

**Opening Remarks**

**by**

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**Minister of Labour and Social Affairs**

**At the**

**Information Seminar for African Members of the  
ILO Governing Body**

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**Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

- Your Excellency, Ambassador Apolinário Jorge Correia, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Angola to the United Nations in Geneva and Chairperson of the ILO's Governing Body
- Your Excellency, Ambassador TaongaMushayavanhu, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Zimbabwe to the United Nations in Geneva
- Esteemed government, employer and worker members of the ILO's Governing Body
- ILO Deputy Director-General for Management and Reform, Mr Greg Vines
- Dear colleagues
- Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to take this opportunity to extend, on behalf of the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and on my own behalf, my warmest greetings and to welcome you to this important seminar.

For those who came to Addis Ababa before, I am confident that you will renew contacts with friends here, and you will also have the opportunity to see some developments that have taken place since your last visit in our country. For new comers, it is my sincere hope that your stay will be comfortable, joyful and pleasant. And to keep some memories, I would like to recommend to you to have a few moments of free time for sightseeing in our country.

## ***Excellency, Ladies and Gentlemen***

We are proud to host this important *Information Seminar for African Members of the ILO Governing Body*. It is the first time all African members of the new Governing Body have been brought together for knowledge and information sharing. Thank you to the African Regional Office for facilitating this meeting and to H.E. Ambassador Correia for his skilful presiding over the Governing Body.

Ethiopia is proud to serve on the Governing Body and welcomes this opportunity to engage with other members. Timing is very appropriate, following immediately after the African Union Specialized Technical Committee on Social Development, Labour and Employment and in advance of the 13th African Regional Meeting, which the Government of Ethiopia will be proud to host in November-December this year.

Allow me to add that Ethiopia hosted the 11th African Regional Meeting in 2007 when the Decent Work Agenda in Africa 2007-15 was adopted. I am proud that since then, Ethiopia has launched three Decent Work Country Programmes, with the third generation Decent Work Country Programme launched only last year. The Decent Work Country Programmes were developed under the leadership of my Ministry and with active participation of the Social Partners. I commend the spirit in which the tripartite constituents in Ethiopia have worked together to agree on priorities and deliverables for the Decent Work Country Programme.

## ***Excellency, Ladies and Gentlemen***

The creation of employment and decent work that brings about increased productivity and competitiveness remains a key priority in all our development efforts and in fact, one could argue, underpins all other development priorities. Over the last decade, Africa has recorded impressive and reasonably sustained macro-economic growth rates. African economies, on average, also showed relatively robust economic fundamentals in terms of stable currencies, single digit inflation rates, and reasonable reserve positions, often bolstered by significant remittances, which in aggregate now exceed Official Development Assistance. Despite some challenges, on average, African economies were reasonably resilient to the financial and economic crisis in the latter part of the decade whose consequences are still with us to this day.

Creation of employment and decent work that brings about increased productivity and competitiveness has received a considerable attention and remained a policy priority of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia as revealed by different developmental government policies and strategies.

The Country's Growth and Transformation Plan is aimed at accelerating sustainable development that focuses on job creating diversified economic activities, which speed up economic growth as a means of reducing poverty and achieving the MDGs. The vision of the GTP is *"building an economy which has a modern and productive agricultural sector with enhanced technology and an industrial sector that plays a leading role in the economy, sustaining economic development and securing social justice and increasing per capita income of the citizens"*



*so as to reach the level of those in middle-income countries".* During the GTP implementation period significant results were registered particularly in infrastructure development, human development and good governance. The three main sectors (agriculture, industry and services) grew rapidly and contributed to the overall economic growth. The industrial sector is growing faster than both agriculture and services. The sector on average grew at 16.9 percent per annum since 2011, becoming the fastest growth rate compared with that registered by agriculture and service sectors.

I will assure you that decent employment creation will remain a policy priority of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia in the next GTP which is under formulation.

Distinguished Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen with those remarks, I sincerely hope this seminar will be an occasion to share information but also build capacity of Governing Body members to be better equipped to address, as a regional block, issues that are discussed by the Governing Body.

I wish the forum fruitful deliberations

I thank you for your attention.