



**5th Global Green Jobs ILO Workshop for Knowledge Sharing, Capacity  
Development and Joint Delivery**

**Welcoming remarks by:**

**Mr Aeneas C. Chuma**

**ILO Assistant Director-General and  
Regional Director for Africa**

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Dear colleagues,

I am indeed very pleased to be able to join you in Cape Town on the occasion of the ILO's 5th Global Green Jobs Workshop.

As you may know, this year's edition of the global team meeting is the first to be hosted in the field, and I am delighted that the Africa region and South Africa were chosen as hosts. Without doubt, this setting will contribute to exposing you to the successes and challenges of large-scale **green jobs promotion** in an emerging economy.

Moreover, by taking your workshop to the field, you have an even better chance of improving the relevance and practical utility of the various approaches and tools that the Green Jobs Programme is developing.

**Dear colleagues,**

Last December, the 13<sup>th</sup> African Regional Meeting of the ILO took place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. More than 400 tripartite constituents gathered to establish policy priorities for the ILO in Africa.

The outcome of that Meeting, the so-called Addis Ababa Declaration, entitled "Transforming Africa through Decent Work for Sustainable Development", identifies as one of the continent-wide policy priorities the promotion of a just transition towards environmentally-sustainable economies and societies for all.

We have, as such, laid a solid ground for our future work on green jobs and environmental sustainability in the region.

Allow me to spend a few moments briefly reflecting on the economic, social and environmental context of Africa to help frame our thinking and action.

Over the last decade, Africa has made considerable progress in economic growth. However, in many cases, the pattern of growth has not been able to generate enough jobs, **let alone decent jobs**, to absorb the growing labour force.

More than half of all new labour market entrants in the region since 2005 have taken jobs in the informal economy, and one third in agriculture – jobs often characterized by low productivity, low wages and limited technological uptake.

The challenge for African countries, therefore, is to transform their economies in such a way that they generate more and better jobs and inclusive growth.

As we deal with such social imperatives, an interrelated crisis is urgently emerging in the region – climate change.

Although Africa, as a continent, only accounts for 3.8 per cent of global greenhouse gas emissions, Africa is the continent most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.

With devastating consequences on economies and communities, climate change will exacerbate challenges we already face in areas of employment, poverty and social inclusion.

We must, therefore, be able to work with countries and constituents to help find coherent responses to these pressing, yet connected challenges that threaten the present and future of the majority of people on the continent.

The good news is that there are several opportunities that we can seize to provide a meaningful ILO contribution and support, drawing on the inherent potential of rich natural resources, a young and vibrant population, and the policy momentum.

African countries have defined their priorities to address climate change through continent-wide initiatives such as the African Renewable Energy Initiative and the Great Green Wall Initiative. These programmes for energy deployment and reforestation, as well as other regional mechanisms, will require support from development partners. And the ILO has a role to play.

At the national policy level, national employment policies increasingly integrate objectives to promote green jobs and a green economy. This is already the case in countries such as Ghana, Namibia, Morocco and Senegal.

These developments offer a good policy opening and the ILO stands ready to provide adequate and effective support.

In addition, ILO constituents are taking innovative initiatives. The ITUC-Africa congress recently passed a resolution on “climate change and decent work”, and only last month ITUC-Africa held its annual leadership school on the theme of climate change and green jobs, presenting a new four-year programme of work in this area. The ILO supported these efforts and more is expected from us.

And our experience stands us in good stead to offer support. There are promising ILO programmes and intervention models that have been implemented through technical cooperation projects, including here in South Africa, as well as in Zambia.

**Dear colleagues,**

Increasingly, we will have to operate in the framework of **joint programmes** as a way of reaching scale, enhancing synergy within the UN and leveraging resources.

The Partnership for Action on the Green Economy (PAGE) initiated by the ILO, UNEP, UNIDO, UNITAR and UNDP is a good model that now operates in five African countries – Burkina Faso, Ghana, Mauritius, Senegal and South Africa as well as across Asia and Latin America.

At this juncture, please allow me to remind us that the Green Jobs programme of the ILO is a global programme, not confined to Africa. As a global programme, it operates in all regions, and I am pleased that we have at this meeting ILO officials stationed in various continents. I warmly welcome you to the Africa region!

The theme of this workshop is “Knowledge Sharing, Capacity Development and Joint Delivery”. I believe the focus on joint delivery is essential. Only by leveraging our common effort, will we be able to reach scale and be effective in a context of scarce resources.

But delivery also implies that we have at our disposal the right set of tools and instruments for policy advice and technical support to ILO constituents.

At this meeting you will have a chance to discuss and review “green jobs packages” that comprise policy advice, best practices and tools for various applications on enterprise development, the greening of enterprises, skills development, green job assessments, and sectoral interventions such as in waste management.

I would like to recall that there is an important gender dimension to this discussion. And allow me before proceeding to wish you all a very happy 8 March – international women’s day!

Climate change is not gender neutral. Women are increasingly being seen as more vulnerable than men to the effects of climate change because they represent the majority of the world’s poor and are disproportionately more dependent on threatened natural resources. What is more, women tend to play a greater role than men in natural resource management – farming, planting, protecting and caring for seedlings and small trees – and in ensuring nutrition and as care providers for their families.

Green jobs opportunities must be created for women and men, and aim to bridge gender gaps and inequalities.

In order to reach scale, it is critical that we work towards mainstreaming environmental sustainability in our policies and programmes. As you know, the ILO Director-General recently issued an ILO Environmental Sustainability Policy.

The Green Jobs Network that you represent will be an essential vehicle to make the mainstreaming effort a reality and success. I can say that you in this meeting are the depository of ILO “best knowledge” and “expertise”, and it is your responsibility to guide and stimulate action across the organization.

I would like to end with a note on strategic partnerships and resource mobilization. Environmental funding is becoming an important source of financing for development cooperation.

The ILO is well placed to access such funding, including through efforts made towards accreditation to the Green Climate Fund, the primary financing mechanism on climate change.

I would like to strongly encourage that effort and invite you all to contribute to the process that will hopefully enable us to become an accredited entity of the Green Climate Fund.

I thank you once again for the opportunity to be here and I wish you a successful meeting.