

Presidential Address to the 102nd Session of the ILC

My election to the Presidency to the 102nd session of the International Labour Conference is a great honour for me and for my country the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan under the leadership of His Majesty King Abdullah II bin Al Hussein.

I would like to express my profound gratitude to the governments of the Asia and Pacific Group that were kind enough to propose and support my candidacy.

My thanks also go to the intergovernmental group of the Conference for nominating me to this position and to the Employers' and Workers' Groups as well as the other regional groups for supporting my candidature.

I would like to thank you all for your trust and confidence in me and my country. I assure all of you of my commitment to live up to the trust that has been placed in me and shall assume the tasks of the presidency with humility, responsibility and determination.

Distinguished delegates, my country Jordan greatly values and appreciates the strong and special relations it has maintained with the ILO for over half a century. We pride ourselves with our strong commitment to the principles of the ILO.

Under the leadership of H.M. King Abdullah II bin Al-Hussein, political, social and economic changes and reforms in Jordan are a constant on-going process. Most recent of these were the creation of a national dialogue committee for the elections, a review of the constitution to explore possible amendments for the institutionalization of work and pluralistic democratic parliamentary standards. Also the acceleration of efforts to abolish all forms of discrimination against women and using dialogue as a mechanism between youth and the state to ensure their voices are heard.

I believe it is opportune on this occasion to quote some of the words of H.M. when he addressed the 91st session of the International Labour Conference in June 2003. He said and I quote "it is up to us to create a global growth economy, one that will give people the jobs they need, to support their families and improve their lives. There must be safety nets, national and international, that can combat the social and economic imbalances of globalization, real access to education and technologies that open the doors to tomorrow; and perhaps most important, justice to show people, especially young people, that ours is a world of fairness and hope" end of quote.

I am also proud to mention that Her Majesty Queen Rania is one of a select group of Heads of State and First Ladies who have taken an active role in the ILO's efforts to combat child labour around the world.

Distinguished delegates, this session of the ILC is of particular and exceptional importance. It marks the first conference for the ILO under the leadership of its new Director General Mr Guy Ryder who was elected on a ticket promoting reform and transparency.

This conference will be the first to apply the reforms approved by the Governing Body to improve its functioning and procedures and to allow the tripartite constituency to better discharge its governance responsibilities. This year's session is dealing specifically with employment and social protection in the new demographic context. A key issue which the ILO will need to integrate its outcomes into its work programmes, building on the mandate already provided by Recommendation 202 on Social Protection Floor for all adopted last year.

We have the ILC plenary session under the theme of "World of Work Summit". We will have the visit of xxx Heads of states and other high level dignitaries who will address the Conference and use the ILO forum to portray their ideas and express their opinion on major subjects that occupy the concern of tripartite constituents in countries throughout the world.

Last but by no means least, we have the report of the Director General entitled "Towards the ILO centenary: Realities, Renewal and Tripartite Commitment". I would like to thank the Director General for his report and to pay tribute to him for providing our esteemed conference with a document that provides the tripartite constituents with key elements to construct a road map for ILO's future action and objectives.

This session has before it the Programme and Budget proposals for 2014-15. In this regard I wish to quote the words of Director General in the introduction to his report he said "the proposals for 2014-15 build on the reform and establish clear priorities around which the Organization can concentrate its efforts and better serve its constituents". Accordingly, I hope we will have a positive and constructive discussion on this subject as was the case at the last Governing Body.

At this juncture, I deem it my duty and obligation to appeal to the tripartite constituents to exert every possible effort to resolve the existing controversy relating to the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions. We need to find a solution to the existing problems as soon as possible, through constructive dialogue.

I would also wish to draw attention to the Report of Director General on the situation of workers of the occupied Arab territories. I believe the honourable delegates would be interested in its content.

Distinguished delegates, the economic and financial crises that hit the world in 2008 and the tragedy of mass unemployment it has created in many countries highlighted the relevance of the ILO and its vital role at the socio-economic level globally. In the words of the Director General "what really matters in practice is the direction that society takes with respect to

social justice and for our specific purposes, the contribution of the ILO to that dynamic through the world of work”.

The success of this highly important session depends on each one of us through our commitment to work together to uphold the principles of the ILO and in particular, its unique trait and driving force, that of tripartism.

Finally I wish to reiterate my thanks for the honour you have bestowed upon me and my country by the presidency of the ILC.