

AU COMMISSIONER SPEECH

The Commissioner for Social Affairs, unfortunately could not join us due to internet connectivity in Ethiopia. She had prepared her presentation that will be shared with all Ministers and also posted on the website.

- She congratulated the ILO for the meeting amid the exceptional period we found ourselves having to navigate every day
- She noted that COVID-19 has permeated all spheres of life and the losses, particularly in the world of work is indescribable.
- She reminded us of the 29th April 2020 the Africa Ministers of Labour and social partners meeting where the Ministers stated unequivocally that without cushioning mechanisms through fiscal stimulus, there will be significant job losses in Africa's large informal economy. The Ministers, further committed themselves to work together more urgently than ever before to minimize the health, economic and employment impacts of this crisis, and prepare for an even brighter future of work.
- She appreciated the leadership of the Ministers of labour and employment
- She noted that Workers in the informal economy and rural sector, migrant workers, youth and women are among the most vulnerable groups bearing heavy burden of the pandemic
- Looking ahead, and expecting a situation where we will learn to live with the virus, we need to engage swiftly into recovery phase, with the aim of Building Back Better.
- Productivity will be a key policy to pursue vigorously as means to enhance the resilience of economies and societies. It must be accompanied by participative management systems and fair redistribution of wealth. In other words a functional integrated labour market information system is imperative to successfully navigate the post COVID-19 recovery time
- Agriculture is another economic sector which can absorb a significant number of young people and women. Well designed rural employment policies will go a long way building resilience in the food supply chain which was disrupted by the pandemic.
- She concluded her statement by wishing Ministers and social partners success on your deliberation and look forward to the conclusions of the meeting.