to protect the vulnerable, including children, older persons, persons with disability, persons in rural areas and universal social protection for enhancing economic and food security during crises. Uganda has thus put in place a social assistance grant for empowerment for older persons aged 80 years and above as a monthly cash support, the special grant for older persons aged 65 years to 79 years, the special grant for persons with disability, women, youth, all to empower the vulnerable. Uganda also recognizes that rebuilding from the pandemic requires increased and targeted investment in rural development. That is why post COVID-19 we have designed rural-based capital financing to support rural cooperative banks at the lowest level of community, called the Parish Development Model, which is placing financing of up to US$500 million per year for agricultural value chain investment, targeting 39% of our poor people to join the money economy. We have focused on government institutional interventions for developing efficient, inclusive and resilient sustainable development, supporting investing in agriculture, especially in small and medium production, which allows our rural people to benefit from land and labour, which are their two main assets and are key in reducing poverty and addressing the global agenda of addressing social inequality. With support from the World Bank grant, we are implementing a women's entrepreneurs financing of US$217 million to support women's medium and small businesses to recover. And we have initiated a US$200 million recovery fund in partnership with commercial banks to provide incentives for the private sector to support transformation and rural development. I therefore commend the Director-General for the initiative to establish a Global Coalition for Social Justice to foster dialogue, strengthen partnership and collective action towards more equitable societies. Uganda stands ready to actively engage and collaborate with this coalition. We believe that together we can achieve meaningful and lasting social

justice by empowering workers, promoting social protection and addressing inequality for a brighter future for all. Equally, we support the Director-General's call for the ratification of the 1986 Amendment and urge Member States who have not yet ratified the amendment to do so since it is important to enable the Organization to realize its founding principle of promoting a more equal and sustainable world of work. Let me remind the Conference that Africa is the only continent to achieve a 100% ratification rate of the 1986 Amendment. In response to the call by the Secretary-General, Uganda recognizes the significance of effective multilateralism in advancing social dialogue and fostering consensus-based solutions through actively participating in discussions, sharing experiences and seeking joint solutions to collectively address the challenges facing the world of work. Uganda stands ready to actively engage in multilateral efforts, working hand in hand with our global partners toward a brighter and more equitable future for all. Lastly, we are concerned that as a global family we are going from one year to the next without having substantially resolved our social inclusion agenda, including poverty, universal social security and inequality. We therefore must move the agenda for poverty reduction and universal social security. We must act with great urgency to bring about an inclusive, resilient and transformative recovery that responds to structural inequalities. We are interdependent as a global family, and therefore I call on developed countries that they should support the LDC countries in their quest to achieve shared global prosperity. Because if you prosper alone, you are alone in your prosperity, and a global crisis will not spare you alone. Let us prosper together because history will bind us together. I thank you, and I congratulate Qatar for the presidency.

Mr Peter Lerner

Worker (Israel)

Today, I stand before you as an Israeli trade union leader, representing the Histadrut, the General Federation of Labour in Israel. As we convene at the ILO's 111th International Labour Conference it is essential to recognize the pivotal role played by the Histadrut in stabilizing Israeli society and uplifting workers through collective bargaining and the general strike as a last resort. The Histadrut stands as an unwavering pillar of strength, fortifying the foundations of our society. Throughout our history we have tirelessly advocated for the rights and welfare of workers, nurturing a culture of dialogue, cooperation and collective bargaining. Our indomitable spirit has become a driving force behind Israel's progress and the well-being of our people. Israel, a nation built on the resilience of its citizens, is bound together by a shared vision of unity. The Histadrut has played a central role in fostering this unity, safeguarding the rights and dignity of workers and ensuring their voices are heard. It stands as a testament to the power of the union, of solidarity and the belief that a nation's strength lies in the welfare of its workforce. Negotiations and collective bargaining stand as a cornerstone of the Histadrut's work, empowering workers to negotiate fair wages, safe working conditions and social protections. Through this process, the Histadrut has facilitated harmonious relationships between workers, employers and the Government, paving the way for a more equitable society. Yet, there are times when the scales of justice are imbalanced and negotiations falter in the face of adversity or when the powers of government are abused against the people of Israel. In such moments, like in the past six months, the Histadrut has mustered the courage to take decisive action and resorted to a general strike as the last resort. The general strike is not an act of rebellion. It is a powerful symbol of workers' determination to fight for their rights. When all avenues of negotiations have been

exhausted, the general strike becomes a beacon of hope, a call to action that reverberates across the nation. It serves as a wake-up call to those in power, demanding justice and respect for workers. It is a rallying cry, uniting workers and society in the pursuit of fairness, equality and decency. The general strike is not undertaken lightly but rather with the understanding that it is a tool for positive change. It disrupts the status quo, forcing stakeholders to confront the pressing societal issues at hand. On the 27th of March this year, following extreme civil unrest due to the Government's proposed legislation, we conducted a general strike. Our strike halted the judicial reform and created an opportunity for negotiations, dialogue, compromise and, hopefully, a more just and prosperous future for all, bringing the unity our country desperately needs. Delegates, today I extend an invitation to all nations, trade unions and employers to recognize the central role of trade unions in stabilizing society and uplifting workers. Let us embrace collective bargaining as the cornerstone of fair labour relations, empowering workers to shape their own destinies. Let us foster a culture of dialogue and cooperation where workers are valued as indispensable contributors to our societies. In those rare moments when justice is denied, let us remember the power of the general strike. It is a tool that can reshape the narrative, ignite conversations and propel positive change. It serves as a testament to the unwavering resolve of workers united in their pursuit for justice and dignity. Delegates, together we can build a world where workers' rights are not negotiable but inviolable, where collective bargaining is not a luxury but a fundamental right. Let us harness the power of solidarity and dialogue to forge a future where workers and society thrive hand in hand. Thank you.

Mr Rafael Eugenio Rodríguez Pellecer

Government (Guatemala)

Good afternoon. I am very happy to be able to address this plenary of the 111th International Labour Conference, and I would like to particularly congratulate Gilbert Houngbo for his first Conference as Director-General of the ILO. When I became Minister of Labour in 2020, when the pandemic had just been declared, I gave a commitment that I would support protection policies so that we could protect the workers in our country, and we also looked at social provision and jobs, and we made sure that we respected national and international standards. It has been a difficult path, but we believe that we are on the correct path. In his report, the Director-General has said that there are external threats which affect the world of work and which affect social justice. He calls upon governments and employers' organizations and workers' organizations to use social dialogue and tripartism and to see them as a way to promote social justice. The Government of Guatemala believes that tripartism is the way to take decisions in the country, and this is certainly the case for the national pay committee, the national committee for OSH and the tripartite system for labour relations. And this bring together employers and workers, people who are freely elected by their organizations, and they are on an equal footing with representatives of government. And we try and establish minimum pay, social justice, and we also look at what is happening internationally so that we can harmonize with other countries as well. And we want to make sure that nationally we stick to the road map for freedom of association and free collective bargaining. We also have support from the International Labour Office. They have helped us increase the capacity of our constituents. Here we have worked together so as to increase the international committee so that we can look at the effective application of international labour standards. And this is an ongoing work at the moment, and we believe in this way we

will be able to live up to our international commitments. We have a responsibility as a government, and we have to come up with sustainable solutions to current problems so that we can give everyone the means that they have to deal with financial, labour and economic difficulties arising from COVID-19. And also we can look at the human, food and energy consequences of this, and also we can see the effect of and deal with the effect of the war of Russia against Ukraine. And therefore it is important that we sought out such problems by respecting sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and human rights because only if this is done and if we have universal and permanent peace based on social justice will our societies be able to enjoy universal human rights, access to opportunities and we will also have a fair distribution and we will be able to have a fair transition for all to decent work. I would call on all Member States to increase their efforts so that we can respect the basic tenets of the ILO based on the Global Coalition for Social Justice and without losing sight of the Sustainable Development Goals. We believe that achieving those will mean that we can improve the work and lives of our workers, and in this way we can add to the development of our country. Thank you.

Ms Fathimath Zimna

Worker (Maldives)

Bismillahirrahmanirrahim. Mr President, distinguished delegates, assalamu alaikum and warm greetings. In the wake of multiple crises, it is imperative that social agenda is prioritized to combat the growing inequalities in the world. I could not agree more with the Director-General's call for a systemic integration of social agenda into all levels of policies. Mr President, a decade has passed since Maldives ratified the fundamental Conventions of the ILO, yet successive governments through these years failed to honour the commitment. The right to freedom of association and collective bargaining, which are crucial to reduce the long prevailing economic and social disparities, are still neither established nor practised. Despite the positive economic outlook of the country in terms of real GDP growth, workers and their families remain in economic and social vulnerabilities, which is exacerbated by the absence of a tripartite labour governance system. Years of persistence, advocacy and protest by the unions finally led to the adoption of a minimum wage in the year 2022 which, while is a positive step, has deeply concerning issues such as its variation across sectors and migrant workers being excluded from the minimum wage and the new pay harmonization policy of the public sector altogether. In fact, this is a classic example where the absence of a tripartite social dialogue precludes any substantial participation by the workers' unions in the policy process, which naturally results in the failure of policy outcomes to transcend meaningfully to workers' needs, and instead breeds discrimination, forced labour, unrest and restriction of rights guaranteed by the international labour standards. It is evident that workers, including migrants, are working in precarious conditions. There are multitudes of reports of fraudulent employment, non-payment of wages, deception, violence, violations of occupational safety and health standards and many more human rights violations. These are, and will remain, deeply alarming matters. Addressing these requires transparency in labour governance and urgent legislative and policy reforms by the Government of Maldives. In essence, this requires genuine honouring of the international labour standards and integrity in the establishment of a functional tripartite governance system which is negotiated through tripartite mechanisms. Respected President, the trade unions welcome the fact that the Maldives Government has increased climate budgeting over the past decade. However, a more inclusive approach to the fight

against climate change is needed through just transition plans negotiated with social partners, including trade unions at the table. Respected President, accelerating the Sustainable Development Goals, Agenda 2030, requires engaging with trade unions and social partners in consultation and social dialogue at all fronts for a more inclusive and just future. As we seek to rebuild a human-centric, resilient economy in the Maldives, one that gives greater priority to job security, decent work, public health and social protection, it is imperative to establish, protect and practise the right to collective bargaining in order to deliver decent work and a decent life for the working people and their families. A century of tripartism and social dialogue, meaningful consultation through tripartite social discourse between trade unions, employers and governments was and will remain the most vital and effective element for ensuring an inclusive, just and sustainable economic growth and future for us all. More than ever, we need the internationally recognized labour standards promoted by the ILO to be contextualized into local laws and practised across the globe. We need governments to be responsible and accountable, to lead and champion the cause of social justice. We need our governments to walk the talk to ensure shared prosperity and a sustainable future for generations to come. I thank you.

Ms Touif Zeinebou

Government (Mauritania)

In the name of God, the Beneficent, the Merciful, peace be on the Prophet. On behalf of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, I would like to address my congratulations to the President and the members of the bureau after their election, and on this occasion of the 111th International Labour Conference we wish them every success. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Director-General of the ILO, Mr Gilbert Houngbo, on the publication of the report submitted to this session, a report which contains a clear diagnosis and precise proposals relating to the role of the ILO and of those involved in production. I would like to congratulate him on his initiative for the Global Coalition for Social Justice, which is linked with his vision for his mandate at the head of this organization. We support unconditionally what has been achieved in the struggle for decent work in the supply chains, the respect for international labour standards and for training of young workers. We would like to express our solidarity with Palestinian workers. We support their struggle to recover all of their rights, in particular the right to life in an independent State with Jerusalem as its capital. Solid partnership with social partners through regular consultation and dialogue, addressing that in accordance with the instructions of Mohamed Ould Ghazouani, the President of our republic, I would like to address the situation of workers, in particular looking at what can be done by the state and what is required for competitiveness. We are carrying out reforms to improve training and to improve coverage of social security to all workers. Our country has achieved a lot over the last few years and we want to maintain those achievements. These have made it possible for workers to live in dignity and work in dignity in a balanced and safe and healthy working environment. The revision of the Labour Code has led to workers having more rights. There has been an increase of the minimum wage by 50%, and we have seen considerable increases in retirement pensions. We have also increased family allowances by 56% and increased the threshold for social security contributions. Women in employment benefit from 100% of their salary during maternity leave and afterwards. Those who suffer from labour accidents receive 50% of their wages for a period after the accident. We are trying to provide prosperity to all the citizens of Mauritania through accelerated growth and shared prosperity. Trying to provide for social peace and 100% coverage

while fighting against poverty, in the spirit of Convention 204 of the ILO which aims to improve the conditions of life and health of workers, we have set up a new social security organization for freelance and informal workers. As far as protection of workers is concerned, we have adopted an improved framework for social security. We have also improved the medical services available to workers aiming to prevent accidents at work and improve safety and health at work. We are working continuously with the ILO against forced labour. Ladies and gentlemen, with a view to guaranteeing the representivity of union organizations, we have implemented a series of measures to improve the share of subsidies provided to them by the Government. We have also organized union representation within the decision-making bodies of government enterprises. We are against all attacks on workers' rights and deterioration in their working rights. We would like to congratulate the Director-General of the ILO and his staff for the excellent way they have prepared for and organized this Conference and for the very relevant points placed on the agenda, and we wish this Conference every success.

Mr José Roberto Tadros

Employer (Brazil)

Good afternoon, everyone. I would like to start by congratulating Mr Gilbert Houngbo, the Director-General of the International Labour Organization and congratulating him in particular for his work and what he has done in conducting this current Conference. I would particularly like to give my greetings to the representatives of the governments and authorities present here, the ministers of State, represented here by the Minister Luiz Marinho from our country. I would like to salute the employers, workers and other participants. It is an honour, ladies and gentlemen, to be here to represent all the employers of Brazil in this 111th International Labour Conference and to contribute to the important mission of this international organization to address matters related to work. In the last few years, countries, their economies and labour markets have been restructuring and adapting to events such as COVID-19 and conflicts between countries. Brazil's economy has been recovering since the pandemic, and in the year 2022 it grew by 2.9%, that growth driven by the service sector which represents more than 58.9% of gross domestic product. In the labour market we have seen the creation of 2 million new jobs and a reduction in the unemployment rate as a result of that. In the search for improvements in working conditions and the broadening of social protection, Brazil has, through a national effort with the support of the social partners in a tripartite way, been promoting decent work in all parts of the productive economy and promoting equality of opportunities and equality of treatment of different agendas and racism and many other things. At the same time as the world is facing up to various different crises, we are also seeing the acceleration of the digital transformation which needs particular kinds of training for individuals. In Brazil we have a system called S-system, which is composed of the social organizations set up by various parts of the productive economy which is composed of private bodies financed by contributions from national business. In the 77 years of its existence, S-system has made a great contribution to filling a gap left by the state given that in some parts of the country, which is the size of a continent, in some parts of the region the population has no other organizations than these in S-system to benefit from without charge for vocational training and also for welfare services, including health services for our workers. This is a model that could be reproduced in other countries in the world because it provides for the continuous retraining of the workforce to be up to the requirements of the labour market. In this sense, we would

like to emphasize the significance of apprenticeships as one of the subjects being debated in the committees of this ILC. We also understand the relevance of priority given to subjects such as reduction of inequality, the promotion of social justice and of decent work. We would emphasize that the global coalition being discussed during this Conference will work as a platform to raise the profile and elevate the discussion on public discussion on social justice and help us to address the current challenges in the world of work. In this context, we would like to highlight the efforts of Brazilian business to generate jobs in the formal economy and to speed up the growth of the economy and also their efforts to reduce inequality, as I mentioned, making sure that all of the advances that we make are characterized by a fair balance and a peaceful balance between capital and labour. Our objective is to cooperate in the strengthening of the Brazilian state to make progress in facing up to the main problems of a structural nature that we face in society and the labour market, among which I would highlight, apart from social inequality and poverty, the reduction of unemployment. Thus we would close our contribution, strengthening the commitment of Brazilian employers to contribute to discussions, working responsibly in the implementation of a kind of decent labour which will guarantee effective respect for the needs of labour while providing for the necessary sustainability of business. Thank you very much.

Mr Van Anh Phan

Worker (Viet Nam)

Vice-President of the 111th International Labour Conference. First and foremost, on behalf of the Vietnam General Confederation of Labour delegation, it is my pleasure to send to the Conference President and all distinguished delegates warmest greetings from more than 11 million union members in Viet Nam. The 111th International Labour Conference is organized at a time of complex and unpredictable developments taking place in the world. Increased globalization and economic cooperation, together with a rapid advance of the Fourth Industrial Revolution continue creating important drivers for the growth of nations. However, the world economy is also facing enormous challenges and risks such as natural disasters, pandemic, climate change, food security, energy security and armed conflict that slow recovery and development. At the same time, they exert severe impacts on the life and jobs of workers in each country around the world. Against this background, the VGCL strongly agrees with the agenda and reports discussed at this Conference: the report from the Director-General, 'Advancing social justice' and the fifth and sixth reports on 'Leaving no one behind: Building inclusive labour protection in an evolving world of work' and 'Achieving a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all'. Distinguished delegates, promoting social justice with equality of development opportunities is a core pre-condition for creating opportunity and motivation that will allow us to develop each person and to promote socio-economic development in each country. The essence of social justice is to harmonize economic development with the implementation of social policies, bringing better life for the majority of people and workers. Accordingly, in addition to the principle of fair distribution of economic achievements in society, the principle of equality between obligations and benefits, between dedication and enjoyment, the effective implementation of human-centred, inclusive, adequate, efficient social protection policies with the motto of leaving no one behind is one of the measures to promote social justice. Viet Nam, with its mandate to represent and defend workers' lawful and legitimate rights, in past years the trade union efforts and activities have led to the improvement in working and living conditions and in the income of union members. And we have achieved a number of

positive outcomes, and these have contributed to realizing our country's goal of wealthy people, strong nation, democratic and cultured society. On this journey, the Viet Nam trade unions appreciate the concern and the support that has been given to us by the ILO. Last March we worked with other tripartite partners and the ILO office in Viet Nam where we signed the Vietnam ILO Decent Work Country Programme for the period 2022-2026. Here we will look at more social development arising from better and broader social protection, more decent work, which will contribute to economic transformation and good governance. We are doing this and looking particularly to pilot transition in the chemical sector in our country. Delegates, we want to contribute to the promotion of social justice in the world and we would like to propose the following to the ILO. Firstly, we should focus on promoting and building peace and justice in the world as well as bringing green growth, decent work and a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies that leave no one behind. Secondly, we have to improve compliance with the ILO's international labour standards, the protection of workers' lawful and legitimate rights, the interests on the basis of listening to the voice of Member States, considering their actual situation, and strengthening dialogue to resolve any disagreements that might arise. Thirdly, we have to reinforce technical support and experience sharing for Member States so that we can achieve social justice and build inclusive, comprehensive social protection systems as well as ensuring just transition for all. And fourthly, we need to bring countries together as well as social partners, businesses and international brands so that we can bring about responsible engagement in promoting social justice.

Ms Patricia Francourt

Government (Seychelles)

Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, it is a pleasure to address the 111th Session of the ILO Conference and to reconvene with tripartite constituents across the world to establish standards and resolutions that will define our actions towards the realities and developments in the world of work. The Government and the people of Seychelles convey their gratitude and support to the Director-General of the ILO, Mr Gilbert Houngbo, in his vision of advancing social justice and promoting decent work. The Report of the Director-General entitled 'Advancing social justice' puts before us the strategic directions to be taken whilst economies continue to recover following the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. I believe the quest for social justice is justified as the conversations, and if I may say, actions aim to fulfil the aspirations of our fellow citizens and workers. Social justice renews the ILO's Centenary human-centred approach and it reaffirms our role as tripartite constituents to bring progress to our people and to uphold the constitutional obligations as Member States of the ILO. It is therefore aptly appropriate that the first words of the ILO Constitution set out our ambition for the achievement of universal and lasting peace to be based on social justice. Mr President, when striving for social justice, we should also aim for inclusiveness and resilient societies so that we leave no one behind. I would like to reiterate that the working environment is rapidly unfolding new trends and accelerating the effects of existing challenges. Many young people still feel and face difficulties to secure jobs in areas of their training, and when they become discouraged they choose a job in a different field. Workers in informal employment remain unprotected from basic labour protection because of the nature of their employment. Balancing work, lifelong learning and family responsibilities remains a challenging task, particularly to young, single mothers. These challenges call for concrete actions to address the four dimensions of social justice as it responds to the realities that many

people are living. We have a role to play to equip our labour force with the skills in demand and to provide correct labour market information and equal access to opportunities to allow them to adapt and grow in the world of work. This is the social justice that we seek. I am pleased to say that my country, Seychelles, which is a small island state, joins this global effort and cooperation. We have developed policies and skills development programmes to facilitate people's access to employment no matter their age, their background and their vulnerable situations. We encourage those in informal employment to join formal employment whilst we progressively improve on the framework for better working conditions. Our national unemployment rate for the year 2022 has been maintained to below 5%. However, youth unemployment remains severe. Seychelles also depends largely on migrant workers, and in March this year we launched the Work in Seychelles induction programme to inform migrant workers of their rights and responsibilities. This was necessary in order to acknowledge and recognize their valuable contributions to our economy in addressing the skills gap given the small size of our population. Such initiative creates a good start for migrant workers to make a positive input in the world of work. It reaffirms that social justice should have no borders and all workers' rights must be respected. To conclude, Seychelles pledges its commitment to the ILO's effort of a global coalition on social justice that serves to achieve parity in treatment for all. We believe it is the way forward to achieve just and inclusive transitions and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Mr Gustavo Gallon Giraldo

Government (Colombia)

On behalf of the Minister of Labour of Colombia, who was not able to come to Geneva, I will speak as ambassador of my country. In Colombia we want to make sure that we can guarantee decent work and social justice in the country, and we hope here that we will be able to have the support of the employers so that we can promote sustainable companies without casualization of jobs. We believe that we need greater social justice, as has been said by the Director-General, and we need to look at ways in which we can achieve this, and we have to work both nationally and internationally so that we can promote human rights based on human beings. These are issues which have been brought up by the Director-General, and these are our priority, and these are set out in our national plan which was brought together and which is the most democratic such plan in our history. And the idea is that we can do the necessary work so that we can become a leader in protecting life, and we should do this with a new social contract which would ensure that we get rid of historic injustice. We want to move away from conflict and we want to change the way in which we deal with the environment and we want to have a productive base which is based on harmony with nature. In Colombia, unemployment has been coming down, as has the informal sector. We have direct inward investment now. And, as part of our national plan, we now have a plan for decent work and we want to create 1.7 million jobs in four years and we want to also boost small and medium-sized and micro enterprises. As part of our labour policies, we now have a system to protect against unemployment, and this will be along the lines of the needs of our population so that we can also help people move from the informal to the formal sector. We also have to look at the gaps that there are with certain populations here, and we have to look at how we can give support so that we can provide coverage to the unemployed and so that we can make sure that people who do not have formal jobs can be brought into productive employment. And we are also looking at measures so that we can help people get back into the world of work. We can help people find placements, and it is important also to

provide the services for those who are out of work. And the national government now, in March of this year, put forward reforms of the labour system, and we have also looked at reform of the pension system, and these are structural reforms because these are going to afford a protection along the basic rights of work and social security. We are changing the pension system, which will guarantee a pension to all and this will protect the contributions and the obligatory and voluntary contributions that people make. And we are also bringing in a system for old age coverage which is equitable and which is based on solidarity and which has universal coverage according to the economic ambitions of our country looking at the medium and long term. This reform of the pension system will not mean an increase in contributions, and we also, in this way, want to make sure that we have a decent level of benefits and we also want to do this with a system which is financially sustainable. There are 18 things which are covered in the reform which has been put to our parliament, and this is something which has been looking at intermediation, working time, stability in employment, decarbonization, the gig economy, rural work, right to association and negotiation, free collective bargaining, things to prevent violence at work and also looking at gender balance, amongst others. Chair, we are happy to see, together with these reforms that we are bringing in, we are working at one with the ILO here and we want to bring together governments, workers and employers so that we can afford greater protection to workers. And we firmly hope that this congress will help us make progress into that direction, and we would call upon here the ILO that you continue giving your support to the reforms that our government is planning. Thank you.

Mr Igor Zubcu

Worker (Republic of Moldova)

Mr Director-General, ladies and gentlemen, let me express my gratitude for the ILO's efforts to promote the principles of decent work and dignity in work for workers, and to express my gratitude for the support, expertise and technical assistance provided to the Republic of Moldova in promoting policies for the benefit of workers and their family members. The ILO's professional team, headed by the Director-General, Mr Gilbert Houngbo, who I had the great pleasure to meet in Chișinău, as well as Ms Maria Helena André, Director of ILO ACTRAV, who also visited our country, are reliable partners in ensuring the efforts of the trade union movement in the Republic of Moldova to promote decent work for employees and trade union members. Together we have managed to achieve a lot, and I do believe that great success awaits us in the future. The world of work is changing constantly. Unfortunately, as a country we are facing challenging times. There is the war in Ukraine, the energy crisis, inflation, food security and migration. All of these crises first and foremost affect the labour force and their families, and that is why it is imperative that we focus on ensuring them a decent future, anticipating the current and future needs of citizens, and this will undoubtedly be possible along with the ILO. I am completely convinced that full and secure employment can be ensured through social dialogue. Moreover, the training of a skilled workforce is vital for the sustainability of the labour market. The Recommendation on quality apprenticeship programmes being discussed at this year's Conference represents an important tool that will allow us to facilitate the process of preparing professional workers in line with the current needs of the labour market. The training of the workforce is an imperative for the Republic of Moldova as well which approved a National Employment Programme for 2022-2026 at the end of the last year. However, it is necessary to point out that the training of skilled workers has to be flanked by implementing policies to increase wages and ensure safe and healthy

working conditions, to provide inclusive programmes for all vulnerable groups, to reconcile work and family life, and to combat the informal economy. One of the most successful common achievements of the social partners of the Republic of Moldova is the establishment of a single national minimum wage for the public and the private sectors due to the long-term efforts of trade unions to promote campaigns and initiatives to amend national legislation. By means of joint efforts, we will try to ensure its continuing growth so as to maintain the purchasing power of the wages of workers. As representatives of the workers of the country, we advocate the alignment of the national legal framework in the field of labour inspection to international standards that have been ratified by the Republic of Moldova: ILO Convention Nos 81 and 129. I firmly believe that through constructive social dialogue, such as has been demonstrated over the years, we can contribute to a prosperous and fair world of work involving workers and employers more actively in the decision-making process to do that. Thank you for your attention. I am completely convinced that the decisions taken and the objectives set at this year's Conference will meet the needs and expectations of citizens, especially in these difficult times when many people are losing hope in the future. Thank you very much.

Ms Taabeta Amuera Teakai

Government (Kiribati)

Mr President, Vice-President, Director-General, colleagues, heads of delegations, ladies and gentlemen. In the name of our Lord, I would like to greet you all. Kam na bane ni mauri. Let me begin by congratulating you, the Director-General, on your election to lead the International Labour Organization. Within the short period of time that you have been in the Director-General's position, in spite of all that has taken place, you have championed the Global Coalition for Social Justice, developments of which Kiribati will continue to follow. My congratulations extend to the President, the Vice-Presidents and all who have been elected by this Governing body. Last year when I addressed this Governing body I presented the aspirations, interests and the challenges that the youth in Kiribati faced in accessing jobs and lingering social and economic symptoms of COVID that, like other member countries, had also affected our national labour market structure. Today I am proud to share with you that, through the tireless work of the Government of Kiribati, we have eclipsed a long-time goal of creating jobs: more than 2,000 youth in labour schemes across Australia and New Zealand. The Government of Kiribati is not stopping here. Kiribati continues exploring untapped labour markets to secure a decent job for its people. I convey my heartfelt thanks to the people and the Governments of Australia and New Zealand. On this note, I am grateful that Japan and Canada have opened their doors to provide more job opportunities for our youth. In the very near future, we look forward with anticipation to engaging with Bulgaria and China and other labour-receiving countries and place our highly trained youth to support industries such as construction, horticulture, tourism, hospitality and age care, a relationship of mutual benefit for all. This landmark achievement would not have been possible without the cooperation of our tripartite partners and our world-class training centres: the Kiribati Institute of Technology and the Marine Training Centre. Together, these world-class training institutes continue to expand their training programmes to cater for specific job requirements and standards from the labour-receiving countries. I am confident to say that much has been achieved and that Kiribati continues to progress on the ILO's underpinning principles of social justice and the 2030 SDG agenda on decent work. We would not have been able to go this far without the support of the ILO, so please allow me at this

juncture to acknowledge, on behalf of the Government and the people of Kiribati, the continued support and strong partnership of the ILO Suva. The Government of Kiribati, through the Ministry of Employment and Human Resources, is looking forward to working closely with the ILO on our remaining priorities which are strongly aligned with our long-term aspirations of the KV20, bolstered by our biggest asset, our human capital. Kiribati will stand strong against any storm that comes our way. Mr President, it would be remiss of me if I end my speech without acknowledging your steer leadership in presiding over unprecedented times when consensus seems an illusion. The ILO family will persevere. Through our differences we will gain strength to do our part to provide for a global environment of decent work for our people. For small island developing states like Kiribati, as I have stated, the ILO's work is vital. And I hope our dear friends, brothers and sisters in this ILO family can put aside their differences, stand united and show this conference capable of rising above that pressure and challenges. Let us all uphold the ILO's fundamental principles of tripartism and reach a tripartite consensus for fair and equitable outcomes. I want to quote the President's speech delivered during the opening of this 111th ILC, that we can make a difference here for the betterment of the society of our workers and employers. The decision that we make today will not impact the respective countries we are representing, but it will strongly impact the world. In closing, I thank you, Mr President, and I wish to share the Kiribati blessings of Te Mauri, Te raoi ao Te Tabomoa meaning, good health, peace and prosperity to us all. Thank you.

Mr Mikhail Orda

Worker (Belarus)

Vice-President, ladies and gentlemen, delegates. On behalf of the unions of Belarus, I greet you. And to start with I would like to state that there is no doubt that the Director-General's initiative on the creation on a global coalition for the promotion of social justice aims at the very highest of objectives which will benefit millions of people. I would like to point out that over the past few years, from the platform of the ILO, we have heard many times about many initiatives on decent work, on globalization of the world of work. And all of these intend to lead to national and international policy, which is just addressing employment, creating appropriate conditions for sustainable enterprises. And what are the results? What do we see today? Inequality is simply increasing all the more. There is less and less justice in international policy. It is the Director-General himself that says this. So the lack of results leads us to call for a re-examination of the way the ILO is addressing the world of work. We have to call attention to the fact of crying injustices in international policy. Many States, to achieve their political and economic objectives, are applying illegal sanctions to other States. For them that has become a habit. These sanctions are used as an economic weapon which they use without fear of other countries. And they are well aware of what the consequence of these sanctions will be: people lose jobs, incomes fall and states no longer are able to provide social assistance to their people. And practice shows that it is strong countries that impose unilateral restrictions on other countries that are trying to develop. Studies show that in the last decade the United States more than 100 times has introduced illegal measures targeting other countries, the European Union 20 times. And that is a burden on millions of workers, and the ILO does not have the right to remain silent faced with that. For more than two years Belarus has been faced with unprecedented illegal sanctions on the part of many Western countries, and politicians cynically state that these sanctions are in the interest of Belarus and that is ridiculous. They never benefit the population. Look at international practice and see where

anyone lives better because of such restrictions. Nowhere. There are many examples showing that sanctions lead to poverty, to hunger and even to death. The Belarusian unions have addressed the leadership structure of the ILO many times to respect the mandate and to protect Belarusian workers against illegal sanctions, in particular by the application of the ILO Constitution. We have presented an argued complaint in accordance with the Constitution and it was not examined and there have been no results. The illegal sanctions which are a direct attack on the right to work are ignored by the ILO. This is the result of pressure on the ILO by other countries in favour of their own interests. These countries are permanently effectively applying a sanctions policy. I recall that the UN Charter, which all countries have signed up to, indicates that unilateral measures can only be introduced as a result of Security Council resolutions. And on the first day of work a Special Rapporteur of the UN, when addressing the ILO, indicated the illegality of all unilateral sanctions. The ILO has set up its own way of addressing sanctions. It has been emphasized that the ILO cannot take decisions that encourage unilateral restrictive measures. The Belarusian unions support this opposition on the part of the UN Special Representative. There should be mechanisms of control which make it possible to avoid going for these illegal sanctions and protect the people. That would be the proof of the ILO's attachment to the principles of social justice which are the guiding principles and the objective of this organization. Thank you very much.

Mr Antonio Sayo

Employer (Philippines)

Distinguished guests, colleagues and friends from the business, labour and government sectors, ladies and gentlemen, good afternoon. It is my pleasure to be speaking here today, June 12th, 2023, which incidentally marks a very important event in our country as we celebrate the 125th anniversary of Philippine Independence Day. At the outset, let me commend the Chairperson of the ILO Governing Body and the Director-General for their reports which are substantive, relevant and forward-looking. With the comments of the various delegations from all over the world, we hope that the aspirations outlined in the reports will enable us to navigate the five megatrends in the future of work, namely the path of economic globalization, shifting demographic patterns, pace of technological advancements, shortage of skills and even the changing climate conditions, all of which have a consequential impact on governments, workers and employers alike. Above all, with social justice as the overarching framework, let me highlight what the DG referred to as its four facets or dimensions with specific reference to my country, the Philippines. The first dimension is universal human rights and capabilities. Universal human rights include, among others, access to an adequate standard of living, education, healthcare and social security. The second dimension concerns equal access to opportunities for employment and productive activity that enable people to pursue their material well-being in conditions of economic security. On these two dimensions, the Philippines has some examples to showcase. The pandemic brought about opportunities for entrepreneurship. Market-based opportunities opened for both micro entrepreneurs and the informal sectors. This served to enhance the capabilities and align them with the requirements of the digital economy. Again the country has made important strides. What started as an adjustment with the pandemic, where manufacturers made use of their workers' capabilities to distribute and collect and made distribution partners, is a clear testament to this. Employers, as a consequence, have treated even the workers at the lower autonomy areas to handle as partner distributors and even

training them for the backend portion of their production. As partners and co-workers, they share the fruits of margins on top of being paid for the direct economic activities they perform, be it on packaging, distribution or collection. The fourth dimension concerns just transitions. On these two dimensions the private sector is working with TESDA in giving workers the opportunity to increase their incomes through decent work brought about by upskilling that is certified based on recognition of prior learning, with employers and business organizations encouraged to act as assessment and certification centres. Enterprise-based training is also being readied so that micro-credentialing can help in incentivizing the upskilling and reskilling process and to make sure that more adherents will participate. The Fifth Industrial Revolution and digitalization have brought forth challenges to employers and unions alike where in our country about 2 million jobs will be threatened over the next two years. Given the above, the Employers Confederation and its affiliated orgs in the private sector have been recognizing employers and awarding companies with exemplary contributions in the field of labour-management relations through the prestigious Kapatiran sa Industriya Awards, or KAPATID. These awards are a biennial awards activity of ECOP that recognizes company achievements in the fields of industrial peace and harmony, quality, productivity and innovation, responsible and ethical business conduct, and business resiliency and continuity. These same companies would be encouraged to participate in the enterprise-based training with their chapters and chambers doing the assessment and certification. Through the course of time, the areas of tripartite interaction through social dialogue have expanded to encompass not only traditional work and labour relations issues but also a host of labour market and socio-economic issues. It is our fervent belief that the continued partnership and collaboration between the workers and employers can be a catalyst to change and recovery, one step at a time. After all, it is both the employers and workers who understand the dynamics and realities in their respective enterprises. In this regard, we shall continue to be a staunch partner of the Government, trade unions, and the International Labour Organization in providing decent work and sustainable employment opportunities to the Filipino people as well as improving the labour market governance which shall ensure utmost respect for all rights at work. We hope that together with the labour sector we will be able to set aside the challenges in bringing about a workable and forward-looking apprenticeship law to help the Philippines train its 40 million workers, the so-called population dividend, and find its rightful place as a tiger economy in the next five to seven years. To this end, the private sector, or employers, heeds the call of the business sector to step up, work by double and be proactively involved in uplifting the lives of the Filipino people by securing the welfare of its employees in their respective workplaces and value chains through the promotion of a culture of compliance as well as the formulation of reforms that would help stabilize and strengthen industrial relations. May we continue to foster a partnership that pushes for a genuine tripartism that will enable every Filipino worker to attain full, decent and productive employment. Thank you very much and a pleasant afternoon to all.

Mr Gi-Seob Kwon

Government (Republic of Korea)

Madam President, Director-General, distinguished delegates, we all agree with the significance of the four key dimensions in the Director-General's report titled 'Advancing social justice'. Korea is pursuing labour reform based on the rule of law to address the dual structure prevalent in the labour market. This effort is closely aligned with the vision of advancing social justice proposed by the Director-General. Like other

Members States, Korea is undergoing significant demographic changes characterized by a low fertility rate and aging population as well as notable transformations of industries such as digitalization and carbon neutrality. Furthermore, polarization in the labour market is deepening between regular and non-regular workers, large companies and SMEs, and principal contractors and subcontractors. As a response to these changing circumstances, it was only natural for the Government to initiate labour reform to create a sustainable labour market for future generations. First, we are working towards restoring justice in the labour market by upholding the rule of law while eliminating illegal actions and unjust privileges of labour and management. To realize this, the Government is providing support to labour unions in maintaining transparent accounting practices to enhance their democratic, autonomous operation and to strengthen social responsibilities. The Government intends to strictly enforce laws against the illegal and unreasonable practices of employers such as unpaid wages and workplace harassment. It is also pushing for legislation of the Fair Hiring Act to prevent any unfair hiring practices. Second, we are developing a new model to foster collaboration between principal contractors and subcontractors to address existing disparities while providing government support for such efforts. The shipbuilding industry has been successful in facilitating mutually beneficial agreements. This trend will extend to other sectors. Also, as part of our efforts to improve the wage system, we have established the Mutually Beneficial Wage Committee to ensure fair compensation for all workers. Third, we are modernizing our labour norms. This includes reforming working hours to allow greater flexibility for workers and expanding the coverage of social protection for various employment types such as platform work. Fourth, we have changed our approach to occupational safety. Instead of relying solely on inspections and punitive measures, we are emphasizing the autonomy of both labour and management to proactively prevent industrial accidents. In this regard, we have introduced the Serious Accident Reduction Roadmap and are fully committed to its implementation. Fifth, we are dedicated to strengthening active labour market policies to effectively respond to rapid technological changes following the COVID-19 pandemic. This includes expanding job experiences for youth, reinforcing digital vocational training and upgrading job matching services for jobseekers and providers. Successfully achieving labour reform and social justice in the labour market requires active participation, not only from the Government but also from labour and management. Each party must embrace their social responsibilities in line with their influence and roles. Regarding the arguments presented by the Korean Federation of Trade Unions earlier today, I would like to provide the Government's opinion. The Government was compelled to enforce laws at a minimum level at some construction sites because labour union members resorted to illegal means such as violence, threats and coercion, stripping valuable job opportunities from the vulnerable and unorganized workers, and because their actions have frequently endangered the public order and well-being of the general population which cannot be tolerated. Both labour and management should depart from the outdated practices that rely on aggression and physical confrontation rather than dialogue and compromise to solve issues. In addition, they must shift their focus away from pursuing vested rights to restoring the spirit of coexistence and solidarity. We must keep in mind that the goal is to ensure that no vulnerable groups, such as youth and unorganized workers, are left behind. In closing, I wish to reaffirm the strong dedication of the Korean Government in establishing the rule of law in labour relations to create a society where the value of labour is respected and in promoting cooperation and dialogue between labour and management to address the dual structure issues. The Korean Government remains committed to fostering close solidarity and

cooperation with the ILO in our pursuit of advancing social justice. Thank you very much.

Mr David Joyce

Worker (Ireland)

Esteemed President, Vice-Presidents, I congratulate the Director-General for choosing the issue of advancing social justice for both his report to the ILC and his initiative for a new global coalition. On this special day, the World Day against Child Labour, let me start by saying that the abolition of child labour is a cornerstone of social justice, and I urge the Irish Government to engage constructively with the initiative and to give serious consideration to joining Alliance 8.7. The persistence of child labour is indicative of the lack of satisfactory solutions to the multiple challenges and changes in the world of work. In Northern Ireland the negative consequences of Brexit, a political impasse and the failed austerity policies of the British Government continue to deny social justice there. Trade unions are engaged in widespread industrial action to support workers and their families. While the restoration of devolved government is urgent, it is only the first step in a recovery that will only be fully realized through a change in the economic policies of the Government in London. In the Republic of Ireland, there have been some positive developments, including the very welcome ratification of ILO Convention 190; the Work Life Balance Act, which delivers a range of initiatives to help workers reconcile work and caring responsibilities, including the right to request remote working and paid leave for victims of domestic violence; publication of the new National Action Plan Against Racism; the introduction of sick pay; large companies now reporting gender pay gaps; and most significant of all is the fact that we are on the verge of finally addressing our collective bargaining deficit through the implementation of the EU minimum wages directive which will promote collective bargaining and abolish the reductions and deductions under the minimum wage for all young workers. We intend to mount a robust and comprehensive campaign to ensure this occurs. A successful transposition of this directive will unleash the power of collective bargaining to advance equality and foster inclusion in our country. But many challenges also remain, including the cost of living crisis and one in five workers being low paid and the failure to implement the practice and principle of a just transition in seeking to lower carbon emissions. The proportion of adults who experienced sexual violence in their lifetime is 40%, with higher levels for women compared with men, and 60% of those who experienced sexual harassment did so at work. There are poor labour market outcomes for minority groups, including travellers and Roma and the rise of the Far Right taking advantage of these crises, including a deep housing crisis and an accommodation crisis for those seeking international protection, and trying to divide working people. Corporate greed is also a serious obstacle to achieving the SDGs by 2030, and we believe a world that leaves no one behind should hold corporations to account through mandatory human rights due diligence, including grievance procedures to effectively remedy violations. Ireland will undergo a voluntary national review at the UN next month, and we believe these key challenges must be addressed if Goal 8 and the full Agenda 2030 is to be achieved. We fully support the ITUC priorities for the September SDG Summit: a new social contract rooted in a gender transformative agenda for recovery and resilience. I also note the report on the situation of workers in the occupied territories which paints a very bleak and distressing picture. It highlights the need for urgent action to deliver social justice to the people of Palestine. Incidences of discrimination against Palestinians in the application of regulations and policy, as outlined in the report, are increasingly

characterized as apartheid. And one wonders how many more of these kinds of reports we need before the international community moves beyond mere condemnation to holding Israel accountable. May I send our solidarity to LGBTQ+ colleagues and urge you all to attend the No Turning Back event here tomorrow, which we are proud to support. And finally, President, a special call-out for the people of Ukraine and a promise of ongoing support from workers in Ireland. Thank you very much.

Ms Thu Hang Tran

Employer (Viet Nam)

Distinguished Mr President, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen. Today, on behalf of the employers' organizations of Viet Nam, I am very honoured to attend and speak at the ILC 111. I would like to wish all of you good health and the Conference fruitful success. I fully agree with the theme of the Conference and the Report of the Director-General of the ILO and the resolution of the committee of the ILO. The Vietnam Cooperative Alliance is one of the tripartite constituents of Viet Nam. We are actively participating to the Government related ministries and branches to consult about the Conventions that Viet Nam approved and will do it. At the same time, it is also an actor to implement the programme on decent work in the period 2022-2026 signed by the ILO, Viet Nam and the tripartite constituents. Dear delegates, up to June 2023 there are 20,000 cooperatives in Viet Nam and more than 100,000 cooperative groups, thus contributing to the social and economic development of Viet Nam. Each year the number of cooperatives increases around 6,000 to 7,000 cooperatives. In 2020, even we were affected a lot by the COVID-19 pandemic. The cooperative sector also influenced a lot about the productive and the contribution, but we still have much contribution to the 5% of the GDP, 8% to the exports and 10% of the state budget. There are 8.5 million members and 3.5 million regular workers, and at least half of them are rural workers. The cooperative sector provided 100,000 jobs for the people in the rural areas in Viet Nam each year. We have very important roles for creating decent work. We continue to organize the training, the skills for workers. The Vietnam Cooperative Alliance provides training for over 30,000 persons per year, and the cooperatives themselves conduct the training for 6.5 million members per year. Actively participating in preparing institutes, policies, strategies on developing decent work, minimum wage, labour market, public work services. Enhancing empowerment of women for gender equality in work assignments, healthcare, leadership, salary and promotion, protecting the basic rights of the workers, paying social insurance, healthcare insurance, unemployment insurance for workers on time. There are 800,000 workers paid by social insurance by the cooperative sector. We are ensuring the minimum wage for workers in the cooperative sector and ensuring the working time working conditions allowances for them at the basic level. Workers have the right to participate in collective bargaining. The Vietnam Cooperative Alliance continues to confirm its position as employers' organization and actively involved in the decent industrial relation, decent work and social and solidarity economy in Viet Nam. We are the members to participate in the national targeted programme on new rural construction, sustainable poverty reduction, creating decent jobs for the labourers, particularly in disadvantaged and ethnic minority areas. Most of the cooperative sector serves the economic and social benefits for the members, developing the communities and ensuring the social security for security, protecting the environment and against and adapt to climate change. We also set up the development goal for 2030 in order to create the fair playground for all the economic sector and with the slogan no one left behind. Thank you very much for the President.

Mr Sharat Singh Bhandari

Government (Nepal)

Mr President, Excellencies, distinguished delegates, it is my pleasure to address the 111th Session of the International Labour Conference on behalf of the Government of Nepal. Our congratulations to Mr Director-General for your report on advancing social justice. It quite rightly captures the impact from the COVID-19 pandemic to the global supply chain disruption has had on structural inequalities, insecurities and injustices. Nepal's experience is no different. Rather, the need to address these challenges is given further urgency by our impending graduation from a least developed country in 2026. A human-centred approach, called by the Global Call to Action and echoed in this report, represents the framework for our response. Madam Chair, allow me to apprise you of the recent steps that we have taken in this regard. We understand that our successful graduation is tied to ensuring a job-rich structural transformation. Complexities of successfully navigating different pathways towards this outcome in a world transformed by recent crises called for a revision of our national employment policy. The policy and its accompanying implementation plan will provide a clear gender-inclusive vision for addressing existing challenges and taking advantage of available opportunities. Crucially, this will be complemented by two other policies. The first is our integrated National Action Plan on formalization that was noted in Mr Director-General's report and is based on diagnostics of informality as per ILO Recommendation No. 204. The implementation of the action plan has been a success and its learnings have now been taken forward in the development of an integrated national strategy on formalization. The other complementary piece is our skills policy with particular focus on apprenticeship which is in its penultimate stage. Here we note the importance of discussions around the quality apprenticeship recommendation and re-emphasize the importance of a standard which better guides our work at the national level. We know that job creation should be accompanied by adequate labour and social protection. Nepal has recently launched a new contributory social security scheme for self-employed workers in the informal sector and for migrant workers. The schemes for the formal sector are also currently being to better facilitate labour market transitions. Our efforts in the coming year will now be focused on improving compliance with concerted efforts to improve and expand the labour inspectorate system based on the provisions of ILO Convention 81. We will also be taking further guidance from the discussions here in conclusion of the report 'Leaving no one behind: Building inclusive labour protection in an evolving world of work'. Mr Director-General's report rightly notes that the labour administration plays a vital role in the governance of the world of work. Nepal has for the first time put in place a tripartite validated National Action Plan on labour administration that provides structured guidance for improving service delivery, securing workers' rights and facilitating transition towards the formal economy. Social dialogue has been the key to our progress here, and we recognize its continued importance to resolving labour market challenges in the days ahead. Nepal remains steadfast in its role as a pathfinder country for Sustainable Development Goal 8.7. We now have declared ourselves Haruwa-Charuwa, that means agricultural bonded labour, free in 2022. They continue to remain a priority group as we look to provide rehabilitation and continue our efforts towards the drafting and adoption of an integrated forced labour act. Nepal has also adopted an area-based approach to eliminate child labour by supporting local governments in declaring child-labour free municipalities. These efforts are guided by an action plan based on the 'Second National Master Plan on Elimination of Child Labour'. Respected ma'am, we understand that while this progress represents significant steps forward, our diverse

labour market challenges require coordinated responses of a wider scope. This is precisely why we need a Global Coalition for Social Justice and as outlined in Mr Director-General's report and captured in the Singapore Declaration at the 17th Asia Pacific Regional Meeting, it would greatly support our national efforts and commitments towards promoting social justice and the Decent Work Agenda. Finally, I would like to close by reiterating our support for the global coalition and give my best wishes for a successful outcome to the 111th Session of the International Labour Conference. Thank you very much.

Mr Sivakumar Varatharaju Naidu

Government (Malaysia)

President, honourable ministers, Excellencies, distinguished delegates, first and foremost Malaysia would like to congratulate Qatar for the presidency of the 111th International Labour Conference. Ladies and gentlemen, Malaysia supports the ILO Director-General's report entitled 'Advancing social justice'. Malaysia echoes all the importance of upholding the fundamental labour principles and rights at work in advocating social justice. In favour of the report, Malaysia is committed in enhancing labour protection and promoting decent work through various initiatives. Towards that, Malaysia's Employment Act 1955 was amended and has come into force on 1st January 2023. Among the amendments are the new provision on prohibition of discrimination to combat and prohibit any form of discrimination with regards to employment issues. The new provision on prohibition of forced labour, this provision was introduced to be in line with ILO Convention 29 on forced labour as well as the Protocol of 2014 to the Forced Labour Convention 1930 which Malaysia ratified on 21st March 2022. The new provision on flexible working arrangements aims to enable flexibility in working conditions and to promote work-life balance as well as to optimize the use of resources, energy and cost to employers. In line with the initiatives of combating forced labour in Malaysia, Malaysia is working towards becoming one of the pathfinder countries which supports the SDG Target 8.7 that aims to accelerate the elimination of forced labour, modern slavery and child labour by the year 2030. In providing standard accommodation for workers, Malaysia has also amended its Employees' Minimum Standards of Housing, Accommodation and Amenities Act 1990 which aims to compel employers to provide minimum standards of housing and amenities, thus elevating workers' quality of life. In addressing inequalities and providing inclusive social protection to all, Malaysia has extended the social security protection coverage for the Employment Injury Scheme to migrant workers effective from 1st January 2019. This step aligns with the core principles of the ILO Decent Work Agenda which extends social protection and underscores the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals, premised on the concept of leaving no one behind. In supporting the theme of Social Justice for All and the agenda of the ILC this year, Malaysia would like to urge all ILO Member States to revitalize the resolution adopted in 2013 concerning sustainable development, decent work and green jobs to be put forward as a policy framework for a just transition. On the importance of enhancing upskilling and reskilling through the technical and vocational education and training, TVET, Malaysia is of the view that it is crucial to incorporate elements of just transition such as green jobs and climate resilience to maintain TVET programmes. Ladies and gentlemen, in strengthening the cooperation with employers' and workers' organizations, Malaysia opines that the National Labour Advisory Council and the National Council of Occupational Safety and Health are amongst the platforms of engagement to address key industrial relations and employment issues. Malaysia

looks forward to productive deliberations and the successful conclusion of this year's Conference agenda. With that, I thank you.

Mr Noor Kutub Alam Mannan

Worker (Bangladesh)

Honourable Chair, good afternoon. I would like to extend my best wishes to the governments, employers' and workers' representatives, including the guests and the media personnel from the different countries participating in this Conference. At the 110th Conference, I mentioned the progress in improving the quality of life, social and legal protection and benefits of workers. I left two proposals. One, to form a permanent disaster prevention fund. Two, to stop the third-party contractual job trend against the permanent post in the name of outsourcing. It will be highly appreciated if we know the progress. We are here for the assurance of survival of the working people of the oppressed world, assurance of work, OSH, to stop violence and harassment against men and women for human development, creating smooth industrial relations to ensure the social and global justice of a stable and fair globalization. Finally we want to ensure the sustainable development of the masses. Bangladesh has already signed 36 Conventions and one Protocol. Bangladesh has 51 green industrial units among the world's top 100 Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design certified units approved by the U.S. Green Building Council. Bangladesh has 64 …

Mr Pearnel Jr. Charles .

Government (Jamaica)

Director-General, Mr Houngbo, Vice-President, Conference President, distinguished delegates and observers. It is my distinct pleasure to address the 111th Session of the International Labour Organization's Conference on behalf of the Government and people of Jamaica, and I want to congratulate and welcome Mr Houngbo as the ILO's 11th Director-General. Madam Vice-President, the issue of social justice is critical, and I concur with the Director-General that a safe and healthy working environment is not a privilege but an entitlement for all workers. In that regard, Jamaica reaffirms its commitment to enacting legislation that safeguards the safety and health of all workers. In Jamaica, the advancement of social justice and the Decent Work Agenda are at the core of our policies and programmes. Our new social justice programme, launched in January 2023, is geared towards strengthening inclusive governance, rule of law and access to justice with a special focus on vulnerable communities and at-risk groups. Additionally, despite the challenges associated with COVID-19, Jamaica has recovered stronger with a recorded 9.4% increase in employment in July 2022 as compared to October 2020. Unemployment in Jamaica is now at an all-time low of 6.6%, and the national minimum wage was increased not once but twice since April 2022, amounting to an 86% increase, the largest increase in the last 20 years. Now, post COVID-19, we now contend with the challenges of an evolving global labour market, and in particular the new phenomenon of platform workers and how to safeguard their labour rights and protection. Madam Vice-President, we must prepare Jamaica for the future world of work. As such, we have taken a strategic step of waiving the tuition and administrative fees for students seeking to access training up to the equivalent of an associate degree at our national vocational and skills training institution. This bold move is intended to better prepare our students for the emerging global landscape. Furthermore, the Government is supporting the establishment of

the first training institution for domestic workers, which is a testament of our support for workers in the informal economy. Likewise, colleagues, Jamaica is fully committed to promoting full and effective participation of persons with disabilities in all areas of society. And, as such, on February 14th, 2022, the Disabilities Act came into full effect. Equally important is the Government's effort to address the challenges posed by an ageing population through the implementation of a robust Social Pension Programme in Jamaica in 2021 and the launch of the revised National Policy for Senior Citizens in 2022. Today, on World Day against Child Labour, I acknowledge the ILO's support for the development of a national plan of action on child labour that emphasizes the strengthening of institutions of government and civil society as well as the enforcement of laws to prevent child labour. As I close, Vice-President, colleagues, I thank the ILO for its ongoing technical support to develop a modern labour protection framework through the advancement of the OSH Bill, Informality to Formality project, unemployment insurance and a gap analysis which will move us closer to ratifying Convention 190, the elimination of violence and harassment in the world of work. Mr President, Vice-President, colleagues, let me reassure this Conference that Jamaica, the land of wood and water, remains committed to maintaining the principles of social justice and decent work for all groups. We believe that through collaboration and collective action we can create a better and more equitable world of work. Jamaica calls upon the ILO to recognize the vulnerabilities of small island developing states and its responsibility to enhance the collective action towards decent work, social justice and just transition as we leave no one behind. Thank you. One love.

Mr Zhumabek Zhanykulov

Employer (Kazakhstan)

Good afternoon, dear colleagues, dear delegates. Let me greet you on behalf of the National Confederation of Employers of Kazakhstan, PARYZ, and thank you for the opportunity to speak. The confederation was established to protect the interests of employers and develop social and labour relations between the state, workers and employers. PARYZ is the only independent and classical social partnership employers' organization in our country, recognized by the International Labour Organization. We attach special importance to cooperation with the ILO and fulfil our obligations in accordance with standards and national practices. In general, the civilized development of the system of social partnership in Kazakhstan by the Recommendation of the ILO began in 1994 on the basis of the decree adopted by the President of the country. This document marked the beginning of the development of the regulatory framework for trilateral cooperation in the republic. As one of the parties of the social partnership, we represented at all levels as a signatory of the general and also regional agreements. The confederation is recognized as an organization which is complying with all the principles of the ILO. It is an independent organization without affiliation with the state. Our independence is our main value. We do not receive funding from the state. We do not have representatives of government agencies. We are not affiliated with anyone. Nothing prevents us from voicing problems when they happen. Since last year fundamental changes have been made in the confederation. Rebranding has been carried out, the composition of the presidium has completely changed and the personnel potential has been increased. As part of our main task, protecting the interests of employers, we have established systematic business relations with the ILO, the work going on practically on a daily basis. Firstly, on the recommendation of the ILO in line with the social partners, we are actively working on the separate laws on employers' organization and on social partnership.

Secondly, this year, with the assistance of the ILO experts, an analysis of the OECD countries in terms of labour legislation in comparison with Kazakhstani experience has been done. The results of the study are presented to the members of the confederation, the authorized body, as well as deputies of the parliament of our country. Thirdly, together with ILO experts, the confederation has begun the development of a new conception on labour protection. There is also an agreement with the ILO on conducting a study to analyse and assess the state of social partnership on the basis of Almaty city. Based on the results, an assessment will be done and specific recommendations will be sent for all parties. In the current conditions, the institution of social partnership has a special role in connection with the growth of social tension in the world and Kazakhstan. In this context, employers can act as a key stabilizing factor, and the confederation aims to systematize the work of social partnership in Kazakhstan. To do this, it is important for the confederation to properly build a social dialogue and follow the best world practice, as well as comply with the international ILO standards. In general, we have a lot of work ahead of us. Many issues need to be addressed, especially those on which decisions have already been made. The confederation will do its best to solve them. We are once again grateful to the ILO for assistance on the development of social partnership in Kazakhstan, as well as for the invitation for this Conference. We express hope for further good cooperation. Thank you.

Ms Maria Joaquina Almeida

Worker (Cabo Verde)

Vice-Chair, representatives from the Government, from trade unions and from employers, ladies and gentlemen. We are glad to be here and to be part of this august Conference which represents the highest levels of workers in Cabo Verde. By means of this statement, we wish to demonstrate the need for a better implementation of the ILO's Conventions. Many Conventions are ratified. However, despite their ratification, often in practice they are not implemented properly. Often in countries, if they can see that they can defer the implementation of the Conventions, they will put it off. This happens especially in employers' sectors. The ones who suffer the most are the workers. In Cabo Verde, for example, 16 Conventions have been ratified. Despite this fact, in practice the application thereof is often not sufficient. For example, Convention 144 on tripartite dialogue has not been implemented properly. It was ratified in 1993 and there was the creation of a social table, and it was only ratified in 2020. So this means that workers often do not have access to decent conditions. Another Convention, the one on harassment, has not been implemented properly. It has been the object of great disagreements among the Government and civil society. Violence and harassment are a recurrent problem in private companies and in public institutions in the country. The Government is not doing anything about it. It is not ratifying the appropriate Convention. More recently we have had a case in which journalists reported on the sexual harassment that was widespread in a public institution, and it was committed by a public official against a worker. The punishment: the official and the worker were both forced to work in a teleworking position. Now, in our view, the Government should take better care of matters. In the Labour Code in our country, these matters have been addressed in 2010 and once again since, but the Government always wants to diminish the rights that have been acquired by workers and always wishes to promote the rights of employers. This is a problem in Cabo Verde. Workers often suffer from unfair layoffs. This is a great problem and it is necessary that we raise our voices in this forum to defend the rights of workers in Cabo Verde. It

is necessary to revise once in a while the Labour Code and without removing rights that have been acquired by the workers and benefit the employers. As representatives of the workers, we wish to challenge the situation and we are faced continually with decisions made by the Government which makes decisions that impact the workers negatively. The only true UNTC-Cs trade union in Cabo Verde defends the rights of the workers. We do so firmly and we do so using the weapons that we have at hand to fight against inequalities. I would like to wish you all the best for this Conference.

Mr Binod Shrestha

Worker (Nepal)

Dear Chairperson, fellow delegates, observers, guests, ladies and gentlemen, I am honoured to address the 111th Session of the International Labour Conference as a workers' delegate from Nepal. On behalf of the JTUCC, the common platform of Nepalese trade unions and my own union, GEFONT, I would like to express my gratitude to ILO Director-General Gilbert F. Houngbo for his comprehensive report on advancing social justice. I commend the ILO for its efforts to promote social justice through its core principles of decent work, social protection, social dialogue and international labour standards. However, in Nepal we have witnessed the denial of our rights as many workers use [vgr INAUDIBLE 1:01] substitute to exploit us in receiving on ways for [vgr INAUDIBLE 1:07]. The Director-General's report rightly emphasizes the importance of social protection for all workers. Unfortunately, the budget for the Prime Minister's employment programme which aims 100 days of employment guarantee was cut by the recent government. Additionally, the Supreme Court orders that the contribution-based social security system be optional for employers in the banking and financial sector. The trade unions are fighting for the social security system to cover all workers and not be left to the mercy of employers. Social security system be extended to the informal sector and workers [vgr INAUDIBLE 1:57], but the Government has not paid sufficient attention to enforce these schemes. Similarly, Nepal is also suffering from global warming and it has adverse impact on employment of workers. I urge the ILO and the Government of Nepal to collaborate and bridge this gap, ensuring social protection and climate justice for all workers. The report also underscored the significance of social dialogue in achieving social justice. However, the Government has appointed leaders of fake unions and representatives of workers in various tripartite forums, preventing meaningful engagement. This illustrates the ill-intention of the Government. Additionally, the Supreme Court's decision to remove the 10% service charge for workers in the hotel, restaurant, catering and tourism sector, which was the result of a 30-years-long fight introduced through collective bargaining, is a significant setback. This undermines the principle of fair hearing [? 3:16] and denies workers the right to be heard, affecting fair [? 3:21] compensation for employees. Nepal is recognized as a labour-sending country, and inadequate protection of Nepalese migrants abroad demands immediate attention. Countless cases of exploitation, abuse and mistreatment of our fellow workers who seek employment opportunities overseas have been reported. The Government should strengthen its efforts to protect the rights of migrant workers based on the ILO principle of fair recruitment. Bilateral agreements with destination countries should be established and adequate service should be provided to address their needs and concerns. Unfortunately, the Government is favouring recruiting agencies and discussing raising fees for workers in addition to visa fees and ticket costs. We urge the Government to adhere to ILO principles in these regards. In conclusion, I endorse the ILO Director-General's report on advancing social justice. I call upon the Government, employers and trade unions

to work collectively towards creating a society that upholds the rights, dignity and well-being of workers. Together, let us advance social justice and create a brighter future of our workers. Thank you very much.

Mr Rafael Francisco Abreu Polanco

Worker (Dominican Republic)

President of the 111th ILC, Vice-President, the CNTD, the National Confederation of Dominican Workers, is an institution of the Dominican Republic and it shares the space with the CASC, the Autonomous Confederation, and the CNUS. This is the opportunity for us to participate in this august event which aims to strengthen tripartism, and this has to be done in collaboration with the Government and the employer sector in the Dominican Republic. Since 1944, the year in which in the Declaration of Philadelphia was signed, the world has sought to fight for social justice and for the protection of the rights of workers. It is important, however, to understand that this is a process which is not moving forward in a linear fashion. Many aspects that are necessary to reach these aims are unable to do so because we are constantly facing crises and moving backwards, and this is happening across the globe. In this context, let me tell you that the Dominican Republic's trade unions movement has truly focused on social dialogue. The trade unions movement has wanted to move forward despite the fact that certain sectors in our society do not understand our message as they resist and they are doing so in a very retrograde fashion. For example, freedom of association is denied as well as collective bargaining. Moreover, there is a social security law which continues to be exclusive in terms of healthcare. This does not allow decent healthcare for people. Moreover, it does not allow for a decent pension system. Currently, we are under negotiations and the trade unions in the Dominican Republic recognize that change is needed. Changes have been made in the Labour Code. No change, however, will ever be achieved properly and we will never accept any changes that represent a weakening of the Labour Code and the workers' rights. It is fundamental that we should highlight this. In the Dominican Republic there are sectors that are very mistrustful of the ILO's wish to achieve decent work. This is something which has been seen at this Conference. And the Constitutional Court of the Dominican Republic has just issued a sentence that excludes domestic workers from social protection, and this is in violation of Convention 189 of the ILO. This was something which had been set forward by a resolution in the country, and this demonstrates that the ministry and many sectors declare that they adopt resolutions but then in practice they perform other actions. I also wish to highlight the following. It is true that we have achieved tripartism, that we have been able to, for example, achieve an increase in wages in many areas. However, we need to go further and we wish for minimum wages to be created and set forth in various sectors. A minimum living wage is necessary for the populations in the country. Finally, let me tell you that the Dominican Republic is a country that has the opportunity to reach social agreement, to achieve social justice and defend the workers of the country. That is because at its lead there are leaders that have been receptive to this fact and to this wish. However, the economy and the employers in the Dominican Republic must be more rational, and they must reach an agreement. [vgr INTERRUPTION 7:27]. Thank you very much.

Ms Sarah Mireille Nzenze

Government (Gabon)

Mr President, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, I would, on behalf of the Government of Gabon and the delegation accompanying me, extend to you and your team our congratulations on your brilliant election to the bureau of this Conference. I also extend my congratulations to the Director-General of the International Labour Organization for the excellent quality of his report. Mr President, in keeping with the ILO Constitution, whose preamble stipulates that universal and lasting peace can only be based on social justice, the Director-General's report, which has retained the Government of my country's attention, proposes taking strong measures and this by the tripartite constituents in order to address the problems of inequality, insecurity, abject poverty and injustice that are an obstruction to efforts over the years for social justice. As part of the major principles proposed, the Government of Gabon, under the impetus of His Excellency Mr Ali Bongo Ondimba, has initiated, and starting in 2020, several reforms for social justice through the promotion of decent work. To this end, practical provisions taken to fight discrimination on the one hand and to promote gender equality on the other is where my country has adopted a strategy to promote women's rights and reduce gender inequality. The strategy entails a certain number of reforms, especially legislatively: enactment of a law on violence against women, laws guaranteeing access to education, health, right of the family, the role of women at home, the right of women to participate in the economy and the right for their political emancipation. To this end, in its implementation this strategy has led to the enactment of a law pertaining to the Labour Code in our country and another one pertaining to the fight against harassment at the workplace. Likewise, with a view to guaranteeing access to full, productive and freely chosen employment as well as lifelong learning, reforms of the legal framework have also been undertaken, leading to the passing of a law pertaining to the creation of a national employment promotion structure and a decree being adopted to create a mission and organization of a directorate general for integration and reintegration, and also a decree to have a directorate general on employment whose role is to come up with public policy in this area. Throughout the long process of the dialogue and consultations between the Government and social partners, supported by civil society organizations and development partners as well as the ILO, a framework document of national policy for employment of Gabon was developed, and has been since 2017, and was adopted in April 2018. The document focuses on four main things: improving capacity to absorb manpower, develop the private sector, increase employability and modernize the workforce. Moreover, there have been incentive measures in order to bring companies to hire youth and then receive tax credits. In order to foster governance of work that is inclusive and effective, a capacity-building programme for the tripartite constituents has been implemented since 2020 with the ILO's support to create a greater dynamic and have better inclusive social dialogue in order to organize professional elections and to set up a standing body for social dialogue. To act on its commitment to protect people throughout their lives and create conditions that are needed in order to have a just transition, the high authorities of my country have decided to create a national healthcare structure and social guarantees. And this is going to be an extension of social protection for all, including for workers. All these actions show my country's will and that of the high authorities to advance social justice. To consolidate gains already made and to face all obstacles that could obstruct its movement forward, greater cooperation with the ILO would help us to strengthen our commitment to social justice. Mr President, before concluding, I

would like to reiterate, on behalf of my country, Gabon, and the delegation accompanying me, our adherence to the creation of a Global Coalition for Social Justice which, as the report emphasizes, would offer the constituents of the ILO a framework within which they could meet with a great variety of key actors to step up action at the regional, global and national levels to work for social justice for all. I thank you for your kind attention.

Mr Ravindra Dinkarlal Himte

Worker (India)

Respected Chair and distinguished participants, please accept warm greetings from Bharat. It gives me immense pleasure to be here and meet you all in person. We have been through the COVID-19 pandemic during 2020 and 2021 globally. The global community is trying to [vgr INAUDIBLE 0:49] due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Workers have either lost their jobs or are away from their jobs. Mass migration of labour from one place to another has occurred. The Global Commission report future [vgr INAUDIBLE 1:08] member status to promote and realize fundamental principles and rights at work. The majority of the working population in developing country is in the informal sector. India is a big country with a 480-million-strong workforce. It has shown in presence in the manufacturing, agriculture and service sector. We are experienced in this world that the hard work of labour for production is not properly rewarded. Uneven [? 1:53] profit accumulated at the end of the chain has proved not worthy. There is a vast discrepancy between the share of wages and share of profits. Giant industries and MSEs do not observe uniform labour standards, which have caused the expansion of labour [vgr INAUDIBLE 2:17], especially in the developing countries. The ILO has developed the comprehensive set of normative instruments meant to guide the development of nations by national, bilateral and multilateral framework aimed at their social protection. We are pleased to inform you that India has collected 291 million data informal workers based on discussion here in ILC 2017. All workers engaged in any sector should be able to enjoy equal provisions of social security. In India, employers in formal enterprises range from 7% to 10% of total employment. The expansion of informal employment in the formal sector, which is noted over the past year, intensified after the COVID-19 pandemic. Thus [? 3:26] understanding prevent informality jobs are extremely important for formulating strategies. It is high time to rethink that acceptance of our unregular worker as a world order [? 3:45]. This year India is the host country to organize the G20 meeting. G20 meetings are important for the whole world and with the theme One Earth, One Family, One Future. Similarly, L20 is also organized under the presidency of India. The important international issues to think about are universalization of social security, women and the future of work. This leads to achieving gender equality and decent work. The ILO suggests forming a social protection floor by creating a manufacturing maximum. We must [vgr INAUDIBLE 4:35] generating growth with workers' rights. With these observations, the conversation on the world of work will provide a better scope for the entire workforce in the near future. For that, [vgr INAUDIBLE 4:57] to the continuous efforts of the functioning of the ILO is necessary. We are sure that we will explore the effect to development [vgr INAUDIBLE 5:09] for world of work. I wish to finish my speech with the optimism of economic growth with the consciousness to make our world a happy, prosperous and sustainable place to live. Thank you all. Jai Bharat.

Ms Juliana Manrique Sierra

Employer (Colombia)

On behalf of ANDI and the Colombian employers, it is a great honour to be addressing this Conference. First of all I welcome the initiative of the Director-General, Mr Gilbert Houngbo, for the creation of a Global Coalition for Social Justice. We are committed to promoting tripartism with the aim of strengthening the multilateral system and to fulfil the efforts that will promote social justice. We believe that the ILO can play an important role in this necessary and urgent mission to create a better coordinated multilateral system which will allow us to move forward towards Agenda 2030. Tripartism has enormous potential to ensure a just transition for all, including of course for employers. Secondly, this innovative and courageous proposal is also an invitation for national players so that they can reiterate their commitment to facing new and old challenges. The employers in Colombia are convinced that the promotion of social justice by means of decent work will require a favourable environment that promotes sustainability and that creates the necessary conditions for the formalization of jobs as well as ensuring compliance with legislation. We believe that trust should be the cornerstone of social dialogue, and this is required to promote the social reforms required in Colombia. The transition from the informal to the formal economy and the creation of decent, full and productive work should be the main aim of the Government, employers and workers. In Colombia unemployment is high. Most workers are employed in the informal sector and this is reflected in a low level of social protection. At the same time, we can see that there is a discordance between the application of laws and the generation of formal jobs. All this has a negative impact on productivity, and this has been seen for decades. This requires true change and for us to reach agreements on fundamental issues such as the creation of decent jobs and sustainable companies. A draft labour reform is in the making, and we are concerned that many may be forgotten, such as the unemployed and those employed in the informal sector who do not have access to any type of protection. We believe that it is not acceptable at this time that these two realities be denied. We insist that all these be taken into account in this draft law. Colombian employers believe that we find ourselves at a prime time in order to respond to fundamental questions and look for solutions in the form of a structural labour reform which would include the following: increasing social protection, increasing the number of formal jobs and formal companies and improving competitivity and productivity of the companies to create new formal jobs. Employers reiterate their good will towards strengthening social dialogue which is based on tripartism and that will allow a stronger democracy and will pave the way towards a greater consensus. We wish to thank the ILO for its technical support which is both objective and balanced and which allows the discussion of social reforms. We urge the ILO to be the guarantor of a true tripartite social dialogue which is both constructive and meaningful. Companies will achieve greater growth and create more jobs and achieve better social well-being if they take into account that productivity and competitiveness are inseparable in order to reach a stronger economy with stable and healthy jobs. Finally, let me tell you that Alberto Echavarría Saldarriaga, who has been the leader of our delegation for decades now, has not been able to come, and he has brought his knowledge and experience to the various bodies of the ILO. Unfortunately, he left us recently in the month of May. He has taught us that social dialogue is the best way to find solutions to persistent problems. Not only it is the best way but it is the only way forward. Thank you.

Mr Fignolé Saint-Cyr

Worker (Haiti)

Mr President of the Conference, on behalf of the structure that I represent, the Haitian workers, I congratulate you on your election to this prestigious assembly. I would also like to take this opportunity to greet the Director-General of the ILO and all the delegates here at this Conference who have come from across the world, especially those from the Republic of Haiti who are present here today. I also extend my greetings to the ILO staff for the efforts they have made to ensure that this event takes place. Ladies and gentlemen, for decades the Haitian people have been facing a dispersed, exploded and shaped framework for strict needs linked to economic and social underdevelopment, making the situation of workers ever more precarious. Added to that are successive natural disasters and gang wars that we have experienced over the past year, and this is making things just worse, of course, and that is making employment a luxury for workers. For instance, the Haitian textile sector used to have in the past over 60,000 workers and today only has 40,000. We also have to mention the agricultural sector, the informal sector and the Madan Sara, on which the national economy largely relies. Haitian workers are now facing galloping unemployment hovering at 50%. In order to enable Haiti to extricate itself from the current situation, it needs proactive Solidarity from all. And I say Solidarity with a capital S. It is in this sense that I am calling for a real manifestation together with employers and buyers of the realization needed in order to have creation of massive employment at the national and international levels for international standards, and this for decent work. In this respect, I take the opportunity to ask the ILO to continue to support Haitian social partners in their reform of the Labour Code that has taken too long. I take this opportunity to ask the Haitian Government to fully play its role as a regulator because too often Haitian workers are victims of violations at the workplace such as unlawful and arbitrary firing, violations of unions' rights and repeated cases of harassment. This is an opportunity to mention the following companies. MAS Akansyel, S&H Global in Caracol. These are South Korean companies, just to mention a few. Mr President of the Conference, Mr Director-General of the ILO, with regard to all the problems facing Haitian workers, the Haitian trade union sector is asking the ILO to have a country bureau set up in Haiti in the near future. This would be justice for the workers of the Republic of Haiti who have a desperate need for this in order to make it possible for social partners to fully play their role in accompanying the ILO. Long live Haiti, long live the ILO and long live the Haitian trade union movement. Thank you.

Mr Mody Guiro

Worker (Senegal)

Mr President, Mr Director-General of the ILO, dear delegates, it is with great pleasure that I take the floor as the Workers' delegate of Senegal on the occasion of the 111th Session of the International Labour Conference. I would also like to congratulate the President of the Conference on his election and also thank the Director-General of the ILO and congratulate him on the relevance of his report. I also would like to extend my thanks to all the delegates from different countries for their contribution to the debates on essential matters of the twenty-first century, namely a just transition toward lasting and inclusive economies, quality apprenticeships and the protection of workers. As rightly emphasized by the Director-General in his report, let us not turn a blind eye to the threats facing this world. Let us not turn a blind eye to

the inequality that is increasing when we see on the one hand exaggerated opulence and growing poverty and indigence in a world where the wealth produced suffices for all to live decently. Indeed, the great majority of the world's population does not benefit from social protection and we see greater precarious situations in terms of employment with the risk of financial stability of institutions for social protection in developing countries. The informal sector, which provides growth and contributes over 50% of GDP in developing countries is left out of social protection policies. This has to be redressed through implementation of relevant policies to improve living and working conditions as well as to make the transition to the formal economy. Mr President, the work environment has changed significantly with the introduction of new technologies, robotics, automation, telework and artificial intelligence, et cetera. This, as an organization of workers, forces us to ask the question about the future of work. The ILO, at its 100th anniversary, had a discussion on the topic, and the only conclusion retained to solve this equation was to have human-centred policies. In Africa, many sacrifices have been made by workers to accompany the authorities in their quest for a better living of the population faced with recurring crises: energy, food, financial, economic, health and social crises. There is hope with respect to resilience in Africa. Despite a difficult environment, we see ourselves faced with very uncertain futures given the war in Ukraine and possible bankruptcies in developing countries with real risks for economic crises. With the tripartite structure we have, we know that the ILO can play an important role in this alarming situation. That is why we congratulate the Director-General on his report for this quest for social justice, which is the only way the world can once again find stability and lead us to a better future. We take this opportunity also to make an appeal to the international community on cancelling the debt of the countries of the South in order to make it possible to allocate these amounts to the development of quality, basic social services and therefore contribute to better social justice. It is the opportune time to be gratified by the creation of the African Continental Free Trade Area, and we hope that there will be involvement of workers in its implementation. We have crucial issues to face. We see with COP, one after the other, the commitments taken to reduce greenhouse gas effects to less than 2% are never complied with in a world that is ever more polluted. Migratory crises with displacement of millions of people seeking a better life with loss of incalculable human lives must disturb our conscience to guarantee migrants and their families in host countries their rights in keeping with the ratification of international standards and norms. We see in this world deep crises, threatened with instability and many, many hotbeds of tension, especially in Africa with the jihadist and terrorist groups that are imposing their laws over great swathes of land and territory. To conclude, we would be remiss not to mention and reiterate our attachment to social dialogue in keeping with the ILO's fundamental Conventions, especially on collective bargaining and trade union freedom and the right to strike. We feel we must all continue to show solidarity with workers who are victims of violations of their rights throughout the world. We thank Mr Director-General for the visit made to Senegal when he took his position to establish contact with social partners. Thank you for your kind attention.

Ms Hon. Prof. Joyce Lazaro Ndalichako

Government (United Republic of Tanzania)

Chairperson of the session, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen. I feel greatly honoured to be granted an opportunity to address this august Conference. At the outset, allow me, on behalf of my delegation, to extend sincere appreciation to the

Director-General of the ILO for his valuable and insightful report. Chairperson, let me convey to you warm greetings from Her Excellency Dr Samia Suluhu Hassan, the President of the United Republic of Tanzania, who is constantly taking measures to improve the country's economy and the standard of living for the people of Tanzania. Chairperson, I would like to commend the Director-General for the excellent work he is doing in pursuing the Decent Work Agenda. This is evidently seen in his report which focuses on the need for greater social justice globally, the means to achieve it and the existing opportunities nationally and internationally. My delegation finds the focus of the discussion in this session timely and appropriate. We consider the dimensions of social justice, which are equal access to opportunities, fair distribution of resources, just transition and universal human rights and capabilities, as a matter of great importance. We concur with the Director-General's report on the need to integrate social agenda into all major international, regional and national policies and to take actions to address the growing economic disparities. Chairperson, Tanzania appreciates the Director-General's report which underscores the growing need for international policy coordination and cooperation in technical and financial matters. The report emphasizes the critical role of social dialogue where challenges arise. We would like to assure you that Tanzania is continuously strengthening tripartism for effective social dialogue. Chairperson, allow me now to mention measures which the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania has taken to enhance social justice and promote the Decent Work Agenda. We have enacted laws to enforce social protection coverage to the informal sector. We have published a new minimum wage order which has been effective from January 2023. Following the resolution on the inclusion of a safe and healthy working environment in the ILO's framework of fundamental principles and rights at work, we have reviewed labour laws to strengthen compliance in line with this resolution. We have formulated and published six new regulations on occupational health and safety in 2023. Currently, we are reviewing the national strategy for combating all forms of child labour. Chairperson, I am delighted to inform you that the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania is fully funding the National Skills Development programme which provides support to youths to acquire relevant skills through apprenticeship training. In ensuring inclusion of vulnerable groups, we have developed national guidelines on inclusion of persons with disabilities in different social and economic activities including the Skills Development programme. In conclusion, Chairperson, I wish to reaffirm the commitment of the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania in continuing to work with the ILO and other partners in observing ILO Conventions, Protocols and Recommendations. I thank you for your kind attention. Asante sana. Merci beaucoup.

Mr David Acuña

Worker (Chile)

Vice-President, let me begin by saluting all the workers as well as the leaders, all the delegates and the employers here present. I come from Chile, a small country. This is how the historic speech of former president Salvador Allende began at the Assembly of the United Nations. He also said this is a country where the working class is united in one trade union. And that is the CUT Chile. This year the CUT Chile has declared that it is the year of decent work and human rights. As a country we are celebrating 50 years since the military coup, despite a negationist attitude of the Right and its intention to rewrite history. Indeed, those were dark times for workers. In Chile human rights were violated and social rights were removed, and the progress that was made by the trade unions was destroyed. It is within this framework that I wish to remind the public of

who Salvador Allende was. He was the President of Chile, and he was reduced to silence by hatred, violence and the tyranny of a military government. They have also managed to silence his heritage. He was a courageous visionary who placed the needs of human beings at the centre of society, focusing on the world of work because societies are formed of workers and workers are the fundamental and central players in the development of countries. As a country, Salvador Allende said, "Workers of my country, I have faith in Chile and in its destiny." This was what he said in his final speech when he gave workers the responsibility of creating the structural changes and the pathways that were necessary to reach a just society based on solidarity and equity. We have made progress, and we have achieved social transformation for many families and we have provided them with decent livelihoods. It is with great faith that we are moving forward towards the ratification of Convention 190 on violence and harassment in order to eliminate those practices at the workplace, focusing especially on women. It is also a progress that has been made in terms of the 40-hour working week, and this demonstrates the important role that was played by trade unions in the development of society because we have achieved a law which gives workers quality of life. It is with great pride that I announce our tripartite negotiations that have achieved a minimum wage law. The minimum wage is now 500,000 pesos, which makes Chile one of the countries in Latin America with the highest minimum wage. Most importantly, it reflects the historic demand of the CUT which has historically demanded a minimum wage above the poverty threshold. However, there are still challenges. In order to achieve greater social justice, it is fundamental that we reform pensions. Our elderly need higher pensions now and we must do so right now. In order to reach this aim, another reform is required, a tax reform which would redistribute wealth and establish tax justice. The people in Chile are undergoing a process of construction in terms of a new constitution in order to move forward as a social and democratic state based on guarantees that establish the duties of the state to ensure that equality is a reality in the country. Workers would like to commit actively to the participation in this process. "I come from Chile, a small country," said Salvador Allende. But Chile is facing important challenges in order to move forward as a country that is more just and based on solidarity, and we would like our counterparties, our political opponents, to prove that they have good will to generate agreements and that they can focus on social dialogue. And that is how we will achieve a more just and sustainable development model which will leave social injustice behind. Thank you very much.

Mr Akmadi Sarbassov

Government (Kazakhstan)

Dear Mr President, Conference participants, on behalf of the Government of Kazakhstan, allow me to extend our greetings to the 111th Labour Conference. It is heartening to acknowledge that this year has been marked by the 30th anniversary of Kazakhstan's membership in the International Labour Organization. Kazakhstan welcomes the report of the ILO Director-General, Mr Gilbert Houngbo, 'Advancing social justice', and notes the relevance and timeliness of the initiative to create a coalition for social justice. Over the years of joint work with the ILO, Kazakhstan has introduced into national legislation its obligations under 25 ratified Conventions. The parties to the tripartite partnership are implementing the General Agreement for 2021-2023, which contains the joint obligations of the parties for mutual cooperation in creating decent work conditions for employees. To consistently achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, measures are being implemented and they are aimed at people's well-being and improving it. There is a Coordinating Council headed by the

Prime Minister. I would like to note that, in accordance with the growth rate of the economy, basic social standards are regularly reviewed which provide comprehensive guarantees for the accessibility and quality of the most important social benefits. Every year there is an increase in spending on the social sphere and employment. Over the last three years alone more than US$27.9 billion, 12 trillion tenge, have been allocated. Modern challenges determine the need for creating new approaches in the field of social protection. As part of large-scale changes announced by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Social Code was adopted. It established the basic social rights of Kazakhstan's citizens from birth to the old age. International experience and International Labour Organization standards have been taken into account when developing the code. The Social Code provides, firstly, a radical change in the paradigm of state support aimed at anticipating difficult life situations and not at dealing with the consequences. Secondly, the deepening of the digitalization of the social sphere, which ensures the transition from providing social services following an application to identifying and taking a proactive approach to their provision. Thirdly, the responsibility for the social security of citizens will be assigned not only to the state but also to the employer and to the citizens themselves. These obligations will be implemented within the framework of the new social contract. Fourth, new approaches to the development of the labour market. Since January 1st, 2023, a Digital Family Card has been introduced at the heart of the Social Code, which is developed using the data from state information systems. The card will serve as an electronic notification tool which, based on the social status and degree of family well-being of the family or its members, will inform what kind of state support they are entitled to receive. As part of the improvement of the minimum labour standard, a draft methodology has been developed to determine the minimum wage. In order to comprehensively solve problems in the field of labour protection, a draft concept of safe labour of the Republic of Kazakhstan between now and 2030 has been developed. In general, the ongoing social policy is focused on inclusiveness, improving the quality of life of the population and implementation of the SDGs. In conclusion, I want to assure you that the Government of Kazakhstan will continue to work on improving social and labour policy, promoting social justice through decent work in accordance with ILO standards. Thank you for your attention.

Mr Vasyl Kostrytsia

Employer (Ukraine)

The Honourable Mr President, ministers, Director-General, fellow delegates and guests. ILO Director-General Gilbert Houngbo, at the opening session of the 111th International Labour Conference, emphasized the need to build a coalition for social justice to fight growing inequalities. "My message is simple. No one should bury their head in the sand when it comes to facing the challenges shaking up the world of work," the ILO Director-General said. On behalf of all three Ukrainian employers' associations, I would like to express the highest appreciation to the International Labour Organization which did not stand aside when the Russian Federation unleashed a full-scale, most terrible war against Ukraine. The ILO Governing Body has approved quite promptly a resolution on the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine. The ILO adjusted its technical cooperation projects and activities, humanitarian aid to the real needs of Ukraine, ILO stakeholders and Ukrainian people in conditions of the war. The ILO supported the functioning of the employers' organizations and provided its professional consultations and expertise. All employers' organizations support the reports presented by the Director-General and Chairperson of the Governing Body to

the Conference. Nevertheless, Ukrainian employers' associations, like the trade unions and the Government, are convinced that the ILO and its leadership could do much more, could be more consistent in their policy and activities in this context. We continue to insist on the transition of the ILO subregional office from the capital of Russia, the aggressor country, to another country as well as to submit the question of the Russian Federation's membership in the ILO for the consideration by the International Labour Conference. Russia has deprived the fundamental rights of the Ukrainians, a right to life, and this war led to the loss of thousands of civilians, of children, in Ukraine. And every minute we are losing our people. Every minute we are losing our businesses in the occupied territories or in the areas where the battles continue. Russia has struck not only at Ukraine. It is destroying the observance of internationally recognized rights and labour standards. It is a threat to the world order and peace. And without peace there can be no social justice for all. How could we explain to people who are victims of the war that we could offer for them social justice, or for those who died, who have been killed, that some social justice does exist in the world? It is very difficult to understand, to explain this. And please take this very seriously how we are surviving now in this time of the war in Ukraine. During 474 days of the Russian aggression, Ukraine has already lost thousands of human lives and unborn generations. This is the biggest problem for the future of Ukraine, for the future of our nation, unborn generations. These sad losses, unfortunately, are growing every minute. Every minute. I repeat this. Hostilities and deliberate damage to the environment, economy, infrastructure and enterprises and people, which the aggressor caused and continues to do so in Ukraine, are impressive with its scale. A few days ago, the Russians deliberately destroyed the Kakhovka Hydro Power Plant Dam. At least thousands of people were forced out immediately to leave their homes. Many people died in the occupied villages and towns under water. Hundreds of small and medium-sized enterprises, thousands of jobs were buried under water. More than 70,000 hectares of excellent agricultural land is likely to turn into a desert. This terrorist act will have a delayed devastating effect not only on the national economy but on the regional and global economies as well. Ukraine, together with many partner countries, has clearly defined an approach to the future reconstruction of the country. Let us restore better. This means the investment in and application of modern technologies, innovative materials and equipment, contribution to the green economy and just transitions in the global and national dimensions. "Formula for peace and reconstruction of Ukraine - we are doing everything to attract as much power of the world as possible", Volodymyr Zelenskyy, President of Ukraine, said yesterday during his negotiations with the Prime Minister of Canada, Justin Trudeau. What do we expect from the Conference, from you, tripartite participants, from the International Labour Office? First of all, more attention and practical assistance in the reconstruction of Ukraine; economic, labour market and employment recovery promoting local business development; involvement of Ukrainian enterprises and companies in international and regional supply chains; in supporting the return of millions of people, Ukrainian people, to their peaceful, socially protected life in the independent and free Ukraine. We appeal to you to help us to contribute to our reconstruction, and the employers of Ukraine wish success to the Conference and urge to support Ukraine. We are staying strong. Thank you very much.

Mr Ali bin Samikh Al Marri

President (Qatar)

Distinguished delegates, as announced this morning, four electronic voting sessions were conducted between noon and 6 pm. I am pleased to announce the result as follows. Number one, with respect to the record vote on a proposed Convention concerning some consequential amendment arising from the inclusion of safe and healthy working environment into the framework of fundamental principles and rights at work, the result of the electronic vote is as follows. Votes in favour, 467. Votes against, 10. Abstentions, 6. The quorum of 297 is reached, as is the two-thirds majority. The Convention is adopted. Number two, with respect to the record vote on a proposed Recommendation concerning some consequential amendment arising from the inclusion of safe and healthy working environment into the framework of fundamental principles and rights at work. The result of the electronic vote is as follows. Votes in favour, 472. Votes against, 5. Abstentions, 6. The quorum of 297 is reached, as is the two-thirds majority. The Recommendation is adopted. Number three, the result of the vote on the resolution concerning the measures recommended by the Governing Body under article 33 of the ILO Constitution on the subject of Belarus is as follows. Votes in favour, 301. Votes against, 54. Abstentions, 108. The quorum of 297 is reached as is the simple majority of 178. The resolution is adopted. Number four, and finally, regarding the electronic vote on the abrogation or withdrawal of several outdated maritime instruments. I am pleased to inform you that all 24 instruments have been either abrogated or withdrawn. The quorum and the two-thirds majority have been reached. The secretariat is currently compiling a detailed result which will be posted tonight and formally announced tomorrow morning in the plenary by the chairing officer. Many thanks. All the results of the different votes conducted today will be published on the record of proceedings in the next 24 hours. Thank you all for your active participation. Distinguished delegates, we proceed with our list of speakers on the general discussion. I am pleased to call the next speaker on the list to the podium.

Mr Vedat Işıkhan

Government (Türkiye)

Honourable Chair, esteemed ministers, distinguished delegates, we are in a period in which the role of the ILO is becoming more important in solving the problems affecting the global workforce, promoting the rights of the workers as well as ensuring social justice and decent work for all. I would like to thank the Director-General for his report titled ‘Advancing social justice’. Türkiye attaches great importance to the ILO’s Global Coalition for Social Justice initiative. We believe that the new challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and climate crisis, along with the ongoing problems in the world of work, can be resolved within this unique tripartite structure. According to Global Humanitarian Assistance Reports, Türkiye has been the most generous country in the world since 2015. Concerning the Russia-Ukraine war, we have been putting in intensive efforts to alleviate the humanitarian consequences of the war and establish a lasting and fair peace in the region. Thanks to the Black Sea Grain Initiative signed last July under the guidance of Türkiye, possible serious disruptions in the global food supply chains have been prevented. Furthermore, Türkiye continues to maintain its status as the country hosting the largest number of refugees in the world by accommodating over 4 million refugees, 3.5 million of whom are Syrians. In this regard, I would also like to emphasize that we attribute great value to the Global Coalition for

Social Justice initiative in sharing the burden of responsibility that Türkiye has been carrying for more than 12 years in the ongoing Syrian crisis. Ladies and gentlemen, as a welfare state we strive to fairly distribute the added value generated by our growing economy to our workers. In line with this approach, we have abolished income tax on the portion of income for all wage workers that is equal to the minimum wage. In January 2023, we have applied the highest increase to the minimum wage in our history. In recognition of the contribution of workers to Türkiye's growth, we have provided them with the highest social welfare share in history through collective bargaining. We expanded social security coverage from 70% to 99.3% over the past 20 years. All these practices are concrete evidence of our ongoing efforts to protect and develop the labour force. Distinguished delegates, today is the World Day against Child Labour. We believe that universal ratification of ILO Convention 182 is an important step to this end. Türkiye has also recorded significant achievements in eliminating child labour in recent years. In this regard, I am glad to inform you that Türkiye is now in the process of becoming a pathfinder country of the Alliance 8.7 to share our experience on reducing child labour. Esteemed delegates, we welcomed the Report of the Director-General entitled 'The situation of workers of the occupied Arab territories'. We believe that the ongoing occupation, conflict and tension in the Palestinian territories, contrary to international law, will not serve to peace. I would like to emphasize once again that Türkiye will continue to stand by the Palestinian people in their rightful and legitimate causes. Mr Chairman, distinguished delegates, I would like to extend my appreciation for the international support we received following the devastating earthquakes that occurred in Türkiye last February. I wish successful outcomes for all from the Conference and greet you all with my deepest respect.

Ms Agnes Makonda-Ridley

Government (Malawi)

Mr President, I bring you fraternal greetings from His Excellency Dr Lazarus McCarthy Chakwera, President of the Republic of Malawi, and the people of Malawi. I congratulate you, Mr President, and your bureau on your election to steer the deliberations of this session. I also congratulate the Director-General, Mr Gilbert Houngbo, for the well-articulated report 'Advancing social justice'. The report is timely given the challenges globally threatening social justice. These include climate change, conflicts, demographic changes, high cost of living, unemployment, underemployment, the growth of the informal work sector that operates outside many of our legislative frameworks, gender pay gaps and other inequities fuelled by disadvantage and discrimination. These challenges require collaborative action between governments, international organizations, business, academia, non-governmental organizations, innovators and entrepreneurs. My delegation, therefore, Mr President, agrees wholeheartedly with the proposal to establish a Global Coalition for Social Justice, built on a foundation of respect for human rights, equality of opportunities, fair distribution of wealth, just transitions and international labour standards. Mr President, building resilience into our societies is at the forefront of Malawi's development strategy. Global connectedness and climate change have led to us in Malawi being hit by multiple disasters in recent years, including COVID-19 and several tropical cyclones, namely Ana in February 2021, tropical cyclone Gombe in March 2022 and, the worst of all, cyclone Freddy in March 2023. Tropical Cyclone Freddy alone destroyed many homes, schools, businesses, agricultural fields with crops about to be harvested, transport and energy infrastructure. It is estimated that over 670 people lost their lives, and 563,602 people have been displaced while 533

people remain missing to this day, and a further 1,063 suffered serious injuries. Mr President, low-income countries are not responsible for these climate change disasters but we bear the brunt of them as we strive to develop our societies from an already very low base of wealth and very low base of food security and a very low base of jobs for our youth. Mr President, Malawi has a blueprint for its long-term development, namely Malawi 2063, and we are in the middle of our first ten-year plan to deliver on our aspiration to be an upper-middle-income country by 2063, a country that is inclusively wealthy and a country that has jobs for all its youth. However, our path is not straightforward, given these increasingly frequent disasters that I have talked about combined with the challenges outlined in the Director-General's report. Aligned with this report and in response to recent disasters, Malawi is revisiting relevant policies and strategies. These include our National Job Creation Strategy and our Decent Work Country Programme, noting that Malawi is committed to become a pathfinder country to amplify investment in jobs and social protection. We are reviewing our Occupational Safety and Health Act to align it with OSH Conventions 155, 184 and 187, which Malawi ratified in 2019. We are also working to ratify the Violence and Harassment Convention, No. 190 and the Domestic Workers Convention, No. 189. Mr President, we are seeking to underpin these efforts through developing a national productivity policy to enhance worker productivity, worker welfare and equitable reward systems. Mr President, the DG's proposal for a Global Coalition on Social Justice is very welcome. We need to complement and deliver on its objectives through both action-oriented and policy interventions. We need to create fiscal space and skillsets to bring about social justice because without those we cannot create social justice. We need also to enhance social protection, formalize the informal sector and develop approaches for improved technology transfer and employment-intensive infrastructure development to advance the agenda of decent work. This must be linked to promoting increased local and foreign investment, fair trade and removal of inappropriate trade barriers, and a widened investment horizon with increased diversity of services and products where we create a fair ground for the global North and the global South to trade as equal partners. Mr President, Malawi looks forward to continued technical support from the ILO to promote social justice. But on this World Day against Child Labour, Mr President, allow me to end with a rallying call to my colleagues in here and to the ILO. We must, as the employment and labour world, work very closely with our colleagues, the education sector because, believe you me, there is no better strategy for ending child labour than education. A child who is in education full-time is a child that cannot be abused through child labour. Let us, as the labour sector, work with the education sector to make sure that every child in the world is in education. That, believe you me, is the best way to end child labour and achieve social justice, because without ending child labour there can be no social justice. Thank you, Mr President.

Mr Juan Mailhos

Employer (Uruguay)

President, Vice-President, delegates, ladies and gentlemen, the report of the ILO Director-General for this 111th ILC reflects a multifaceted view of social justice. Although it does not provide us with a precise definition, it does include its facets: equity, equality and the ability of people to act within the realms of their own lives. Social justice allows societies and economies to operate in a more cohesive fashion. This report, which is the object of this Conference, explains why the availability and access to decent jobs plays a fundamental role to achieve social justice. The report also

focuses on the creation of the Global Coalition for Social Justice. Uruguayan employers welcome this renewed interest in the matter, which adopts a broader understanding of social justice in the face of the current socio-economic context. However, it is necessary that the ILO should integrate and better defend the indispensable contributions of companies, companies' contributions that have been made in the past and that they are still performing in order to achieve social justice. Here we must highlight the key contributions of the private sector to social justice. First of all, the creation of jobs in an economy where over 90% of jobs in the country are present in the private sector. Opportunities of decent, productive work are fundamental in order to achieve social justice and develop both society and the economy in a sustainable fashion. Social protection is fundamental in order to achieve social justice. And that is why it is necessary to count on appropriate solid and adequate social protection systems. This requires high contributions, and again these are mainly contributed by employers who contribute the most to those systems. In terms of skills and education, employers are key players when it comes to foreseeing the necessary skills to satisfy labour market demands. Moreover, the promotion of public-private partnerships is fundamental. These are important to achieve social justice because they allow us to address inequalities and promote the four dimensions of social justice that are raised by the Director-General in his report. Innovation and entrepreneurship, individuals and companies must be able to develop their ideas and projects in order to create new opportunities for economic and social empowerment. This is crucial in order to achieve successful productivity policies. As regards the commitment to human rights, companies must also commit to this in order to create more just societies and fairer societies. In order to create a successful initiative on social justice which appropriately integrates social justice, companies must promote the four dimensions that integrate social justice, i.e. the following: universal human rights, equal access to opportunities and fair distribution. Indeed, Uruguayan employers believe that the Global Coalition for Social Justice is a courageous initiative that may convert itself into a driver of change to promote the ILO's agenda. It is necessary therefore to promote the collaboration with the constituents to reach a realistic and viable proposal which is mainly based on the fundamental matters such as productivity, skills and the sustainability of companies. President, in Uruguay recently we have undergone legislative reform that is based on social dialogue and which aims at modernization and the sustainability of the world of work. First of all, this is based on the tripartite system which is enshrined by this institution. And finally, it will be important to focus on all these matters to reach our aims. Recently, legislative reforms have taken place in Uruguay, and these are based on social dialogue. In this legislation we focus on sustainability and modernization. First of all, we have modified the social security system to achieve greater coverage. Secondly, a law has been drafted that focuses on collective bargaining in the private sector and which brings it in line with Convention 98 after being the object of the ILO's supervisory mechanism over 14 years ago because there had been a complaint. There are still some aspects that require a solution, but the Uruguayan employers will be requiring assistance from the ILO. This is something which the Government has already requested. Until this is the case, it will remain in CAS. Beyond these concrete solutions, let me reiterate our commitment to social dialogue and the fact that we want our country to be able to reflect the ILO's Conventions in both law and practice. Thank you very much.

Mr Antoine Robinson

Worker (Seychelles)

President of the Conference, Vice-Presidents of the Conference, ILO Director-General, ministers, heads of delegations present, all delegates, invited guests, ladies and gentlemen, a very good evening to you all. On behalf of the Seychelles Federation of Workers' Union and the workers of Seychelles and on my own behalf, I take this opportunity to congratulate the Director-General for giving us this special report. Special because it could have not come at a better time when the entire international community desperately needs to reconcile an approach to address this consultation on how to advance social justice both nationally and internationally in the face of multiple challenges and persisting injustices, inequalities and insecurities occurring in our respective countries and societies. The DG's report strongly focused on how it is now timely and indispensable that our different countries harness and embrace the ILO unique tripartite, human-centred and rights-based approach to progress towards social justice. In Seychelles, like it is the case worldwide, the slow bouncing back of our island state economic recovery from COVID-19 and severe impact on jobs and income is having despairing consequences on the daily livelihood of our working people and the most vulnerable and their families included. The recovery of our island state tourism-dependent economy is uneven and incomplete, and therefore uncertainties and challenges to make confident steps toward social justice still persist, more so pronounced in the private sector. Needless to say, the ILO has since its creation in 1919 availed all its constituents the necessary tools and is still upholding decent work and social justice in the world of work in all its four interrelated and interdependent dimensions clearly described in the DG's report as follows: universal human rights and capabilities, equal access to opportunities, fair distribution and just transition. Let us all use the future of work together with the various Centenary initiatives of the ILO as our guiding principle in our work. However, in the face of the injustices and inequalities which are still visible and on the rise in all parts of the world, our role as trade unions in our respective countries is to ensure that we must leave no one behind in the already dangerously unequal world becoming more unequal every day. What should now be our priority is to ensure a progressive trend in the establishing of social justice. We are far from exhausting our task, which has been unfairly aggravated by this overlapping set of challenges described by the DG's report. It is widely agreed that the whole business of the International Labour Conference would have been impossible without the application of the ILO's critically important decent work strategic pillars of social dialogue and tripartism. No debates ongoing on our agenda items in this Conference would have produced a united vision had they not been based on the effective application of the principles of social dialogue and tripartism. The Seychelles Federation of Workers' Union welcomes the ILO Governing Body decision to include pertinent agenda items for discussion on which, together with other thematic debates and events, will contribute towards strengthening the pillars needed for advancement of social justice both nationally and internationally, hand in hand with the ILO principle of human-centred recovery. Mr President, we do not have to reinvent the wheel, as the saying goes. The Seychelles Federation of Workers' Union believes firmly that a Global Coalition for Social Justice is possible. Whilst trying to put the workers' perspective, let us not forget that the United Nations has found it necessary to include the Decent Work Agenda in its millennium goals. What stronger truth that we need to be convinced that the Decent Work Agenda is the solution to the world's dilemma. Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, Seychelles has ratified all core Conventions of the ILO together with other conventions all geared towards decent work for all, for peace and social justice

to prevail in the Seychelles' world of work. The Seychelles labour laws and policies make provision for protection of all workers' rights, including women and youth and migrant workers. The Ministry of Employment and Social Affairs, through the newly reconstructed tripartite forum, the National Consultative Committee on Employment, NCCE, comprising of trade unions and employers' trade union and other stakeholders are holding a series of consultation forums to adopt a road map for ratification of all other ILO Conventions. Mr President, I cannot end without commending the ACTRAV ILO in the ongoing commendable work they are doing in order to assist in empowering our Member States and social partners to apply the principles of social dialogue and tripartism more effectively. In Seychelles, the Seychelles Federation of Workers' Union and the Ministry of Labour, employers' organizations and other social partners are committed to the framework of tripartism and fruitful cooperation in our working agenda. May I repeat, Mr President, a Global Coalition for Social Justice is possible. Together we stand. Divided we fall. I thank you for your attention. May God bless us all.

Mr Ahmed Jasim Al-Asadi

Government (Iraq)

In the name of God, the most Merciful. Mr President, Mr Director-General of the ILO, ladies and gentlemen, Excellencies, peace be upon you all. At the outset, I welcome you all in our participation in the 111th edition of the ILC, and we appreciate all the international efforts that aim to prepare plans and strategies to hoist up the realities of the working categories and to help them face all the challenges security wise and economic wise. The ILO was and still is working towards hosting the responsibilities on all the plans that it set for itself, wishing it all the success in the world, to build a new world with full prosperity, full of the basics of decent work in order to help everybody face the world challenges that we face. Ladies and gentlemen, the Iraqis are celebrating the remembrance of the fatwa coming from the religious authorities to face the terrorist Daesh gangs in response to the needs of the Iraqi people while it defends its own security and the actual defence of the entire world. We also remember the horrible Speicher butchery that happened in 2014. Mr Director-General, we support what came into your report when it comes to the Global Coalition for Social Justice. And also through our ministry we have worked to relieve all sorts of social phenomenon, such as poverty and unemployment, through several programmes that we had and also bringing aid to all these categories, amongst them the handicapped people, and all this according to international standards. Also, when it comes to the social security issue, we have given aid to 1,800,000 families, and we are actually working in providing more than 2 million additional families to be covered by this social security, dependent on the demographic density and also the poverty line. Also, the budget of 2023 includes 600,000 additional families. We also have a raising of the budget to 1 trillion 200 billion dinar through giving loans to youths who are working on new small and medium projects. And we also gave unemployment to more than 222 (sic) citizens and also have an electronic platform specialized for giving services to handicapped people. More than 400 million citizens have taken advantage of this platform. We are also working on supporting the entrepreneurship to create new job opportunities to the youth and encouraging them to endeavour in new projects that would enable them to get into the labour markets. Ladies and gentlemen, the Iraqi Government has worked in legislation and laws and priority is the retirement law. This law ensures several new aspects that help the working group, amongst which the expansion of such a sector, with the optional insurance and also the insurance

coverage for the informal economy and also all laws regarding the bonuses and increase in revenue and also covers the workers in the non-formal economy with the percentage of 15% and giving women maternity leave with full salary and other advantages. And we also work through the Ministry of Labour with the investigative departments, and we have hoisted the capacity of the inspectors when it comes to the safety and security in the workplace and helped them to implement all the related laws. On top of that, bettering the health systems and the security and safety in the workplace through these investigative and inspection works in different sectors that are covered by social security. Ladies and gentlemen, creating new job opportunities through the change in economy and opening our economy in investments, and we would like to say that the small and medium enterprises are very important in developing our economies because it creates new jobs and creates services that our people need. Ladies and gentlemen, on the occasion of the World Day against Child Labour we have taken several measures to fight this negative phenomenon, and the Iraqi Government has established a strategy in the early development of children and also the national strategy for education. Ladies and gentlemen, the world is facing social, economic and cultural challenges, and we have to find ways to face these challenges through social dialogue and also have actual labour policies that are efficient and sane that would guarantee the general stability of all the people. At the end, we do hope all the success of the workings of this Conference. Hoping that we will have decisions and Recommendations that are positive for everyone. And thank you for your attention.

Mr Hamou Touahria

Worker (Algeria)

In the name of God, the most Merciful, and peace be upon his prophet, Prophet Muhammad. Peace be upon him. Mr President, Mr Director-General of the ILO, ladies and gentlemen, heads and members of the delegations, peace be upon you all. At the outset, allow me to congratulate the Qatari State for its presidency of the Conference. Also, we congratulate Mr President Al Marri as President of this Conference. Ladies and gentlemen, it is an honour for me to stand before you speaking in the name of the Algerian trade union, in front of all these masses from throughout the world, representatives of governments and entrepreneurs and also workers in the 111th edition of the ILC, which is the greatest forum related to work throughout the world and that has several articles in its agenda, on top of which is the issue of social security. This important issue that all the heaven's religions have stipulated upon and that my country gives the utmost importance to facilitate its implementation to hoist the level of social security. The Algerians and the people of Algeria generally, and especially for the workers, whereas our TU is preparing as we speak a general conference for all workers regardless of their background so that us, as a TU, we can be a force of proposition to guarantee a true stability in our country. And this through listening to our workers and looking for solutions for their professional and social issues, the true ones. And also we follow its follow-up on the field, among which is security and safety. All of this to create a calm atmosphere to bring investors to our country through a win-win approach. Giving importance to all categories of workers and even jobseekers and retirees and also so we can have a true restart of our economy, all sectors combined, and also have a safe environment for this to happen. Also guarantee a continuity of all our institutions and guarantee the power of purchase through us choosing the road of social dialogue through the three stakeholders of this organization and also provide solutions away from a demagogue approach. This is the unique way that we have

chosen that will guarantee us the stability and give the right atmosphere for foreign and national investors. A stable state equals a strong economy. And we also appreciate what came into the report of the DG of the ILO concerning the situation of workers in the occupied territories in view of what these workers in Palestine face in regards to the blatant violations from the occupier, because the Palestinian issue is an issue of all Arab and Muslim countries and we do need to take stringent decisions against these violations and those who perpetrate these violations. The ILO and all countries, seekers of truth, need to look into this issue. And we also condemn all activities against our workers in the Golan Heights and Syria and also the Shebaa region in Lebanon and also the occupied territories throughout the world, among which is the Western Sahara. And also we, as Algerian workers, we refuse any Convention that goes against the human nature and also our beliefs and our traditions. And also we insist on implementing a just transition and also all Conventions that perpetuate peace and security and prosperity. Ladies and gentlemen, I do thank, in the name of the workers in Algeria, its office for its continuous support. Long live the TU in Algeria and also long live the international solidarity of workers. And thank you very much for your kind attention, and peace be upon you all.

Mr Charalambos Kyritsis

World Federation of Trade Unions

Workers' representatives, ladies and gentlemen, first of all, from this global podium I would like to salute the militant struggles and the outbursts of millions of workers all over the world who refuse to foot the bill for the capitalist crisis, a crisis which is increasingly generalized and deeper. World peace is dangerously threatened. Not for the human rights, as some would have us believe, but because of imperialistic, geopolitical and economic interests. That is why, for us, struggle for peace means struggle against imperialist interventions, for the dismantling of NATO and all military coalitions. The high inflation brutally undermining workers' living standards, social inequalities are widening dramatically, the right to organize and collective bargaining is under attack. The pandemic has been used to launch new attacks on democratic and trade union freedoms. Individual contracts, privatizations, outsourcing, teleworking and service leasing are just some of the forms taken by this harsh neoliberal attack. We have carefully read the Director-General's report. Unfortunately, we see once again that, as the attack on social and workers' rights intensifies, instead of measures, proclamations and slogans multiply. For work to be dignified it must be accompanied by rights. It must guarantee the satisfaction of workers' contemporary needs. Slogans are not enough. The same applies to the report on the occupied Arab territories. The findings: violation of Palestine's national, political, social and workers' rights, black labour, colonization. But what is the reaction? What is the intervention? And above all, what are the measures? WFTU denounces the imperialist policy of double standards and selective sanctions and economic wars, denounces the blockade of Cuba. For some countries, violations are deliberately uncovered in order to impose draconian sanctions. For others, like Israel, international organizations remain silent or limit themselves to reports and findings. I am coming now to another issue that concerns pluralists and the democratic functioning of the ILO itself. I speak on behalf of over 105 million members from 133 countries on every continent whose voice is limited and marginalized by the undemocratic way of the functioning of the ILO and also because of the policy of arbitrary exclusions that many States apply. Chile, for example, for the second year in a row. There is not enough time to mention all the complaints but, as a rule, the exclusions concern WFTU affiliates. It is not, and never will be, acceptable for

some to monopolize workers' representation without being entitled. More than any other institution, the ILO should become pluralistic and representative. Mr Chairman, I am concluding my speech, as the General-Secretary of the oldest and most historic world trade union federation, with a call to the workers. The system that generates crises and reproduces exploitation can be defeated. United and organized in our class-oriented unions, let us intensify our struggles for a world free of wars and imperialist interventions, free of exploitation and discrimination, where work will be permanent and stable, regulated and safe. Thank you very much.

Mr Matias Cremonte

Asociación Latinoamericana de Abogados Laboralistas

Delegates of the Conference, on behalf of the Latin American Association of Labour Lawyers, I wish to salute the Director-General for his decision to choose such an important and necessary issue for his report, i.e. the promotion of social justice. Since 1919, the States of the world have stated that global peace will only be possible if it is based on social justice. But today it is clear that this has not been achieved, which has had a heavy impact on humanity. As stated by the Director-General, social justice is related to job opportunities and to a decent standard of living so that all can live a productive and decent life. Prosperity and progress to improve a standard of living is required for workers. Working for an employer must be synonymous with decent living conditions, whether they be material, spiritual or cultural. And until this becomes a reality, we must continue ensuring labour is not a commodity and work must be paid at a fair wage. We find ourselves in the region of the world with the greatest inequalities, where extreme wealth lives side by side with abject poverty. This is not due to the lack of industry. Indeed, Latin America has factories, services and great economic activity. That is why a powerful workers' movement was born as a result, to achieve these social rights and high levels of participation in the gross product. Many regressive labour reforms have been passed which have attacked the pillars of labour law, freedom of association and collective bargaining. The right to strike has also been affected, and this has affected social work contracts. We have seen also that outsourcing and subcontracting have become a regular way of negatively impacting workers' rights and collective agreements. This is worsened by inequalities, especially in terms of gender. In our region, capital is not productive by means of investment and technology. Instead it exploits the workforce. COVID-19 has been a human tragedy and a social tragedy, but it has also resulted in companies earning more and in increasing their gains, which demonstrates that productivity and economic growth have only been a reality for capitalists. This is why we must fight back with counter reforms in order to stop this neoliberal regression of labour law. We require the good will of progressive governments and the crucial strengthening of trade unions. We must come back to collective bargaining in force to combat outsourcing and guarantee decent wages, gender equality, the lack of violence and to fight discrimination. The resistance that has taken form in the workers' movement has fought against restrictions on the right to strike and the lack of the ability to protest. Strengthening the ability of states to monitor compliance with social legislation is a priority, and Convention 81 of the ILO is systematically violated and labour inspection systems are weakened. The attacks against labour law and labour justice and advocacy must stop because there is a permanent stigmatization by neoliberal governments who wish to weaken workers' representation. Without the right to work, strong trade unions and the right to strike, it is impossible to even think of a socially just world. Thank you.

Ms Hildegard Hagemann

International Kolping Society

President, delegates, it is fantastic to be back here after four years. Thank you once again to the ILC for opening its doors to INGOs. We are glad to provide the opinion of the Catholic social association, Kolping International, concerning the Report of the Director-General. We have 400,000 members in over 60 countries. Of course, we do hope that in the upcoming years INGOs will still be welcome here despite renovation work. Our international NGO has been registered at the ILO for over 30 years, and hand in hand with other INGOs we have used the period of social distancing in order to discuss the chances and the opportunities and challenges presented in the future of work of social dialogue. We all agree that the impact of recessions, pandemics, financial crises have been terrible for many workers, whether in the formal or informal economy, and that it is necessary to have decent negotiation platforms for the social platforms. We cannot ensure that in future we will not have social partners that are excluded from the dialogue due to catastrophes and other factors. In 2019, at the Centenary of the ILO, the focus was on social dialogue as a public good. Today, however, we say nothing about us without us. Whether it be in terms of the fight against terrorism, the financial crisis, climate crisis and health crises, there are many authoritarian States that are using these opportunities in order to exclude part of civil society. Let us not forget them. This is why this is the correct place in order to focus on ILO tripartism and to promote social dialogue as a public good and also to focus on solidarity with all those who cannot be part of this social dialogue and civil society. Kolping International has focused on these matters for over three decades. We have focused on the needs of all people so that they may escape precarious and informal working conditions. There are important Conventions here at the ILO that have been decided upon for over 100 years and that defend workers. The ratification processes are fundamental for the defence of workers' rights. Kolping International welcomes the focus of the ILO on the labour law deficits in terms of the informal economy. With other INGOs, it has proposed the following to promote social dialogue: the creation of regular platforms for social dialogue on national levels concerning matters raised by the ILC, and also the creation of contact positions for NGOs on a national level as well as the presence and effective participation of INGOs in the Global Coalition for Social Justice. Kolping International supports all those who are promoting social peace as an essential portion of social justice. And now I wish to thank Gilbert Houngbo, the Director-General, for his recognition of our work, and we also expect that this initiative of the Global Coalition for Social Justice will be a success and that we will be able to participate in social dialogue. Thank you very much.

Mr Julio Durval Fuentes

Confederation of Latinamerican and Caribbean Public Workers

President of the 111th ILC, representatives of the governments, employers and dear workers. It is an honour for me to be here as the President of the Latin American and Caribbean Confederation of State Workers. I welcome the Director-General's report and its call for the Global Coalition for Social Justice, which will take place within a framework of a multilateral and tripartite system focusing on social dialogue. The realities are very difficult and we find ourselves in a context in which tripartism is in a period of crisis. Trade unions are always continually becoming weakened. According

to the CSI's 2022 Global Rights Index, 87% of countries are seeing the right to strike becoming weakened and 79% are not allowed to perform collective bargaining. 77% do not have the right to freedom of association. And these are only a few of the injustices. States, in their quality of employers, are weakening the right to freedom of association. This means that the path followed by the ILO in 1978 is not being reflected in Convention 151. Today, the relation of capital is being fiercely defended, so capitalism, and within this framework it is difficult to focus on tripartite dialogue. And this is why governments, as stated by the Director-General, must not become hostage to institutions such as the IMF. This organization imposes programmes that make the financial situation of states worse, that force strategies for development upon them and also have an impact on the economy and on employment. On the level of employers, the national employers should take note of this pernicious role that is played by multinationals and the global financial system. Seduced by the possibility of capital and foreign assets, these entrepreneurs forget that on their national markets they are impacting it negatively. Where would we start in order to create a necessary coalition for social justice? Well, we must give increased value to national states in order to reactivate internal markets and promote sustainable development with decent work, both on an international level, and we must promote dialogue in order to achieve the aims that this globalized world requires. The working class has always had to suffer these types of wars. We understand that armed conflicts include the interests of all. If we want global peace, we must renounce many aspects. This is true for the war between Ukraine and Russia and as well as other military conflicts between other countries that include political factions, ethnic or social factions. To achieve peace also means that groups of countries must renounce from imposing sanctions to others, because this violates democracy and human rights. The Republic of Cuba has suffered for over 60 years from a criminal blockade. More recently, Venezuela has suffered from a similar situation. We must understand that the States that consider that they are the world's policemen are impacting the fundamental rights of the populations that they say they are defending. In our call for peace, we must also call for a common home to all, as has said Pope Francis. Also the Secretary-General of the United Nations has warned us that we are on a highway towards hell as far as climate change is concerned. And these are only two symbols of the crossroads at which we find ourselves. We can stop this happening. We are still in time to change the course of things. There will not be social peace without social justice and there cannot be social justice without a just transition which is based on both the populations and on democracy and which will serve the populations of the working classes. Thank you.

Ms Rosario Nomdedeu Moreno

Trade Union International of Pensioners and Retired Persons

Good afternoon. Thank you to all those who are here present today. I am Rosario Nomdedeu and I represent the pensioners of the global pensioners coalition, the Trade Union International of Pensioners and Retired Persons. This will be the only statement made by a representative of pensioners of the globe. So, I have a spent approximately ten consecutive years defending the rights and demands of those who are at the end of their lives, after having worked for decades to improve the reality of this world. However, you, governmental leaders and entrepreneurs from capitalist countries, seem to have forgotten us. You seem to have forgotten that justice also is the due to 30% of people who have the right to vote on our planet. We are only demanding a long and decent life for people aged over 60. Our collective is not an expense, as has said

the IMF. The IMF has stated that we are an expense, using its position as a rich minority that exploits workers, and that is the truth. Our international trade union says we are not an expense, and our pensions are only the result of what we have paid into systems for decades. We have also brought something to society such as our knowledge, our experience, our balance and the ability to judge and to give counsel, and most especially our wish to help those who most need it: our direct descendants, i.e. young people. We are responsible for our own lives, and you have promoted the privatization of public pensions with the help of Dictator Pinochet and yellow trade unions. You have also pushed forward privatization such as with the European regulation on private pension funds that was approved a year ago. You do know, as managers of capitalism, that private pension funds are negative and that they go bankrupt one after the other. In the United States, where there are the most bankruptcies in terms of pension funds, pensioners must look for work again, and they are very easy to exploit, or they will not be able to buy the medication that they require. Indeed, there are also luxury pension funds that some are able to use with thanks to the public monies that will save them from bankruptcy. The real universal solution for a decent livelihood is public pension funds that will stop the fraudulent usage of the private ones, such as has happened in Bolivia. The ex-Soviet Union has also demonstrated how it is possible. They did so over 100 years ago. And now women, for example, are suffering in terms of pensions. Indeed, we have approximately 30% to 40% less when it comes to our pensions. In 1917, Lenin universalized the right to a pension when wealth on the planet was less than it currently is. And in the Russia of the tsars, women who worked in the Tsar's home and workers in the fields were allowed to receive a pension. Of course, this pension would have to allow people to at least lead a decent life. As you know, in countries that do not accept capitalism as an economic system and who do not obey the IMF's rules, in countries where we try to have a society without any exploitation, and I am referring to Cuba, China, Viet Nam, North Korea and Laos, they know that these countries will not see old people simply by removing them as older people and as rubbish. So thank you very much.

Mr bin Samikh Al Marri

President (Qatar)

Thank you very much. That concludes our list of speakers for this sitting. I would like to thank you very much for your participation. Now the sitting is closed.

Mr Muhammad Zahoor Awan

Worker Vice-President (Pakistan)

Brothers and sisters, ladies and gentlemen, it is my great pleasure to declare open the 12th sitting of the 111th Session of the International Labour Conference. This morning we shall start by turning our attention to the first report of the Credentials Committee which was posted on the Conference website as regard proceeding 2A(Rev.1). Following that, we will continue with the general discussion on the Report of the Chairperson of the Governing Body, the Report of the Director-General and its appendix. I shall follow the list of speakers as it will be displayed on the screen. The Finance Committee has informed me that they are hoping to finalize their proceedings this morning with a view to submitting their report to the plenary this afternoon. I therefore ask for the understanding and flexibility of those speakers scheduled to take the floor this afternoon as last-minute changes to the list of speakers are foreseen because of these exceptional circumstances. Let us begin without any further delay. Ladies and gentlemen, I invite you all to turn your attention to the regard of proceeding 2A(Rev.1) containing the first report to the Credentials Committee. Please allow me to quickly recall that the members of this committee are Sister Samuelsen from Norway as Chairperson, Brother Fernando Martínez from Mexico, Employer Vice-Chairperson, and Brother Jeffrey Vogt from the United States, Worker Vice-Chairperson. I now give the floor to the Chairperson of the Credentials Committee, Ms Samuelsen, who will present the Committee [vgr INAUDIBLE 2:16] report. Thank you, and the floor is yours.

Ms Tanya Marie Samuelsen

Government (Norway)

Mr President, Excellencies, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen. I am honoured and pleased to present to the plenary of the 111th Session of the International Labour Conference the first report of the Credentials Committee. This report, which is published as Record of Proceedings No. 2A, includes information on the composition of the Conference as well as the Committee's conclusions on the question of the representation of Myanmar at this session of the Conference. In connection with its mandate to examine the credentials of delegations to the Conference, the Credentials Committee traditionally comments on the overall composition of the Conference. In this regard, I would like to mention two points. Firstly, with 172 Member States having accredited a delegation, the overall participation level in the Conference remains slightly above its pre-pandemic and pre-Centenary level. Indeed, after the participation record of 178 Member States at the Centenary Session, participation remained high in 2021 and in 2022, probably thanks to the possibility to fully participate remotely. Nevertheless, the Credentials Committee notes that no online platform can provide participants with the same experience as in-person interaction and that direct personal contacts facilitate consensus building. With respect to the 14 members that were not represented at this session of the Conference, the Committee is concerned that by not appointing a delegation or by failing to accredit a fully tripartite delegation the Government deprives the employers or workers of the country, as the case may be, of their right to be represented in the highest policymaking body of the ILO and to participate actively in its work. Secondly, following a steady increase in the participation of women in the Conference since over a decade,

the proportion of women in delegations dropped last year. This year it is stagnating at 36.6%. Moreover, women continue to be unevenly distributed by function and group. The Committee has once again stressed the importance of reaching the minimum target of 30% of women's participation in all groups and in all delegations, including in leadership positions within delegations, with the goal of gender parity. Let us hope that the upwards trend will be back next year. Let me now turn to the question of the representation of Myanmar. Like last year, the Committee was faced with two sets of competing credentials. The military authorities that seized power in February 2021 on the one side and the so-called National Unity Government on the other side. As you are aware, the Credentials Committee's decision not to recognize either authority as a legitimate government, taken in line with the position of the UN General Assembly, has had the effect that Myanmar was not invited to the Conference, not invited to the sessions of the Governing Body and other ILO meetings. The Committee noted that in December 2022 the United Nations General Assembly decided again to defer a decision on the credentials of Myanmar. It also noted that several entities have deferred consideration of the question, including the Credentials Committee of the recent 76th Session of the World Health Assembly. In light of those considerations, the Committee decided that no delegates from Myanmar would be accredited to this year's Conference. However, the Committee felt that, at the ILO, the matter could not end there. It noted with concern that the continued ambiguity of the question of representation of Myanmar affected not only the representation of the Government of Myanmar but also precluded the participation of the employers and workers of Myanmar in the Conference and other tripartite meetings. It therefore expressed, in careful language, that it may in the future need to address this situation. It stated, "In view of this situation, which is specific to the ILO because of its unique tripartite structure, the Committee believes that, in the continued absence of guidance from the United Nations General Assembly, it may in due course consider making a determination which would enable the tripartite constituents of Myanmar to resume active participation in the work of the Organization." With this, I invite you to take note of the first report of the Credentials Committee, which is available on the website of the Conference. I thank you for your attention.

Mr Muhammad Zahoor Awan

Worker Vice-President (Pakistan)

Many thanks, Sister Samuelsen, for her very important report of the Credentials Committee which has unanimously adopted its report and requests the Conference to take note of its contents as presented in the Record of Proceedings 2A(Rev.1). In accordance with article 31, Paragraph 3 of the Standing Orders of the Conference, the Conference shall take note of the first report of the Credentials Committee without discussion. But let me also see if, from the floor, there is any disagreement. Our secretariat can guide me if there are any hands. As we do not think so that there is any hand for any disagreement or any comments which can have on the presentation of this Credentials Committee report, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the officers of the Committee for their excellent work. I hear that the atmosphere in the Committee was very positive and that work was carried out in the spirit of fruitful cooperation. Thank you, brothers and sisters. May I now take it that the Conference takes note of the report of the Credentials Committee? Now brothers and sisters, ladies and gentlemen, we go now for the actual proceedings of the Conference for inviting speakers, those they are on my list, to take the floor. And so far, what I have seen for this morning's session, there are almost more than 30 honourable speakers who will

take the floor. So therefore I would earnestly request to the honourable speakers that they may limit themselves with the timeframe which is already of five minutes. Thank you very much for their cooperation.

Mr Phongsaysack Inthalath

Government (Lao People's Democratic Republic)

Excellency Chairperson, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, very good morning. On behalf of the Government of Lao PDR, it is my great honour to formally extend my congratulations to the Chair and Vice-Chairs for being selected as the chairs of the 111th Session of the International Labour Conference. I have a strong belief that under your chairmanship this Conference will bring about the great achievement. Your Excellency Chairperson, allow me to begin with the National Rural Employment Strategy. The strategy is a critical document of Lao PDR in linking with and supporting the relevant legislations and regulations. The ninth National Development Plan, the Labour and Social Welfare Development Plan and sectoral plans are relevant to decent and sustainable employment creation in rural areas to ensure increased income, improved livelihood, reduce poverty and address rural-to-urban labour migration issues. Therefore, to support the strategies running smoothly and achieve its goal, the Government is concentrating and raising the following issue to the ILO in country to further support the development of legislation including employment law and the minimum wages related OSH law and Skills Development Law. Regarding the employment and labour migration issues, the COVID-19 outbreak has resulted in rising unemployment levels, causing women and men Laotians to search for new opportunities, including self-employment. In addition, migrant workers are often excluded from national COVID-19 policy responses such as wage subsidies, unemployment benefits or the social security schemes. Following the ease in COVID-19 related restrictions, the economy has started to rebound. However, currency depreciation and a high inflation rate have come up with new challenges. Consequently, school dropout numbers are on the rise and a higher number of youths is migrating to neighbouring countries in unskilled and low paying jobs yet earning more than compared with the same or similar jobs in Lao PDR. Skills development is a priority of the Government and is set out by the ninth National Development Plan. The rapid change of technology, innovation, climate change and integration has been significant toward national policies and commitment towards its industrialization and modernization. National skills standards, as a consequence, is an element enhancing the development of competency-oriented training for manpower in various sectors. Reskilling and upskilling within the enterprises will motivate employment to work with productivity. Capacity-building for institutions will help improve the skills development and TVET system with more quality of management and training. Social protection is set out in the Government's priorities with the ninth National Development Plan. As a result, under the support of the ILO and the other UN agencies, the first National Social Protection Strategy 2021-2025 was developed and promulgated with three pillars of, one, health insurance, two, social security and, three, social welfare. The Government has achieved great success in extending the National Health Insurance scheme coverage to 94% of the population through subsidies to the contributions to workers in informal employment and their dependents. Additionally, with the support of the ILO in the country, Lao PDR has ratified OSH Convention No. 155 and No. 187 in July 2022 and endorsed the national profile of occupational safety and health. On this meaningful occasion, Lao PDR would like to take this opportunity to express its gratitude and thanks to the ILO in country and its regional office for their continuous

collaboration with and support to the relevant government and private agencies, tripartite, as well as having and maintaining a very good relationship with the international development partners, CSO and other embassies to the country. Lastly, I wish you all stay healthy and wish the meeting comes to an end with great success. Thank you very much for your attention.

Mr Michalakis Antoniou

Employer (Cyprus)

Dear Mr President, I wish to begin by congratulating the Chairperson, the Director-General and his office for this year's reports regarding the advancement of social justice and the promotion of decent work. The concept of a social justice coalition is a bold and timely initiative. It has the potential to bring positive change and promote the ILO's agenda once a realistic and workable proposal supporting productivity growth, skills development and sustainable enterprise is developed in consultation with constituents. One of the four dimensions of social justice the Director-General lists in his report is that of a just transition. As mentioned in the report, technological transformation is one of the factors affecting a just transition. Technologies and systems supported or based on artificial intelligence will change economies and the world of work in profound ways. Like the industrial revolution in the past, repetitive tasks will be automated and new tasks will be made possible only on a scale and magnitude we cannot fathom. New jobs will be created to utilize new technologies based on artificial intelligence while others will become obsolete. If we are impressed with what we see in the media daily, we must keep in mind that this is artificial intelligence technology in its infancy. Like other disruptive technologies of the past, artificial intelligence will usher a new era of economic and industrial activity that will most likely define our age. Legal, ethical, labour and regulatory issues are raised and they need to be addressed today. This is a technology that will take years not decades to proliferate. If there is one way to address such a complex issue, it is through social dialogue. The European Union is embracing artificial intelligence and aims to become a global leader. Discussions to regulate artificial intelligence are underway and social partners participate actively in the deliberations. Social dialogue may not always be expeditious but its outcome helps maximize consensus and minimize social friction. Social dialogue works at the national level even better and helps maintain and bolster good industrial relations. This is certainly the case of Cyprus. Our country has a long tradition of effective tripartite dialogue whose benefits we reap continuously. Cypriot social partners, under the auspices and mediation of our Minister of Labour and Social Insurance, have recently reached an interim agreement regarding the cost of living allowance payment, a hot topic that brought employers and workers at the edge of a serious conflict. Through social dialogue, good faith and mutual respect, we decided to resume structured negotiations with a view to designing a comprehensive and permanent arrangement of the dispute by mid 2025. Neither side achieved its objectives in their entirety but we succeeded in safeguarding labour peace and moving forward. Dear Chairperson, ladies and gentlemen of the plenary, the large-scale integration of artificial intelligence in the world of work is not something that will happen in the distant future. It is nearly upon us. We cannot afford to be complacent or idle in our deliberations regarding this matter. I am confident that governments, employers and workers can reach consensus and help forge a future where the benefits of this technology can be harnessed by all. There is a lot to talk about, and as far as we are concerned, the sooner we start talking, the better. Thank you for your attention.

Ms Irina Kostevich

Government (Belarus)

Distinguished President, distinguished delegations, allow me, on behalf of the Government of Belarus to welcome members to the 111th Session of the International Labour Conference. Annually, within the framework of his report, the Director-General invites us to discuss current issues in labour, employment and social protection. Within the framework of the discussion, we have the unique opportunity to learn about new advances intended to develop social labour relations as well as to share with other members of the Conference our positive experience and innovations in national legislation. In past years, we have seen that there has been an increase in the focus on themes such as work which is online work as well as platform employment, and we have seen a challenge to our traditional system of labour relations from these developments. In many countries we have seen unprecedented efforts to counter negative processes that have led to an increase in unemployment as well as to a decrease in social and labour guarantees. We, with great interest and enthusiasm, have been following the initiative of the Director-General, the Global Coalition for Social Justice, and we fully support the need to activate multilateral cooperation to ensure actions which are taken by the tripartite ILO partners to achieve the goal of social justice. The policy of the Belarusian Government is based on the basic principle of ensuring social justice. We are convinced that economic growth itself is insufficient as a guarantee of the improvement of the quality of life of our population. We believe that it is absolutely necessary to ensure a development in our country in the system of social partnership which provides constructive cooperation on the part of government bodies as well as of employers and labour unions. The Global Coalition for Social Justice must bring together the tripartite ILO partners in order to provide new meaning and progress to achieving these noble goals which are contained within the Charter of the Organization. And how is this taking place in Belarus? Is it possible in Belarus for the workers as well as enterprises in our country to count on the promotion and support of the ILO in ensuring the realization of the principles of social justice? The problem is that at this session of the Conference we are seeing the adoption of documents according to which, in the place of cooperation with Belarus, the ILO is proposing the imposition on our country of full-scale sanctions on the basis of article 33 of the ILO Constitution. And sanctions will affect not only the interests of the State but first and foremost those of our citizens because they will lead to a decrease in the income of the population as well as an increase in unemployment and a decrease in the financing of social programmes. Yesterday a resolution was adopted that will isolate Belarus, and today we are talking about the mandate of the ILO which will be weakened in the area of social justice. It is obvious that the ILO is carrying out plans to have destructive effects on the economy and social labour relations in Belarus which is in direct contradiction to the goals of the Organization. In this connection, I would like to note that it is necessary to show solidarity with independent Belarus and to return to using the ILO as a possibility for increasing social justice rather than politicizing its mandate. Thank you very much.

Mr Steven Humphrey Mac Andrew

Government (Suriname)

Mr President, representatives of the social partners, colleague ministers, other delegates, ladies and gentlemen, good morning. It is a privilege for me to address this

session of the ILC once again as Minister of Labour, Employment and Youth Affairs of Suriname. I wish to take this opportunity to wish the new Director-General, Mr Gilbert Houngbo, a successful tenure at the helm of the ILO and thank him for his excellent report. Notwithstanding the current economic and financial challenges that Suriname faces, we firmly believe that decent work is imperative for advancing social justice in our country and indeed in the world.. Decent work continues to have this potential through its four pillars, namely fundamental principles and rights at work, social dialogue and tripartism, social protection and labour protection, and full and freely chosen employment. We also firmly believe that universal and lasting peace can only be guaranteed if it is based upon social justice. Mr President, we see our third Decent Work Country Programme, which will be implemented in the period 2023-2026, as the main vehicle to boost decent work and attain social justice in Suriname. The Decent Work Country Programme has a strong focus on employment, employability, just transition, equal opportunities and social dialogue. Furthermore, the Decent Work Country Programme has an emphasis on vulnerable groups and a transition from the informal to the formal sector. I wish to point out immediately, Mr Chair, that I installed a couple of weeks ago a commission on entrepreneurship and employment for indigenous and tribal people which must develop within six months a programme of activities. I also wish to provide you with a brief snapshot of other activities that the ministry has implemented to spur decent work and social justice, namely the welcoming of 24 junior labour inspectors earlier this month who completed a training of nine months, the convening of various awareness sessions on labour legislation, the enactment of our new equality of treatment act and the enactment of the Violence and Sexual Harassment Act in October 2022. Furthermore, the establishment of the inclusive Labour Market Commission and the first historic payments made by our parental benefit fund in May 2023. It is clear from the aforementioned activities that the Government of Suriname attaches great value to decent work and social justice and that we therefore can indicate without hesitation that we fully support the call for a Global Coalition for Social Justice. Suriname, a country with high forest coverage and low deforestation and one of the three carbon negative countries in the world, has a coastal zone which is highly vulnerable to the impact of climate change, in particular sea level rise. We therefore fully agree with the Director-General that there is an urgent need for sustainable business practices to be adopted. Just like the DG, we are of the opinion that the private sector, especially micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, can play a pivotal role in a just transition by creating new, decent and green jobs and introducing new technologies. Suriname is therefore moving forward with the implementation of a project entitled Labour Market Alignment with New Industries, which is financed by the Inter-American Development Bank and which will assist the capacity of the Surinamese to take up jobs in new industries. I can also point out that our Decent Work Country Programme also includes just transition goals, which have been agreed to by the tripartite partners. After the COVID-19 pandemic, Mr Chairman, we are witnessing worldwide an upsurge in the migration of skilled workers, both regular and irregular. Both have the potential to impact negatively on the development in countries, and Suriname is no exception in this regard. In our Decent Work Country Programme we have, therefore, as a critical goal the strengthening of the governance of labour migration in our country. Mr President, I wish to conclude my brief remarks by pointing out that Suriname anticipates the adoption of the apprenticeship Recommendation during this ILC. Once again, our Decent Work Country Programme caters for the introduction of an apprenticeship system in Suriname and it is our aim to establish a national work-based learning programme as soon as possible as part of the Decent Work Country Programme implementation in our country. Mr President, I thank you.

Ms Marta Elena Feitó Cabrera

Government (Cuba)

President, distinguished delegates, after the end of the COVID-19 crisis we have seen an increase in prices of food and fuel. According to a WTO report, there are now 430 million people unemployed in 2023. In real terms, wages have gone down 0.9%, 700 million people live in extreme poverty and millions of them do not have access to any social protection at all. For them, the points that are being discussed in this Conference are relevant. Policies and actions that we decide on have to be centred in human well-being, in decent jobs, facing up to the challenges of climate change, protecting and promoting vocational training and guaranteeing social protection for all. If we intend to improve conditions, we have to accelerate international work on climate change which represents a burden impossible to bear by developing countries. They need support and finance from developed countries. We Cubans have learned not to accept defeat. Despite our country's difficult economic system, which has been made worse by the economic aggression and the illegal blockade imposed by the United States on Cuba for some decades, the country is continuing the compliance with Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development through macro programmes and policies, including the macro programme of human development, equity and social justice which, among other things, includes a decent work programme with inclusive policies to provide quality jobs, reducing informality, promoting green jobs and the social and solidarity economy. We have recognized new economic players which have had a favourable effect on the rate of employment, and that has been flanked by a programme to strengthen safety and health at work, which addresses all economic players. There are also social policies aimed at preventing, dealing with and changing situations of vulnerability of individuals, families and communities and also guaranteeing the financial stability of our universal pension system which provides universal provision of services of a financial nature. Universal free healthcare has had a great effect on our people, providing free vaccinations, and our education system, which has similar characteristics, provides for lifelong learning. The Caribbean, of course, is faced with the effects of climate change, seeing great damage to tourist and agricultural infrastructure, and our programme 'Life Task' is being set up to face up to that, including strategic actions in harmony with the Decent Work Agenda. The world economy is in an uncertain and unstable situation and is in a state of crisis, and instead of seeing construction of a world of solidarity and inclusion we see more conflicts, hunger and exclusion. Countries' participation in Agenda 2030 should be flanked by specific measures for market access, fair access to finance and preferential access to finance, transfer of technology and of skills and North-South cooperation. If we intend to create a better world, we absolutely have to struggle for a fair, just, democratic international order centred in the peoples and the people of the world. Thank you.

Mr Laurent Berger

Worker (France)

Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, delegates of governments, workers and employers, I speak on behalf of the French workers. And after three years of disturbances in its functioning, this Conference has now returned to its primary mission that is allowing all of the peoples of the world to engage in tripartite dialogue in an arena dedicated to the promotion of the rights of workers to well-being and to social justice. I am thinking here today of all of my union colleagues who are

imprisoned in so many countries. The pandemic crisis that we have experienced, the return of war to Europe and the environmental crisis force us to be even more demanding in our search for justice, equality and effectiveness. We have learned from our recent trials that it is the most vulnerable among us who pay the highest price. Informal workers as well as essential workers face unacceptable daily challenges, a cruel lack of income in order to feed their families as well as constant health dangers and the loss of millions of jobs. As for the environmental crisis, its effects are felt everywhere and especially in the global South. The November 2022 COP27 agreement endorsed the financing of the issues that have been experienced by the most vulnerable countries. However, it mentions neither the decrease in the use of fossil fuels nor an increase in ambitions to fight climate change. So we are only seven years away from 2030 and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals that the 193 Member States of the United Nations have adopted. So our committees are in keeping with these priorities, and we must ensure that this year's general discussion dedicated to a just transition, though not a normative discussion, must take its responsibility on board and reflect upon the urgent, specific effective actions to be taken. Apprenticeship must be enhanced and upgraded, and gender equality should be defined as the primary objective in the search for decent work as well as the fight against inequality. Everything is interlinked. In the face of heightened inequality, the desire to increase skills lessons and economic mobility and social mobility as well as human development are limited. We see that economic growth is weakened as well. Uncertainty and vulnerability as well as insecurity take root and confidence in institutions and public powers erodes. COVID taught us a lesson that we must not forget. The inclusion of a safe and healthy workplace in the fundamental principles and rights at work is an achievement to be lauded. But it is not enough. The ILO must provide new hope and prove that it has the ability, through specific actions, to strengthen the multilateral system and its role in this system to promote its values and to reduce the effects of globalization, the greatest effect of which is an economic one. Words alone are truly no longer enough. We count on the platform of the Global Coalition to promote to a greater level social justice through its thematic areas, goals so precious to the workers and indispensable for the survival of humanity. The ILO cannot risk disappointing us. Thank you.

Mr Suchart Chomklin

Government (Thailand)

Dear Mr President, on behalf of the Royal Thai Government, it is my honour to deliver a statement to the Conference once again this year. To begin, I support the notion of the new Director-General, Mr Gilbert F. Houngbo, that a Global Coalition for Social Justice shall enhance international cooperation and strengthen the ability of Member States in advancing our common goal: social justice. Thailand is committed to and has taken an active role in advancing social justice and promoting decent work at both national, regional and international levels. We recognize the need to uphold fundamental principles and rights at work, eliminating inequality through social dialogue, building resilience in crisis times through employment promotion, strengthening labour market institutions, closing the gender gap in the world of work, enhancing labour migration policy and expanding social protection. In this connection, please let me share some of Thailand's pathway for supporting business and workers in our journey for social justice. First, the occupational safety, health, and environmental campaign promotes well-being in the workplace and a culture of safety in the workplace which supports a sustainable society in Thailand. Second, we promote

employment and prevent job losses by organizing a national job fair called Job Expo to support all of the workforce in finding stable and secure employment in suitable jobs. Last but not least, social and labour protection systems are very important for all workers. The Government works hard to ensure that not only formal workers but also informal workers, including vulnerable and migrant workers, have income security, access to healthcare and a better standard of living. Social justice cannot be achieved with the Government's effort alone. Rather, a tripartite and integrated action from all sectors, including the employers and workers, is essential. We need to reinforce our commitment for a better world of work. Together we can make it happen. In closing, I wish to affirm Thailand's commitment to move forward and our readiness to work in partnership with others to advance social justice together. Thank you.

Mr Sameer Nass

Employer (Bahrain)

In the name of God, the Magnificent, the Merciful. Chair of the Conference, ladies and gentlemen, I would like to greet you. It is a pleasure to be able to address you today on behalf of the employers of the Arab countries involved in this 111th Session of the International Labour Conference. In my [vgr INAUDIBLE 0:56] as President of the Chamber of Commerce of the Arab Union I would like to welcome the report from the Director-General at the service of the workers and the employers as we address the issues of the world of work that involve all of us, addressing the improvement of productivity and economic growth. Honourable delegates, we are all aware that we are living in a world that is shaken by crises coming one after another which have difficult consequences. To address them, we need a development vision which will make it possible for us to face up to the problems. Thanks to an exhaustive and integrated programme of work, we can do that. We need to address growth weakness and strangle inflation, putting a stop to the increase in prices. It is clear, Chair, that all of the issues on the agenda of this ILC and the meetings in and around the Conference call on us to address the issues raised in the Director-General's report 'Advancing social justice'. This will help us to provide decent work and through decent work to provide equality in respect of the existing regulation and legislation in our countries. We, as employers and workers, have to promote a vision that will address these challenges, so all of our efforts have to come together to realize social justice and the Development Goals. We also have to address, of course, the rights of the Palestinian workers, as addressed in the annex of the Director-General's report. An ongoing situation that has been there for decades and swallowed many billions of dollars. We insist that the Palestinian workers' rights be respected and call on the Director-General to work for that. We can assure you of our will in the Arab world to help the societies of the world to resolve their conflicts, and through strengthening of dialogue and peaceful coexistence so that we can have strong, stable economies in peaceful coexistence and see a growth in the world economy, providing more jobs. And we are convinced of our unchanging position. We refuse to accept any redefinition of workers. We do not think that should get in the way of our convictions and work and our definition of workers. We think that what we have is adequate and sufficient and based in our moral convictions. We do not think that we should go against those fundamental convictions and the legislation that applies in Member States. To wind up, I wish this Conference every success and I hope that it will be able to be successful in its work helping us to work together better in this area. Thank you.

Ms Cyrene Waern

Worker (Sweden)

Distinguished delegates, as Sweden's Worker delegate, I would like to highlight the role of the ILO, a role where our tripartite system in the ILO contributes to a world where decent work, equality and peace are guiding stars. We must protect and promote fundamental rights everywhere. In a world where autocracies increase and democracies decrease, we need to join efforts more than ever to defend fundamental rights. In countries like Belarus, Myanmar, Iran, China, et cetera, we continue to see trade unionists being persecuted, imprisoned and even executed. Trade unionism is not a crime. Trade unionism is not extremism. This must end. On behalf of the Swedish Trade Union Confederation and the Swedish Confederation of Professional Employees, I once again want to express our profound solidarity with the workers in Palestine. The illegal occupation must end, the trade blockade of Gaza must be terminated and the daily harassment of civilians must stop. We want to reaffirm our support to international forces that tirelessly continue to work for a lasting and peaceful solution in which Israel and Palestine live side by side in peace and security. The Director-General points out in his report, 'Advancing social justice', that there are structural inequalities within our systems. The ongoing economic crisis due to the war in Ukraine and the repercussions of the pandemic is being paid by workers around the world, and especially by women, being the first ones to lose their income. Crises cannot be paid by workers. Companies need to use economic gains from earlier years to get through tough times. By doing so, they will be able to keep skilled workers and thrive again after the crisis. Remember that labour is not a commodity. Greed cannot be the driving forces of a fair, decent and just labour market. The world needs a greed deflation. Every worker deserves to be treated with dignity and respect regardless of their race, gender, sexual orientation, religion or socio-economic background. Fundamental rights mean that we must continue combating discrimination, advocating for equal opportunities and dismantling systemic barriers hindering progress. Mr President, governments need to make sure that systems are in place to ensure equal access to opportunity, a cornerstone of social justice. We must strive to level the playing field, ensuring every worker has the chance to fulfil their potential regardless of their circumstances. This means investing in quality education for all, affordable healthcare, systems for reskilling and upskilling, and robust social safety nets. By removing barriers hindering progress and providing equal access to resources and opportunities, we can pave the way for a society where democracy and equality are the guiding lights. As we envision a better future, we cannot ignore the pressing need for a just transition. The challenges posed by climate change and environmental degradation demand that we move towards sustainable practices and renewable energy sources. This transition must be carried out with justice and equity at its core, ensuring that those who are the most affected by the transition are not left behind. Workers need upskilling and reskilling to be able to work in emerging sectors. Prioritizing a just transition, through the Decent Work Agenda of the ILO, we can forge a path towards a greener, more sustainable world that benefits us all. A just transition to a greener world does not include child work in cobalt mines. This must end. No one should be exploited in the world of work. Fair conditions and a healthy and safe work environment must always be at the heart of every business. Lastly, the benefits of economic growth must be distributed in a fair and equitable manner. The rewards of progress are too often concentrated in the hands of a privileged few, worsening social and economic inequalities. We must strive for an economic system that prioritizes the well-being of all citizens by implementing progressive taxation, fostering inclusive business practices and strengthening social

safety nets. By ensuring that the benefits of economic growth are shared by all, we can build a society that leaves no one behind. In conclusion, let us remember that the ILO was founded on the basis that universal and lasting peace can only be established if it is based upon social justice. Thank you.

Mr Martin Kocher

Government (Austria)

Chairman, members of the bureau, ladies and gentlemen, the Report of the Director-General places social justice, the basis of the foundation of the International Labour Organization, at the centre of its attention, an objective that we are all committed to. The International Labour Organization already in 2008 in its Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization made clear its approach to social justice based on the concept of decent work. Austria has always been in favour of political consistency in the international system when addressing these questions, and it is important that decent work, in 2015, was placed in Agenda 2030 as Development Objective 8. In our world of today, shaken by crises, we have seen that past progress has seen setbacks. The pandemic showed that social partnership is a good basis for coordinated crisis measures to maintain jobs and that functioning social protection systems provide a reserve of robustness. Through them rich countries have recovered fairly well from the pandemic, while the economies and the labour markets of poor countries have sometimes fallen back. Unfortunately, forced and child labour have increased once again. The proposed initiative for a Global Coalition for Social Justice is very ambitious. Austria is in favour of the objectives for a coherent multilateral approach so that the international system for social justice is all pulling in the same direction. We agree that poorer countries have to be supported in order to shape their systems in a fairer and more just way. But it is also important that there are basic preconditions there, such as national political will to create social justice and to respect human rights as also the precondition of good governance. As Minister for Labour and the Economy, sustainable trade is something that is very important to me. Austria supports the inclusion of sustainability chapters in EU free-trade agreements in a systematic fashion, making them an integral part of all of them, which will, for example, require the implementation of fundamental rights at work and improve their implementation continuously. We also support the customs preference system of the EU which provides incentives for the ratification and implementation of human and labour rights. We also support the cooperation on research of the WTO and the ILO. We would also be in favour of including the respect for fundamental rights at work in the trade policy controls of the WTO. I would like now to address three subjects that the Conference is addressing that are particularly important to Austria. Firstly, I welcome the fact that the Conference this year is working on a Recommendation for high-quality apprenticeships. This instrument is going to be a good guideline for the formation of training systems in which the acquisition of skills in the workplace plays an important part. Austria has had good experience with its dual training system and hopes that the Recommendation will help other States now to use this approach successfully to better cover the need for future skilled workers. Also important is the provision of the just transition to an ecological economy. In Austria we have the just transition plan for training and further training, and there it is a question of providing training focusing on the energy transition in the environmental area. It is not just a question of training in the existing environmental foundation but also supporting companies so they can provide green skills. I would like to emphasize the significance of effective social dialogue and collective bargaining to protect workers

properly. In Austria, the autonomously negotiated collective bargaining agreements negotiated by the social partners provide adequate wages and good working conditions and cover 98% of our workers. Thank you very much.

Ms Marilia Agostinho Mendes

Worker (Switzerland)

Chair, Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, the crises of the world affect all of us. The dramatic ecological crisis, geopolitical instability, which we can see quite clearly in the dreadful war only a few thousand kilometres from Geneva, increasing inequality and disgraceful injustice, along with technological developments are facing the world of work with great challenges. We need worldwide social justice more than ever. The Director-General's report addresses the ways of achieving this objective and highlights national and international options for pursuing the human-centred and rights-based approach of the ILO. In the world of work we are a long way away from this objective. Precariousness is a worrying fact. In particular, new areas of the economy such as the platform economy create new kinds of precarious working relationships. They use people's labour without caring about their protection, for example through social insurance. The increasing inequality leaves no country untouched. The wage gap is increasing more and more, and the difference between women's and men's earnings has got bigger in the last few years rather than smaller. This in spite of the fact that many of the jobs that have a majority of women involved in them, such as care work, were recognized as essential during the COVID pandemic. It is thus essential that we provide for the protection of workers' rights independently of their gender, their origin or their ethnicity. Gender equality is decisive for the achievement of the ILO's objectives. In Switzerland the 14th of June is an important day. Tomorrow women are going to be going out in the street, along with other people in solidarity with them, to stand up for their rights, for equality and against all kinds of discrimination. The women's strike of the 14th of June is a powerful means of pointing out existing injustice and discrimination in Switzerland and worldwide. It is up to us to accept our responsibility to support this strike and to make sure that women and all people who are discriminated against can have the same opportunities and rights. The strengthening of women in the workplace means the strengthening of society as a whole. And there is a lot to be done here in Switzerland as well. For example, we still need good protection for pregnant workers and the ratification of ILO Convention 190. The geopolitical situation is also challenging. In Europe the genocidal war of Russia against Ukraine is raging, which I firmly condemn. And violence and war, wherever they happen, bring unending suffering, endanger human life and infringe the basic principles of humanity. Any attack on the sovereignty and territorial integrity of another country is unacceptable and a breach of international law, the UN Charter and the principles of the ILO. Attacks on a country's own population, including against union workers, as in Belarus, also breach these principles. To organize in a union is a right and not a crime. In his report, the Director-General sees social justice as a milestone for a better coordinated multilateralism. This is urgently needed. Social justice and human rights, care for the environment and for peace have to lead the world of work and our societies. Thank you very much.

Mr Pablo Mieres

Government (Uruguay)

It is a pleasure to be here at another International Labour Conference, participating in it. I would like to greet the Director-General and the President of the Conference and wish them every success in leading our discussions. I have to point out that we are going through very challenging times, characterized by a succession of adverse developments which have particularly affected the world of work. First there was the COVID-19 pandemic with the increase of unemployment at a planetary level that came out of it. And almost immediately after that, the sharp increase in inflation that arose from Russia's aggression against Ukraine with the obvious negative impact in the purchasing power of salaries in many parts of the world. However, in our country we have managed to recover and have a level of employment which is higher than before the pandemic. The rates of economic activity and of employment are now above the levels of 2019, and the level of unemployment is lower than in that year. Apart from that, the drop in the purchasing power of salaries which happened in 2020 has already, in large part, been made up for and we will soon be back to the levels of real earnings that we had before the pandemic. In our country, Uruguay, the existence of a closed net of social protection was a decisive factor in mitigating the effect of the pandemic on employment through the intensive use of social security benefits such as unemployment and health benefits. These circumstances increased the rate of formality, so Uruguay has reduced informality by five percentage points going from 25% in the years before the pandemic to 20% at present. In the same general direction, in our country we have just approved a profound reform of the social security system which will provide for its financial sustainability in the medium term while maintaining pension provision for the younger generations, increasing the lower pensions through a solidarity supplement and unifying subsystems of social provision in one system with shared parameters, and increasing the age of retirement of 65 years to take account of our demographic situation. And all of that being done in a gradual process of change without sudden or drastic effects on anyone. However, the world of work is facing up to its own challenges as well. We are seeing on the one hand a technological revolution characterized by processes of automation and robotization to which are added also now the direct impact of artificial intelligence. This will lead to the rapid disappearance of a large number of jobs, particularly those of the most vulnerable. And faced with this situation, we think it is fundamentally important that States respond, developing and expanding our social protection nets, constructing and promoting labour formality and supporting education and training. We are also seeing a change in the distribution of working hours and the possibilities that arise of a reduction of the working day. The new forms of labour relationships and their flexibility cannot however be allowed to lead to a drop in the protection of workers and their rights. In the case of the reduction of the working day, we have to recognize that that can only happen if it is directly linked to an increase in productivity, and this necessarily has to be defined with respect to every sector of the economy or even every individual business. When faced with this panorama, we would emphasize the importance of tripartite social dialogue. It is indispensable to address the challenges I have been talking about. In our case, tripartite social dialogue in the last few years has been of fundamental importance in defining strategies to address the pandemic, the effects of inflation and the recovery of employment and wage levels. Finally, I would like to support and welcome the opportune initiative of the Director-General for a summit on the word of work centred on social justice. We think this is an opportune initiative given that the situation in the world, which should see us concentrating on the improvement of working conditions

and advancing in the construction of social justice, is characterized on the contrary by the dangerous increase in uncertainty with flagrant violations of international law happening ever more frequently, damaging the prospects of peaceful coexistence and the future of our people. In this difficult situation, the ILO has a fundamental part to play so we wish the Director-General and his team every success and we can assure you that Uruguay will be fully available to assist in any way that is needed. Thank you.

Mr Michail Shmakov

Worker (Russian Federation)

Distinguished President, ladies and gentlemen, colleagues, today we are witnesses to the birth of a new system of international relations and to the collapse of the unipolar world. For a long time we will all be living in a new and different paradigm. This new multipolar world requires that the ILO plays a special role, most importantly by preserving the values of the Organization. The ILO must distance itself from the views imposed upon it by certain countries and see to it that in each of the areas of growing multipolarity there be respect for its value system and Conventions. First and foremost its fundamental Conventions such as Conventions 87 and 98. Over many decades, the Organization has convincingly demonstrated its ability to effectively defend the interests of workers and to promote the strengthening of systems of tripartite relations. Today we must ensure that tripartism develops in each of the newly developing poles of our world. We must further highlight the role of the political and economic contractions that are resulting from the introduction of illegal sanctions against sovereign States, which benefit the leaders of these countries and transnational corporations while risking the fragmentation of the global economy as well as undermining prospects for just multilateralism and plunging into poverty millions of people. Humanity has already paid too high a price for our past division into blocks. The development, ratification and application of ILO Conventions as a component part of the regulations promoted in the UN system provide for the strengthening of the rule of law in a world riven by conflict. We share the main idea of the Director-General's report that to attain social justice it is vital to revive social dialogue. This idea is intended to take form as a Global Coalition for Social Justice. The Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia is ready to promote the creation of and work of this coalition. We have fought for decades so that ILO values and principles would become a guide for action for the entire global community, and the specific proposals in the report create an excellent basis for decisive steps in this direction. As is noted in the report, striving for social justice goes beyond the world of work. In countries in which inequality and exploitation are growing and in which decent work is scarce and in which there is mistrust of elites on the part of citizens, social justice is indispensable as a condition for peace and stability. The creation of the coalition paves the way for possibilities to integrate tripartism and social dialogue in multilateral cooperation globally, including in the BRICS format. Social dialogue is intended to become a binding global mechanism, included in collective agreements at all levels, including in global supply chains, in digital production and in the platform economy in conditions of remote work. Ensuring comprehensive protection of labour through ensuring sufficient salary levels, the improvement of labour conditions and the achievement of productive, freely chosen employment must become the decisive contribution in the success of the coalition. Ensuring the observance of labour rights as one of the unalienable rights or human rights is indispensable as a condition for implementing the ILO's decent work programme and the UN Agenda for Sustainable Development 2030. In order to do so, we must demonstrate greater solidarity. We

must come to the aid of developing countries and the poorest countries which can barely cope with new crises, from climate catastrophes to the socio-economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. We trust that the creation of the Global Coalition for Social Justice will reach its goals and yield real results. This will truly be our new social contract. In conclusion, I would like once again to emphasize that if the ILO does not rise to meet the current political, economic and even military challenges and carry out the values and embody the values that are enshrined in its Constitution, then the Organization has no future. Thank you very much for your attention.

Mr Ekasit Kunanantakul

Employer (Thailand)

Mr Chairperson, delegates, distinguished guests, on behalf of the Employers' Confederation of Thailand, ECOT, I would like to extend my warmest congratulations to Mr Gilbert Houngbo, who has assumed office as the 11th Director-General of the ILO. Please rest assured of our full support for you and your team. I would also like to take this opportunity to express our affirmation and support to the ILO work in advancing social justice through decent work. We strongly believe that enterprises' sustainable competitiveness and social progress are not only compatible but mutually supportive. We also agree that it is not possible to achieve sustainable development without decent work. Over the last few decades, Thailand has made remarkable progress in social and economic development, moving from a low-income to an upper-middle-income country. The rapid economic growth has also led to significant reductions in poverty. Despite the progress, Thailand faces several challenges with the changing jobs landscape and finds itself in the middle-income trap due to the inability to transition into higher productivity employment, thus a decline in its competitiveness in the region. Despite the increases in higher education, our young graduates experience the highest levels of unemployment due to high rates of education mismatch. At present, Thailand's economy is recovering from the COVID-19 crisis. The unemployment rate declined to 1.05% in the first quarter of 2023 thanks to the robust recovery in the manufacturing, wholesale, retail and tourism sectors. The Thai Government has embarked on an ambitious reform programme to raise Thailand's long-term growth and achieve high-income status. The 20-year National Strategy and 13th NESDP to promote Thailand's development in accordance with the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy originated by our King Bhumibol Adulyadej that aims at improving human well-being by creating a balance of economic, social and environmental management with good governance. The digitalization of the economy, the adoption the National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights, and implementation of the Bio-Circular-Green Economic Model are some of the initiatives that demonstrate Thailand's commitment towards a balanced and sustainable development. Our well-developed social security system provides universal health coverage and protection for all including informal economy workers and the vulnerable. Business communities in Thailand are committed to support the National Strategy to enhance Thailand's competitiveness, social well-being, equality and environmental preservation. ECOT has been working with the Government and stakeholders to enhance private sector productivity and promote responsible business practices. ECOT also supports establishing a Global Coalition for Social Justice, as highlighted in the DG's report. We further stress that tripartism and social dialogue remain the fundamental instruments to advance social justice through decent work. In this regard, we urge the Government to endorse and ratify Convention 144 on tripartite consultation. As a last thought, let me finish by saying that the ILO is the only

unique body in which employers and workers have an equal seat at the table alongside the governments. Let us strengthen the tripartite body, which we value as essential for all of us to act in this challenging global setting. Thank you very much.

Mr Thulas Nxesi

Government (South Africa)

Mr President of the ILC, the heads of the delegations, the honourable delegates, it is an honour to address this esteemed gathering at the 111th Session of the ILC on behalf of the South African delegation. I would like to extend our gratitude to the ILO for its unwavering commitment to advancing social justice globally. We commend the report of the ILO Director-General which echoes our country's shared sentiment for greater social justice and outlines the means to achieve it. Today we find ourselves facing a complex array of challenges that threaten and undermine social justice on a global scale, the compounding crises we face from the fallout of the pandemic and many other crises, to growing inequalities, the inadequate investment in social development and weakening global solidarity that demand urgent attention and collaborative action. In light of these challenges, the proposal to forge a Global Coalition for Social Justice holds immense promise. Such a coalition would elevate social justice as a global policy imperative to foster multilateral cooperation amongst the ILO partners and stakeholders. By initiating coordinated action in strengthening countries' ability to address social justice deficits, the coalition would contribute to the well-being of the nations and support the national efforts to build inclusive societies. We strongly recognize that implementing a global social protection floor, aligned with the ILO's Recommendations, can yield positive effects. It has the potential to increase the GDP per capita, reduce poverty, narrow income gaps and foster a more equitable society. A comprehensive and an inclusive social protection system is a cornerstone of social justice, providing a safety net for vulnerable populations and ensuring a dignified life for all. Advocacy and policy dialogue play a crucial role in including social justice considerations in decision-making at all levels. Thus, the Global Coalition would provide a platform for such dialogue, enabling us to address the deficit and design sustainable strategies through the processes of national social dialogue. Moreover, the integration of the direct work agenda with the SDGs is of utmost importance. The Global Coalition can actively contribute to the integration, ensuring that social justice is firmly embedded in the pursuit of sustainable development. And to achieve these ambitious goals there a need to underscore the importance of SDG 17 which calls for a global partnership for sustainable development. It also highlights the importance of the macroeconomic stability and mobilizing financial resources for developing countries and further stresses the importance of trade and equitable rules for governing it. In this spirit, we support the call for global action to bolster the existing frameworks and foster closer engagement among the organizations such as the IMF, the World Bank, the WTO and the ILO. Thus, there is no need to reinvent the wheel since there are already initiatives that attempt to achieve the same goals and objectives as the Coalition. Nonetheless, we must prioritize international policy coordination and joint action to create a coherent and harmonized approach towards social justice. After all, we are less than seven years from 2030. By facilitating high-level dialogues and enhancing policy coherence, the Global Coalition can effectively support countries in their endeavours to promote social justice and equitable development. Further, we must not overlook the pivotal role of the ILO tripartite composition in shaping the social contracts at the national and international levels. The success of the Global Coalition will depend mainly on its inclusivity and social dialogue, so the unique

collaboration amongst the governments, employers' organizations and workers' organizations will enable us to develop an inclusive policy, promote social dialogue, create sustainable jobs and foster sustainable development. We must therefore harness the power of this tripartite cooperation to renew the social contract, address the social justice deficit and build resilient and inclusive economies. As we embark on this journey towards the Global Coalition for Social Justice, we must also remain mindful of the critical juncture at which the world finds itself. The recurring crises, economic inequalities, poverty, unsafe working conditions, conflicts and discrimination continue to hinder progress towards social justice. We must act decisively to reverse these trends, safeguard the dignity and the well-being of the workers worldwide and build a more just and equitable future. In conclusion, President, let us embrace the vision outlined in the ILO DG's report and forge a Global Coalition for Social Justice. We wish him the best of luck in his efforts that commence with the World of Work Summit beginning tomorrow. Together let us work towards a world where social justice is not a distant dream but a reality for all. We call upon all nations, organizations and individuals present here today to unite in this noble endeavour and commit to creating a better future for generations to come. Thank you.

Ms Raquel Cecilia Kismer De Olmos

Government (Argentina)

President, it is an honour for me to be able to address you and the delegates present at this Conference. In a world that is exhausted through recurrent crises, the Republic of Argentina and our government, headed by Dr Alberto Fernández, is certain that we will not find responses if we look at the ideas of those who, basing their ideas on economic neoliberalism, propose ways of doing things where the powers that be and financial capital determine the lives of individuals, the destiny of communities and the sustainability of the planet, seeing them as variables to adjust the greed characterizing existing and dominating economic and social systems. On the contrary, our aspirations are similar to those set out by the Director-General of the ILO, Mr Gilbert Houngbo, and that of the Secretary-General of the United Nations addressing the Global Accelerator on Jobs. We subscribe to the ideas and the doctrine which place social justice as the guiding principle of all state policy, placing it at the centre of political discussion and incorporating the interests of working people as a value characterizing what we refer to as full democracy of social justice. My country, the Republic of Argentina, has a recognized tradition in the search for all of this, which you see in the struggle that our country has been engaged in for 80 years now, the 80 years of the history of Justicialism, which teaches us that no one can develop in a society that does not develop. Seen from this viewpoint, full protection of labour, social and environmental rights, the recognition and strengthening of collective representation, the right to associate, tripartite dialogue and the search for gender equality are indispensable conditions for a system of labour relationships which can function as a true backbone for any system that is truly democratic and social. In a globalized world, there is little scope for effective responses that are restricted to one individual country. It is essential to have global governance that will strengthen these principles, which will tend to remove systemic inequality, to provide a solution to problems such as foreign debt of developing countries and which, in general, will contribute to a restructuring of the international financial engineering and structure of international trade which has led to an unprecedented concentration of economic resources in a few hands and to the current social polarization which is crushing humanity. For all of these reasons, we are enthusiastically in favour of the creation of a Global Coalition for Social

Justice. This could take this concept to the level of a universal political debate which would effectively manage to align economic, financial, environmental, gender and social agendas so that we can achieve prosperity and share prosperity in peace. Along with Pope Francis, in Fratelli tutti, we support the idea of an ethics of international relationships. We will not be able to live in a world without conflicts in a world in which people are not able to assure their own livelihoods with decent work which guarantees them a proper wage and their physical integrity with the backup of democratic systems, social security and strengthening of the free association of employers and workers. My country has been traditionally involved in this search. Looking back over history, we see that we have been involved in this search shared by those who believe in the existence of robust social protection with a consolidated system of collective negotiation and a tripartite structure for the public and the private sector and calls on that as a support for peace and social cohesion. It is necessary to affirm the path of social justice at a global level. It is time to do that to reinforce the need of structural strengthening of unions and their sectoral organizations for tripartite dialogue between them, organizations of employers and the Government, and the strengthening of the rules that protect union activity. All of this is an indispensable social heritage for life in an organized community such as the one we refer to, and that is our reference model which has to be proposed in all instances and bodies of multilateral dialogue. Thank you.

Mr Zulfiquar Haider

Government (Pakistan)

Distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, assalamu alaikum, and a very good morning to you all. Please allow me to extend warm greetings from the people of Pakistan. In line with the DG's ILO vision, Pakistan is dedicated to promoting social justice based on principles of equity, solidarity and equal rights for all. We deeply appreciate the recommendations presented in the report as they align fully with our ongoing efforts to advance in these particular areas. Recognizing the devastating impact of floods on our population and the workforce, Pakistan has implemented robust strategies and policies to enhance social protection measures and ensure job retention during such calamities. Relief programmes have also been established to offer temporary employment opportunities to all the affected people, providing economic stability and preserving their means of livelihood during the challenging recovery phase. These efforts contribute to rebuilding communities and enable individuals to actively participate in building a more resilient nation. Pakistan takes pride in its informal economy, which serves as the backbone of the country. We are committed to recognizing and protecting the rights of those working in this sector. In recent years we have enacted new laws in the provinces to regulate and improve the working conditions of our informal workers, including domestic workers, home-based workers and agriculture workers. These laws have provided better entitlements, particularly for women workers, and encompass provisions on minimum wages, working hours, leave entitlements, and occupational safety and health. Pakistan remains steadfast in upholding the international labour standards. Our national legislation is aligned with these labour standards, and to further strengthen our commitment, we have developed a five-year ratification strategy with the assistance of the ILO country office. Priority Conventions for ratification include those addressing forced labour, occupational safety and health in mines, maternity protection, domestic workers and maritime labour. The Pakistan DWCP 2023-2027, signed by the Government and social partners in May this year, outlines four key priorities that will

improve working conditions and foster an inclusive and equitable society. First we prioritize decent work in Pakistan's economic recovery, development and response to climate change, natural disasters and conflict. Integrating decent work principles will lead to sustainable, inclusive and worker-centric economic growth. The ILO's support in developing a world of work strategy for crisis response and just transitions is vital. Secondly, we prioritize expanding social protection coverage for all, including universal health coverage. We are committed to USP2030 and are prepared to join the Global Accelerator. Creating fiscal space and implementing inclusive legal reforms are steps we have taken to enhance social protection. Thirdly, we prioritize the application of international standards and fundamental principles and rights at work, fostering harmonious industrial relations. Through the Better Work programme, a collaboration between the ILO and IFC, significant progress has been made in improving working conditions, safety and labour standards compliance in our country. We are dedicated to strengthening our partnership with the ILO and addressing formalization, access, SME development, capacity-building, diversification and the empowerment of women entrepreneurs. Lastly, let me state that we are committed to safe, healthy and gender-responsive workplaces free from violence and harassment. Prioritizing occupational safety and health Conventions, we are working with the ILO to establish an OSH Centre of Excellence. Our government is focused on ratifying the IMO shipbreaking Convention, emphasizing occupational safety and health in the sector. In conclusion, Pakistan stands ready and determined to work towards just transitions through job creation, social protection, human capital development, upholding labour standards, especially fundamental principles and rights at work. At the end, let me say this, that the vision of the Government of Pakistan and the vision of the DG of the ILO are aligned, and we look forward to our joint and collective effort to further the goals of social justice for all. With this, ladies and gentlemen, I thank you for your indulgence.

Mr Dato Awg Haji Ahmaddin Haji Abd Rahman

Government (Brunei Darussalam)

Mr President, Your Excellencies, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, assalamu alaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh. First, on behalf of my delegation, allow me to express our heartfelt congratulations to His Excellency Mr Ali bin Saeed bin Samikh Al Marri, Qatar Minister of Labour, on the election as the President of the 111th Session of the ILC. I would also like to extend my sincere appreciation to His Excellency Gilbert Houngbo, Director-General of the International Labour Organization, for convening this year's World of Work Summit: Social justice for all. I am pleased to join my fellow constituents in expressing our appreciation for the comprehensive report delivered by the Director-General regarding advancing social justice. The Director-General highlighted the importance of addressing the issues arising from the overlapping challenges and the current realities that require a joint effort in a distinct tripartite approach or mechanism. You stressed the need for tripartite entities to effectively utilize the strategic opportunities that exist at both the national and international levels. Therefore, Brunei Darussalam remains committed in promoting full and productive employment and decent work for all, which is also stated in the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Brunei Darussalam underscores social justice and fairness in the workplace that addresses the systemic inequalities that hinder progress and perpetuate discrimination, the ASEAN Declaration on Strengthening Social Protection, which sets out our commitment to enhance the well-being and livelihood of the peoples of ASEAN and providing them with equitable access to opportunities for human development, social welfare and justice. Further to this,

Brunei Darussalam strives to adhere to the international standards and policies to protect basic human rights and vulnerable groups. This includes providing fair opportunities while enhancing inclusivity in pursuit of reducing discrimination against race, disabilities and status. Amongst others is the Brunei Darussalam Disabilities Order 2021 that protects the person with disabilities from abuse and neglect. Additionally, the amendment of the Old Age and Disability Pensions Act Order 2021, that will strengthen the care of the people with different abilities and ensure the provision of allowances to those who are entitled to receive and no one is left behind. Mr President, efforts in maintaining our momentum towards scaling up social justice for all societies, as an evidence of our continuous commitment in investing in education, upskilling and training development programmes to accommodate the evolving industries and ensure our workers have the necessary talents to succeed in the workforce, this will support those who have been mismatched with the demands of the industries and equip them with the relevant skills through accessible programmes organized by various agencies in the country. To further reinforce the global ambitions and values of equitable and just (sic) for all, our government has made substantial efforts to ensure that all members of society in the nation have access to basic services, amenities and opportunities for professional and economic development through a social welfare system that provides free or low-cost healthcare, education as well as housing assistance for low-income families to ensure that they have access to basic services regardless of their socio-economic status. Brunei Darussalam recognizes the challenges and disparities faced by both local and migrant workers and is committed to achieve solidarity and protecting workers' rights and promoting fairness in the workplace. The ratification of the Forced Labour Convention 1930, No. 29, will significantly accelerate our progress towards achieving social justice, aligning with the aspirations of this summit in reforming and dismantling social injustice and inequalities, particularly in the work conflict. In addition, the Employment Order establishes employment standards which includes regulations on working hours, leave entitlements and other basic working conditions. In the matter of work conflict and labour disputes, we adopt the settlement mechanisms which are in line with collective bargaining. To conclude, we recognize that advancing social justice is not a one-time effort but an ongoing commitment which requires a whole-of-government approach and the continuous unity within the nation and people by building a community of inclusivity and harmony. By investing in education, minimizing economic disparities, supporting vulnerable groups and fostering empathy, we can create a society where social justice is a reality for all.

Mr Abdulrahman Al Awar

Government (United Arab Emirates)

Thank you, Your Excellency, for your comment. Actually, I really appreciated that, and thank you so much. In the name of God, Most Merciful, ladies and gentlemen, may the peace and grace of God be upon you all. It is an honour and a pleasure for me to be taking the floor here today at this 111th Session of the ILC. We meet here today in …

Mr Antonio Fernando Varela Bohórquez

Government (Peru)

Vice-President of the 111th Session of the International Labour Conference. Ladies and gentlemen, delegates, it is an honour to address you in the framework of this 111th

Session of the International Labour Conference. I pass on a fraternal greetings from the Constitutional President of the Republic of Peru, Ms Dina Ercilia Boluarte Zegarra. Recently, Peru has managed to maintain its democratic institutions, achieving the succession of the presidency of the republic in accordance with the provisions of our constitutional order, following the guidelines of the Inter-American Democratic Charter, after a deplorable coup d'état during which Parliament was dissolved and democratic institutions were subjected to coercive measures. Unfortunately, in this international ambit, claims have been made that have nothing to do with reality, indicating that our country would be governed by a de facto president. Nothing is further from the truth because in Peru there is a democratic state in which individual citizens can express their different opinions to those in government, as we have seen clearly through the various contributions from employers and workers who have spoken before me in this important international body. We are therefore convinced that we will be able to find many points of agreement, particularly in the world of work and employment. That world is developing very quickly, hand in hand with the transformation of global society and our local societies. All of that represents a challenge which has to be faced up to under the banners of tripartism and social dialogue. And this current International Labour Conference is an appropriate context to continue in the direction of this shared objective. And with this objective we have placed at the centre of our activity the struggle to formalize labour, which is the cornerstone of decent work and social protection. And given that, we have continued to implement our Sectoral Action Plan for more Formal Work 2022-2023, the objective being to incorporate 752,293 workers into the formal economy. Apart from that, through the integrated centre called 'Formalize Peru', employers are provided with orientation services, training services and technical assistance to help formalize labour with offices in 22 different regions of Peru. Apart from that, we have been working on draft regulations which will provide compensation to employers when they maintain formal employment, working in the regions of the north of Peru to mitigate the effects of the intense rainfall that we had recently, and with that measure we will generating 165,000 formal jobs. Apart from that, our constitutional government is particularly interested in expressing our severe pain that arises from the lamentable accident which led to the death of miners in Peru last month. Let these humble words honour their memory. In this sense, safety and health at work is another of our priorities based in our national policy for safety and health at work by 2030, a plan which arose from tripartite social dialogue in the National Council for Safety and Health at Work. Alongside those lines, looking at labour inspections, the national labour inspection service this year has carried out more than 5,000 actions to help work against accidents at work by providing training and consciousness raising, contributing to the adoption of protection measures to guarantee the safety and health of 111,474 workers. And in the course of this year there have also been 150 inspections addressing safety and health at work in large and medium-scale mining activities. Apart from that, the Ministry of Labour and Promotion of Employment in Peru is particularly open to the tripartite reflections that are underway with respect to the ratification of Conventions 155 on occupational safety and health and 187 on a promotional framework for occupational safety and health. As far as pensions are concerned, the Government has drawn up a proposal to create a new system to provide provisions in Peru, trying progressively to move to universal coverage, guaranteeing a social protection floor. And along with technical assistance from the ILO, work has been underway on an integrated system for unemployment protection as a mechanism for social protection for unemployment. All of this is based on our vocation for social dialogue. This is one of the President of the country's main concerns. From the first day in office, we have seen great emphasis placed on the reactivation of the National Council for Labour and

Employment Promotion. Eight roundtables for labour have been set up in the four main unions and employers' organizations. Finally, we reiterate our commitment to the founding principles of the International Labour Organization based in our deeply rooted democratic values. Thank you very much.

Mr Antonio De Lisboa Amâncio Vale

Worker (Brazil)

We salute the initiative of the Director-General of the ILO to launch a Global Coalition for Social Justice and emphasize that peace and justice are founding principles of this organization, set out in the Declaration of Philadelphia. President, among the issues that this Conference is addressing we have the just transition. Reducing the high levels of carbon dioxide is urgent, but this cannot be done at the cost of workers, in particular the great majority of poor workers who are often left only with high levels of carbon dioxide by the current polluting model. Analyses of the impacts of technological advances and of artificial intelligence on the world of work are alarming. Instead of the gains of productivity being passed back to society, they continue to be used to concentrate riches and income. In the third decade of the twenty-first century the world still has more than 160 million children working in child labour and around 50 million people in forms of modern slavery. More than 4.1 billion people do not have access to social protection. More than 2 billion workers are in informal employment, without access to rights and struggling to get a minimum wage that will enable them to survive, a living wage. In Latin America and the Caribbean one person out of two works in informality and has two to four times more chances of being in poverty. This carries rise to the phenomenon of poor workers, workers in poverty, those who, even if they work, cannot keep their family living in conditions of dignity. As far as this is concerned, as far as data from Oxfam suggests, more than 1% of the world, the richest 1% of the world, was able to gather more than two-thirds of the riches generated since 2020, around US$42 trillion, which is six times as much money as 90% of the global population managed to earn in the same period. A Global Coalition for Social Justice is urgently needed but the question is how to construct such a coalition. In our view, you cannot make an omelette without breaking eggs. And by that I mean that to have social justice we have to face up to the causes of injustice and to the people causing injustice. We have to regulate labour in global supply chains that concentrate income between people and regions. Many of us are aware of the differences in the quality and value of work in the countries where the big corporations are based and at the end of the value chain where work is almost always precarious with huge inequality, exploitation of natural resources and environmental imbalance. We need to regulate work in global supply chains. It is an urgent challenge if we want to promote social justice. Millions of workers, particularly young people, are being exploited by companies in the platform economy. Research carried out by the CUT in Brazil shows that social justice requires taxing these companies, regulating the work and guaranteeing rights and dignified pay to these workers. Millions of transactions are carried out every day in the financial system, often directed to tax havens without anything being offered to the great mass of people, particularly in the global South. The financial system works freely, benefiting a few, the richest, and strangling the world economy. Apart from that, the fiscal measures imposed by the IMF are strangling the poorest countries, reducing their investment in social policy, creating more poverty. We need to stop tax havens, tax the big fortunes and financial transactions to guarantee resources to finance social justice. Informal employment is the reality for most workers in developing countries. Recommending Recommendation 204 of the

ILO is promoting social justice. President, after seven years of a tragedy during which human, workers' and environmental rights were severely attacked, today we are seeing in Brazil the scenario in which democracy has won and we have a government which has come back to strengthening social dialogue and started once again to protect the most vulnerable. The policy of upgrading of the minimum salary was resumed, benefiting around 54 million people. Apart from that, the Government sent draft legislation to parliament to ratify Conventions 190, 156 and 187. We are working on the regulation of platform labour, aiming first to guarantee rights to the workers in transport and delivery. Another working group proposed by the unions is talking about the strengthening of collective bargaining which is so important to workers and to this organization. Restarting social dialogue, abandoning the last seven years, will no doubt help to implement these policies of social inclusion to fight against poverty. In Brazil we believe we will overcome these difficulties, taking specific actions to fight social injustice. Thank you.

Mr Alexei Buzu

Government (Republic of Moldova)

Mr Director-General, Madam Vice-President, Your Excellencies, as I stand before you a war rages in Ukraine for the second year. Since that fateful February day, over 800,000 refugees have crossed our border and over 100,000 have chosen to stay. In our small country of 2.6 million, this is over 4% of our population. This is one of the highest number of refugees per capita in Europe. This winter Moldovans saw energy prices increase sevenfold, reaching unsustainable levels. Double-digit inflation adds pressure on working Moldovans and businesses alike, hurting the living standards of a population already struggling. I want to thank the ILO Director-General for visiting Moldova in this time of need. His visit gave us great hope that we are not alone in these challenging times. Indeed, we see more signs of hope. Last June, Moldova became an EU candidate. We have a clear path ahead as part of the free world. More importantly, we have not been defeated. Instead, we worked relentlessly to offset the impact of the crises while pressing ahead with structural reforms. I am grateful to all the countries and international organizations, including the UN, who supported us in these efforts. Dear delegates, I fully share the vision set out by the Director-General in his report. Let me give you just some examples of what we are doing to achieve his vision. Energy prices and high inflation reconfirmed the importance of social protection. With support from international partners, my government put in place an innovative, targeted compensation scheme. Hundreds of thousands of vulnerable households had their bills compensated by up to 60%, depending on the need, to help them to make it through the winter with dignity. The Government also introduced new measures of support for families with children. Recent legislation sets out to create more quality childcare so that more women have the chance to enter the labour force faster. We are redoubling our efforts to tackle informal work. The Parliament enacted legislation bringing the mandate of the Labour Inspectorate closer in line to the ILO Conventions through unannounced visits and direct sanctions. We are also helping employees to transition to formal work, prioritizing agriculture where informality is most widespread. The Government is introducing a new, fully digital voucher scheme which will allow businesses to easily register their workers. Strong, effective and well-managed labour institutions are key. The National Employment Agency and the Labour Inspectorate are undergoing a structural reform to improve the access to decent jobs and to protection at work. We are determined to offer adequate support for labour market integration, including to vulnerable groups, especially people with disabilities.

For the first time, with ILO support, labour inspectors are undergoing comprehensive training designed to help them to gain skills and keep up with the fast-changing world of work. As a minister, I find the figures on child poverty in my country deeply unsettling. Together with my colleagues, we launched an ample reform of the social assistance system in Moldova. Our efforts aim to reduce regional inequalities in social assistance so that every child and adult can enjoy adequate services and protection. Having joined the Government from the ranks of civil society, I am convinced that effective policy can only come through quality social dialogue. We will continue our efforts to build trust and improve the culture of consensus-based solutions as the best approach to decision-making. Ladies and gentlemen, I come before you from a region beset by war and compounding crises. My message to you is this: let us join forces. That is why we fully support the creation of the coalition for social justice. Let us draw inspiration and strength from each other while pressing ahead with our shared purpose, that of social justice for all. Thank you.

Mr Younes Sekkouri

Government (Morocco)

Bismillahirrahmanirrahim [foreign 0:24]. Mr Chair, Mr Director-General, ladies and gentlemen, I would like first of all to congratulate our organization for the maturity that all the Member States have witnessed in this very specific session because of the long debates on the budget and the priorities on the Declarations. And I think that it is time for all of us to seize the opportunity and ask ourselves the important and crucial questions on whether we want this organization to be a technical and normative one or we want it to be a real political organization with real impact on employment, on decent work and so many areas that it covers. I think that our duty, our common responsibility today is to promote a new generation of multilateralism. And we cannot do that if we do not really mobilize our governments, our bodies of employers, our unions to make sure that there is a consensus on what we want to present to the world and to the future generations in every single country. We need an efficient and relevant organization that is connected to the real lives, priorities and lived experiences of our populations, of our citizens. And this is why I want to thank and encourage and endorse the role, the efforts that the Director-General is doing every day with all of you, Member States and Chairs, so that we can transform our organization in this post-COVID era. By the way, I do not see another choice. I do not see another organization who can play this role because of the unique constituency of this very specific organization with the tripartism that we all know. Let us be practical and try to shape this international endeavour and nurture it with our experiences, since tomorrow will start the summit on the international coalition that the organization wants to launch, and that we of course endorse and want to nurture. One of the areas that are important to all of us is social dialogue as one of the spaces where most of the agreements can be achieved. In Morocco, for instance, we reached last year a historic agreement on social dialogue. We have the proof with the unions, the three representative unions present here, the representatives of the employers, and if we could achieve this social dialogue agreement in very difficult times in terms of economy, in terms of inflation, and you all know the circumstances that all our countries are facing, it is because we wanted to act in a responsible way towards our citizens in these very difficult times. This social dialogue agreement enabled us not only to reach social peace, which is of course one of the basics of every social dialogue objective. It enabled us to launch three important, crucial and unprecedented reforms in the sector of education for more than half a million people, workers, in the sector of

higher education and in the sector of health. The second area that we absolutely need to tackle in a responsible way is social protection. His Majesty King Mohammed VI launched a royal project to generalize social protection to all Moroccans. We could reach last year more than 11 million additional Moroccans who have now access to medical coverage. It is huge in terms of budget. It required a lot of trade-offs for the Government. But we could reach it, and we are engaged this year, next year and the year after to tackle the other areas of social protection, namely the family allowances, the job loss compensation that exists but we are revamping, and the extension of pensions to all types of workers, including those who do not earn wages. Another interesting area that you are tackling here, and I am finishing with this, is the apprenticeship, because it is one of the very efficient ways to make sure there is an integration to the job market. We have more than 600,000 people in vocational training, and His Majesty launched one of the Rolls Royces of vocational training in Morocco that we called the Cities of Skills, with more than 35,000 students, villages of tourism, aeronautics and car industry and so many other industries so that we can give to this very important population the means of its success. Ladies and gentlemen, I do not want to take more time. I just want to reassure you that Morocco is engaged with the ILO in the efforts, in the endeavour of the Director-General, and we completely endorse and we want this initiative that is launched tomorrow to be a successful one.

Ms Jyotsna Shrestha Subba

Employer (Nepal)

Respected Chair, Excellencies, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, first of all I would like to extend my warm greetings to you all. Namaste to you all. I am very much pleased in having this opportunity to speak in this plenary sitting of the 111th Session of the International Labour Conference. It is significant that we have been attending this conference physically after three years. We experienced the painful times of the COVID pandemic that severely affected the socio-economic activities and human life in the past three years. We all have been facing the shocks of economic recession that has pushed the development process behind. We acknowledge the report presented by the ILO Director-General which has analysed the current global situation, labour market realities and pointed out various challenges affecting the process of social transformation. We appreciate the idea of a global coalition and actions to be taken from all the stakeholders to advance social justice. We would like to thank the Director-General for preparing such a comprehensive report. The interdependency within our globalized economy is an undeniable reality. Economic crises and market instability, wherever they arise, have far-reaching effects on socio-economic activities worldwide. It is crucial for all of us to acknowledge this fact and work together in partnership. We firmly believe that stability, peace and mutual cooperation are crucial in creating shared values. Technological innovation, climate change and globalization have shaped the labour market. Economic transformation is replacing jobs with skilled workers and leading to increased inequality. Sustainable business, reducing inequality and promoting social justice are major challenges, particularly in countries like Nepal. Respected Chair, we in Nepal were expecting a quick recovery of the loss caused by the COVID pandemic, but now we have been experiencing the situation beyond our expectations. Economic activities have slowed down and major economic indicators have shown gloomy pictures of the economy. Economic growth for this year is expected to be 2.16 whereas the growth the previous year was 5.26%. This has affected to carry out planned activities and achieving development goals. Nevertheless, despite these obstacles, the private sector of Nepal

remains committed in pursuing business growth, creation of decent jobs, enhancing the social security system, promoting small and medium enterprises, SMEs and formalization of businesses. We understand the importance of industrial peace and making efforts to improve labour relations. The Labour Act and Contribution Based Social Security Act were enacted in 2017. Now contribution-based social security schemes are being implemented. The provisions of the new Labour Act are applicable to all workers and will be instrumental in improving better working conditions, creating decent employment. We are actively involved in the consultation process in developing the current National Master Plan on the elimination of child labour and the Decent Work Country Programme, DWCP. The employers' organization has been closely working with all stakeholders to eliminate the forms of child labour. Currently, our priority is to contribute to overcoming the current economic hardships by advocating for policy reforms, fostering skill development, promotion of occupational safety and health and improving the quality of working life. Recognizing the importance of human-centred sustainable growth we have aligned all our activities with the Sustainable Development Goals, SDGs. We actively collaborate with the Government and trade unions through social dialogue to achieve these goals. I would like to take this opportunity to appeal to the ILO to develop programmes and strategies aimed at enhancing collaboration that can drive social transformation. In conclusion, I urge everyone to unite in collective action and strive towards advancing social justice. Let us join hands in this endeavour. I and my team from Nepal would like to wish the Conference great success. Thank you very much.

Ms Jovanka Trenchevska

Government (North Macedonia)

Respected Chair, distinguished ladies and gentlemen, Your Excellencies, it gives me great honour and pleasure to address this Conference today on behalf of the Government of North Macedonia and to present some of the priorities of our government. The Government of North Macedonia devotes great attention on social dialogue. As we all know, the social dialogue bodies and processes present a powerful weapon for tackling important economic and social issues, handling crises, fostering good governance and social justice, reducing inequality, recovering the economy and promoting economic growth. Social dialogue leads to mutual understanding between social groups representing different interests so as to agree on a solution to problems of common interest. One of the key principles of participatory governance is that those who could be affected by a decision should and must be involved in the making and implementing thereof. In other words, those affected by the Government's legal provisions or strategies should participate in the opinion-forming process and be given the opportunity to bring forward their proposals. And that is exactly what we as a government constantly strive for and implement. For years the Economic and Social Council has been operating as a forum that is consulted on the most important draft laws, policies and measures in the economic and social sphere on a regular basis. The Economic and Social Council was exactly where solutions and measures addressing the consequences of the pandemic and the energy crisis were discussed and produced, with the overriding aim of helping the economy as well as workers and vulnerable categories of citizens. A few months ago we, as a government, opened negotiations on the General Collective Agreement for the public sector, the last signing of which dates back 15 years. The consultation process is ongoing and it will bring enormous pleasure to reach a solution that, despite possibly being imperfect, will definitely be the result of a successful dialogue between the Government and the social partners. Facing the

challenge relating to the employment of young people following the completion of their educational process, long-term unemployment and frequent involvement in informal work, we have seen the need for a systemic approach to tackling the problems that young people in North Macedonia face, specifically the need to reduce youth unemployment and to increase youth employability. In this respect, I will briefly elaborate on the topic of Youth Guarantee as one of the European major initiatives aimed at providing young people with a quality offer of employment, continuous education and training or traineeship within four months from their respective date of registration in the Employment Service Agency. In fact, North Macedonia is the first non-Member State of the EU that has been successfully implementing the Youth Guarantee project since 2018, with over 80,000 entries of young people to date. This far almost 40% of the participants have received an offer of employment, continuous education and training or traineeship, which is considered a positive outcome. Despite all of us being witnesses to the fact that the challenges of building a functional and healthy society never cease, we as a government do not deviate from this path because it is for the good for workers, it is for the good for all of us because it means social justice for all. Thank you very much.

Mr Manuel Marcelino Peralta Pena Costa

Employer (Portugal)

Morning. As a representative of the Employers' delegation from Portugal, I would like to reaffirm the commitment of Portuguese business to the effort that has been done within our country and outside it to overcome together the difficulties that have been created by successive crises in our country and at a global level affecting everyone. In Portugal, we have a tripartite model of social dialogue which has become well established. It is a model that has shown the significance of the involvement and the contributions of the social partners, which is an importance that they have always had, particularly in difficult times such as those we are going through today, given their role in providing for economic development, better social cohesion and high levels of prosperity and well-being in society. Against this background, in 2021 all of the social partners in Portugal signed an agreement on vocational training and qualifications, setting out a strategic design for people, along with countries and for the country, reaffirming the role of social partners in the context of governance and in the context of programmes of vocational training. And it was in this context as well that in the autumn of 2022 the majority of the Portuguese social partners signed a medium-term agreement for improvement in incomes, wages and competitiveness with the objectives of rebalancing the distribution of riches that are produced, increasing available incomes for families and to attract young talent and to create conditions for companies to increase competitiveness and productivity. This agreement was the result of difficult and hard negotiations, but above all, it was the result of a firm conviction that unity is strength. We know today, months later, that the efforts we put into dialogue and into setting out specific concrete objectives made a difference. This agreement is just one example of shared efforts in this sense, but we think it is essential for any activity of the social partners in all the countries of the world. Without entrepreneurs, without businesses, without a friendly and competitive business environment it will not be possible to get through situations of such difficulty as these we have recently seen and are still confronting. As far as the work underway in this international conference is concerned, we would like to emphasize the positive nature of the fact that Portugal, once again, has taken on the responsibility of being president of the work in the Committee on Quality Apprenticeships. We would like to

congratulate the committee on the work that has been done in that discussion, and we have to emphasize all of the work that has been done by the social partners in the area of lifelong learning and in training for young people. Young people are those who are going to be leading us in the next few decades. We have to refer to the problem that we have had to attract and keep talent with us, and this is an area where we have to work together with the rest of the world. As the Report of the Director-General states, we are facing very difficult situations in the world of work. We need to face up to them and we need to work on them rationally. All of the challenges that arise are also opportunities to grow, to affirm our principles and to become more mature. It is up to everyone involved to work in a way which will be able to provide a positive contribution to resolve the questions that arise and the questions that arise at the level of social justice and a social agreement which permanently has to be in a situation of revision. And all of these have to be the basis of the action of the ILO. Thank you.

Ms Ivanka Shalapatova

Government (Bulgaria)

Mr Chairman, Your Excellencies, distinguished delegates, it is an honour for me to take part in this session of the International Labour Conference. For more than a century, governments, employers and workers have been joining efforts to overcome inequalities and ensure decent work, driven by the understanding that lasting peace is unthinkable without social justice. Allow me to congratulate Mr Houngbo for his first International Labour Conference as the newly elected Director-General. I am confident that under his leadership, the Organization and its constituents will continue their efforts and will build on the results achieved so far in the pursuit of our common goal, which is obviously social justice and decent work for all. The International Labour Organization can count on our support in Bulgaria and collaboration on the way to achieving this goal. The world of work is undergoing many developments which trigger both challenges but also opportunities. Social, economic and technological development have contributed to improving the way of living and expanded opportunities, but at the same time there are rising inequalities within many countries and the region, and my colleague has already mentioned that. The war in Ukraine is presenting a significant challenge for the social system in my country. The COVID-19 pandemic further disrupted the global economy, as well as the rising food and energy prices, climate change, geopolitical tensions and conflicts. On a global level, deeply concerning is the fact that 160 million children are still in child labour and almost 28 million persons in forced labour. All these issues require immediate and effective actions. As correctly noted by the Director-General in his report, our global ambition must be commensurate with the scale of the significant challenges we all face today. The International Labour Organization has repeatedly proven throughout the years its important role in supporting countries in crisis and challenging situations. International labour standards and tripartism are key to ensuring decent work in all countries. Development and implementation of integrated and inclusive policies on a national level, based on a human-centred approach, is of key importance. Emphasis should be placed on active labour market policies built on the principles of non-discrimination and equality between men and women, social protection, decent and secure working conditions, including health and safety at work, education, skills and lifelong learning, and support through transitions, including return-to-work policies. At the national level, I would like to note that one of the main priorities of the National Employment Strategy of the Republic of Bulgaria is to improve workforce quality in accordance with the need of the economy. In the short term, the focus will be on

acquiring digital and vocational skills and increasing employment. In the long run, the measures under the National Recovery and Sustainability Plan will be the tool for mitigating the negative impact and supporting the restructuring of our economy. As the newly appointed Minister of Labour and Social Policy, I would like to assure you that the Republic of Bulgaria will continue to be strongly involved in all the activities of the International Labour Organization and, last but not least, to confirm the full commitment of my team in our support. Let me conclude by noting that we all, by being part of the international community, have both common responsibilities and common rights and goals for peace, social justice and decent work for all, without exception and obviously in the spirit of the principle of no one left behind. I am pleased that these principles, aims and values are shared also by the Director-General and placed high on the agenda of the International Labour Organization in pursuing its mandate for achieving social justice. Thank you very much.

Mr Stephen Mc Clashie

Government (Trinidad and Tobago)

Mr Vice-President, fellow delegates, ladies and gentlemen, good afternoon. I wish to first congratulate the ILO and its constituents for a successful return to the first fully in-person Conference since 2019. I am certainly pleased to be here in Geneva, and it has been an honour to contribute to this year's discussions and to interact with colleagues. Mr Vice-President, multiple global crises continue to have far-reaching implications for the world of work. It is without a doubt that moving forward would mean leaning on the valuable lessons learned over the last three years. If we want to realize a human centred-recovery from the pandemic, Trinidad and Tobago suggests that we must take full advantage of opportunities for growth, embracing social justice and ensuring human dignity. This is why I strongly support the Report of the Director-General this year, which I understand is his first. Advancing social justice during this period of recovery should remain a top priority if we do seek to safeguard the well-being and rights of not only our people today but for the future generation. Given that the achievement of social justice in practice can appear obscure or even distant, I found it particularly useful that the report set out key elements to describe its definition and thereby its application. The report speaks to four dimensions. They include universal human rights and capabilities, equal access to opportunities, fair distribution and just transitions. The report also makes it clear that decent work has a critical role in advancing these dimensions. Indeed, the inclusion of decent work and its link to social justice should be reflected in more coordinated policies nationally and globally which will redound to the benefit of economies, employers and workers everywhere. Indeed, Trinidad and Tobago remains committed to promoting decent work and advancing social justice. Our National Development Strategy 2016-2030 provides a framework for the achievement of developed nation status by 2030 and it entails five thematic areas which all reflect the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Theme 1 of putting people first seeks especially to ground our society in the principles of social justice. According to this strategy, commonly referred to as Vision 2030, a society which embodies the principle of social justice pertains to one in which there is equitable distribution of resources, opportunities for upward mobility are based on merit and achievement, and the rights of citizens are respected and preserved. Respect for human dignity is broadly implied in our institutional and legal framework. For instance, there are a number of policies and legislation which currently address non-discrimination and social inclusion in Trinidad and Tobago. Just to name a few, they include the Equal Opportunity Act, the National Policy on Persons with Disabilities, the Maternity Protection Act and the

National Insurance Act. But, Mr Vice-President, governments alone cannot break down obstructions to advancing social justice. We must engage in a collective process to solve any arising economic or social challenges which affect our citizens. The report touches on the Global Coalition for Social Justice, the establishment of which is extremely reflective of the importance placed upon strengthening multipartite partnerships and promoting social dialogue in an effort to ensure that social justice and decent work are prioritized in national and global policymaking. In closing, and on behalf of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, I reiterate our commitment to achieving a just society for all and I thank you.

Mr Plamen Dimitrov

Worker (Bulgaria)

Dear delegates, as the ILO's founding principle states, labour is not a commodity. It is about having access to opportunities for employment and adequate standards of living so that each person can live a productive and dignified life. It is about shared prosperity and a measure of security when income is interrupted, insufficient or intermittent. And we trade unions stay strongly behind these principles. I want to make three points here. First, the high level of inequalities that characterize our economies and societies manifest in a variety of ways. For example, The Commitment to Reducing Inequality Index published by Oxfam and DFI puts Bulgaria in 62nd place in the ranking. According to the report, the Bulgarian tax system is one of the most regressive in the world. Data from Eurostat and those from Harvard University shows that there is a trend of increasing inequalities in the distribution of income. This trend is particularly pronounced in countries with a flat tax and countries without tax-free minimum income, such as Bulgaria. This is a problem of essential importance because there is huge empirical evidence that shows that greater collective bargaining coverage and a fairer tax system leads to lower levels of income inequality. Therefore, these two instruments are key to a more equitable redistribution of the fruits of economic progress. The higher the coverage of workers by collective bargaining, the lower the wage differences are, especially in sector-level bargaining systems. To reduce income inequalities we must apply a multi-pronged approach, including policies to ensure fair wages, including living minimum wages which cover the growing costs of living of workers and their families. Collective bargaining at all levels should be strengthened. Second, digitalization and artificial intelligence are factors for increasing inequalities too. Division exists not only between individuals but also between nations, countries, geographic regions, industries, workplaces, et cetera. The future ILO activities should be very much focused on, first, insecure forms of work and the platform economy. Workers should not depend on artificial intelligence and algorithms that they have little or no ability to impact. Because platform workers often are not in direct contact with each other, it is hard for them to be organized and platforms can induce a competitive dynamic among them. We need to focus efforts on undervalued work in the care economy too, generating good quality employment with access to social protection. Unprotected work in the informal economy is also a problem. We need to reset the scope of laws and regulations so that informal work is legally covered and full compliance is guaranteed. And last but not least, artificial intelligence and algorithmic management in mediating and allocating work. Consideration may need to be given to questions of data privacy and the risk of artificial intelligence bias, such as discrimination. Third, the ILO recognizes that advancing social justice is possible through the effective application of freedom of association and bargaining collectively. Collective bargaining proved over the years to play a key role during crises by keeping

wages stable, maintaining aggregate demand and avoiding potentially deflationary wage developments which may delay recovery. In Bulgaria the right to join trade unions is proclaimed in the Constitution of the country but it is not sufficiently guaranteed by law. There are no safeguarding and securing enforcement norms to guarantee the application of freedom of association and collective bargaining. That is why for years we are insisting on the criminalization of acts directed against the freedom of association and collective bargaining. Finally, it is time for a new social contract which should be human-centred and ensuring rights-based fairness. It must include the floors of universal labour guarantee for all workers, including minimum living wages, collective bargaining, safe and healthy working conditions and maximum hours of work. Second, social protection as a universal right. And third, fighting inequalities through fair taxation for workers and upward wage convergence. Thank you very much.

Mr Pierre Ricot Odney

Government (Haiti)

President, ladies and gentlemen from the secretariat, on behalf of the Haitian delegation, I would like to congratulate the President on his election to this position which is fundamentally important for the constituents of the ILO. It is also an opportunity for me to salute the various delegations that are here present and that have come from across the globe. Our planet is facing complex situations and has done so for the last four years. This weight is certainly being felt in the world of work. Despite all the effort deployed in order to fight against the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, which hit the entire world, poverty has increased, climate change has worsened and there are threats of a new pandemic, according to forecasts. And these are huge obstacles. It is within this context that the Republic of Haiti finds its aims reflected on the agenda of the Conference of this year, most particularly the World of Work Summit to achieve social justice. His Excellency Ariel Henry, the Haitian Prime Minister, favourably responded to this invitation, but unfortunately he was not able to attend this Conference and I have been entrusted with giving you his most sincere apologies and to wish you all the best. Our country has faced many challenges, and it will face up to the challenge of creating jobs and a more inclusive world of work. Haiti is fully aware that in this world both men and women and the world of work must be able to benefit from their share of the wealth of the country. The Republic of Haiti is a founding member of the ILO and it cannot remain passive when it comes to achieving social justice. Indeed, this is clearly reflected in the National Policy For Social Protection and Promotion which was adopted by the Haitian state in 2020. It aims to reduce poverty, inequalities, social and legal injustices and to construct a just society in which citizens have access to rights and to social protection. It also aims to increase the standard of living of its inhabitants. This summit on the world of work in order to achieve social justice for all has been organized at this 111th Session of the ILO, and it will not be able to reach its aims without taking into account the role of decent work and of the social partners when it comes to economic and social development which is inclusive as well as achieving peace and resilience. To achieve these aims, the Haitian Government is renewing its commitment to significant action which will promote the Decent Work Agenda, which is based on four pillars: the promotion of work, social protection, fundamental rights at work and social dialogue. The Haitian Government would like to take this opportunity to reiterate its commitment to strengthening its democratic institutions, the Haitian textile industry, the development of agricultural value chains and the creation of job opportunities, mainly for young people and women, as well as

the development of micro and SMEs. It has benefited from the technical and financial support of the ILO, its development partners and the international community, which have all come to aid Haiti when it comes to constructing a socio-economic model which is inclusive and resilient as well as human-centred. Moreover, it is based on rights and international labour standards and social dialogue. Finally, the Government would like to congratulate the States, the employer and the workers' organizations, the organizations of the United Nations as well as international organizations who are aiming for a Global Coalition for Social Justice and for the promotion of decent work. Haiti wishes to join their ranks within the framework of the Declaration of the ILO on social justice for a fairer global world. Thank you.

Ms Rina Yessenia Lozano Gallegos

Government (El Salvador)

Mr President, dear delegations, during this Conference we have been urged to search for social justice. The Director-General has reminded us that both access to decent work, both productive and freely chosen, as social protection are bases to achieve this social justice. Historically, these objectives have stumbled upon unjust economic and social structures. These realities have perpetuated inequality within countries and amongst countries, limiting opportunities for a sustainable and equitable development. The ILO was born under the belief that decent work is a driver for social and economic development, and at the same time a needed condition for building peace in the world, always with a basis of social dialogue amongst workers, employers and government. For this reason, El Salvador reiterates its full commitment to achieve decent work for its population and the commitment of establishing synergies between worker and employer. Our country is the best example of resilience in the place of work, and this is what characterizes us as a people, always working towards solidarity and a better future. This attitude is what inspires our government, led by President Nayib Bukele, to do everything within our hand to bring to our people the best conditions for well-being and ensuring that we have full social justice for everyone. In this manner, we have worked against terrorist violence, and in 2019 we started a way with no return towards full peace in which our people can live without fear, in freedom and prosperity. The employer sector has been benefited by this new environment of stability and social security in our country. We are proud to now be the safest country in Latin America and that the world hears a difference story of El Salvador where the warmth of our people, the beauty of our towns, volcanoes, lakes, beaches are what really show, amongst many other beauties of our country. We are aware that in order to satisfy the needs and aspirations of development of our country it is imperative that everybody have quality employment. It is so that we are working towards the fulfilment of all the SDGs, and in particular SDG 8 for decent work. This means we must progress in structural transformations, short, medium and long term, in order to have a generation that is working in decent work with the abilities and capabilities necessary to ensure that both workers and enterprises can benefit from them. In 2022 we started our second review on sustainable development which shows that ten objectives out of the 12, and 24 indicators out of the 26 linked to SDG 8 are showing a positive trend in our country. Despite the pandemic and its impact, we have registered a favourable trend on indicators relative to a guarantee for decent work in a safe setting, freedom of association, collective bargaining and decent remuneration, amongst others. Committed with the vision of the ILO, we have institutionalized the National Award for Decent Work which aims at recognizing the best entrepreneurial practices in the framework of the national legislation. This has been seen very

positively both by employers and workers who have really added to this initiative. We have also set up the national prize for collective bargaining, which aims at promoting social value in collective bargaining as well as strengthening relationships between workers and employers. Amongst other initiatives to fulfil with our international commitments, and in line with Convention 190 on violence and harassment in the place of work, we have created an electronic mechanism as well as a specific unit to deal with these issues. We are also working towards setting up a system of social protection that will ensure the well-being of our population from the beginning, under the leadership of the First Lady of the Republic, Gabriela de Bukele, and we have created an integrative model of promotion and protection of children and adolescents through the new legislation 'Being born with care'. These are setting the basis for a just nation. The Government of President Bukele has also implemented a new law on pensions, and this in order to ensure a dignified pension for all working class. Finally, I would like to reaffirm the commitment of El Salvador to the principles and values of the ILO. This is why we are working towards a development based on the freedom and equality of opportunities in order to satisfy the needs and aspirations of our people. Thank you very much.

Mr Luc Triangle

International Trade Union Confederation

Dear President, dear Vice-Presidents, distinguished delegates, on behalf of the International Trade Union Confederation, representing 200 million workers in national trade union centres in 168 countries and territories, I need to start by expressing grave concern about the state of democracy around the world. Social and economic progress cannot be made when freedom of association, including the right to strike and the right to collective bargaining, continue to be attacked. We welcome the global solidarity in relation to the extreme case of Belarus, but trade union rights are under attack around the world, east and west, north and south. At the same time, inequalities and injustices keep growing as a consequence of a flawed global economic system that continues to prevail. Let us be clear, social justice cannot be realized through the prevailing neoliberal, corporate dominated global economy. A new social contract is required to put the economy in the service of humankind and save people and the planet from the threat of destruction. A new social contract with full employment and a labour protection floor with fundamental principles and rights at work, minimum living wages and maximum working hours in a regulated labour market to end the false classification of many workers as independent contractors. A new social contract with freedom of association and collective bargaining effectively recognized as enabling rights, including the right to strike in a context of freedom of speech and assembly and the right to protest. A new social contract with wage justice through minimum living wages, including in domestic and global supply chains, through statutory processes or collective bargaining and mandatory due diligence. A new social contract with adequate social protection for all through increased targeted development aid and fundamental tax reform, including a global minimum corporate tax rate, financial transaction and wealth taxes as well as a crackdown on tax havens and tax avoidance by corporations. A new social contract without fascism, racism and xenophobia, without discrimination based on gender, sexual identity, race, ideology, religion, social status or other grounds. The new social contract should also ensure that no one is left behind through a fundamental reform of the global economic system, with a leading role for the ILO with its tripartite and normative mandate on social and economic issues, with a systemic trade reform, in particular the World Trade

Organization, with unions consulted on trade negotiations, the inclusion of labour and environmental standards, and enforceable dispute settlement procedures on these matters to protect public services, workers' rights and sovereignty. That is the new social contract the world needs. World military expenditure rose by 3.7% in real terms in 2022 to a record high of over $2 trillion. Global spending grew by 19% over the decade 2013-22 and has risen every year since 2015. Imagine what could be achieved for social justice if we recommit to the prevention and resolution of armed conflicts through international standards as well as diplomatic and political means and common security cemented on the principles of the United Nations. These funds could be reallocated towards investment in decent, climate-friendly jobs and socially beneficial areas such as education, health and social protection through the Global Coalition for Social Justice, the Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection and the Global Alliance for Care. Distinguished delegates, we have a historic opportunity and a major responsibility. Together, as social partners, we need to shape, drive the new social contract as a centrepiece of Our Common Agenda towards a new World Summit for Social Development in 2025. I thank you very much.

Mr Stephen Mark Cotton

International Transport Workers' Federation

Colleagues, fantastic opportunity to be with you. So first, on behalf of our 18.5 million members, I want to congratulate the ILO and their colleagues for pulling together our first ILC after such a difficult period of time. I would also like to thank the Director-General, Gilbert Houngbo, and his team, who has just taken over leadership, but we were supported magnificently by our colleagues in SECTOR and STANDARDS throughout the pandemic. A massive thank you. Our world is in a crisis and we must unite to overcome it. Recovery from the COVID pandemic has seen high inflation, cost-of-living crisis, political conflicts and natural disasters. Despite these crises, transport workers continue to keep the world moving, transporting millions of passengers every day, ensuring our societies receive the goods we rely on. But we are seeing a shortage of decent work in transportation and we are struggling to ensure that our workplaces are safe and our employment is not precarious, and the standard of living of our members is falling. We, together, have a collective responsibility to build a better workplace, ensuring inclusive and effective labour protection for all workers. The general discussion on just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies is critical for all of our societies, and the ILO is a fundamental part of that. Climate justice is inseparable from social justice. Decarbonization of all modes of transport must happen rapidly, but it must be safe and fair for workers. There must be a just transition. For us just transition is about workers having a power to represent themselves at the table. It is critical they are involved in all elements of responding but also the changing employment conditions. Governments and employers, workers, we must work together to respond to this challenge. It is critical not just for transport but for the societies that rely upon us. At COP27, we, together with the International Chamber of Shipping, the International Maritime Organization, our friends in the ILO and the UN Global Compact launched our Maritime Just Transition. And we have identified that we need to retrain over 800,000 seafarers by 2030 to be on track. We have come up with a ten-point plan to ensure that there are no additional burdens on seafarers and they are in a position to respond to those challenges. In passenger transport, we see a significant investment required to shift the way we travel and commute. This means cutting emissions, congestion, and it needs to drive and create new green jobs. Only by working together can governments, employers and workers

achieve the standard of change we need to deliver a better world. We also welcome the standard-setting discussion on apprenticeships. Young workers today only make up 10% of our transport workforce. Transport is not recruiting young people and we must respond to this challenge. But young people need high-quality employment, decent apprenticeships and a transition from the current methods of education to ensure they are ready for the new society. Last year the ILC made the landmark decision to recognize, as one of its fundamental principles, safe and healthy working environment. It is critical that we now take that around the globe and ensure, not just for transport workers but for all workers, they can work in a safe way. Even in the midst of our global crisis, we have forged powerful partnerships. The ILO, the World Health Organization and the ITF Joint Action Group, which is made up of employers' associations, adopted in January 2023 a set of strong precedents to make sure that we protect transport workers when we respond to future health crises. In conclusion, colleagues, dare I say friends, we want to reaffirm our commitment to C190, a critical Convention. And while a number of governments have successfully ratified it, there is still much to do to ensure that we can provide diversity and equality in our societies. We wish the Conference a successful outcome. Many thanks for listening to me. Thank you.

Ms Dimitrina Dimitrova

Clerk

Dear delegates, I would like to draw your attention to the programme for the day that has been clarified at this stage as we have the good news that the Finance Committee will adopt its report this afternoon and the vote will be respectively opened this afternoon. The other side of the news, this good news, but is that as we have 82 speakers on the list today, 82, this will take us up to ten o'clock this evening. There will be a short break between now, 1.30, and two o'clock. We will resume the plenary with the list of speakers at two until three o'clock when the Finance Committee will present its outcome documents. At a later stage, towards four o'clock, the vote will be opened on the Programme and Budget for the next biennium of the Organization, and we will continue with this long list of speakers. With a short break around eight o'clock, we will have to resume for a very late evening sitting in order to allow the President of the Conference to announce the result of the vote which will be ready to be announced by 9.30 this evening. Please consult the Daily Bulletin for the details about the vote. I use this opportunity to remind everyone how important it is that we get the vote on this key issue for the future functioning of the Organization. With this, although we have a very short break, I wish you a pleasant break and a nice lunch. Thank you.

Mr Muhammad Zahoor Awan

Worker Vice-President (Pakistan)

Thank you very much, brothers and sisters, for your cooperation. Even I think we have a longer list, and that has to be concluded, as sister Dimitrova made her announcement. So by this I think the morning session of this Conference stands closed.