

**Speech at the ILO/ACFTU Workshop on Strengthening  
Workers' Education, Promoting Gender Equality and  
Achieving Decent Work**

**By Ni Jianmin**

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Distinguished Ms. Herbert, Director of the ILO Beijing Office,

Distinguished Ms. Hodges, Director of the ILO Gender Bureau,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Friends,

Good morning!

Today, the ACFTU and ILO jointly organize the Workshop on Strengthening Workers' Education, Promoting Gender Equality and Achieving Decent Work in the UN Pavilion of the Shanghai Expo. On behalf of the Secretariat of the ACFTU, first I'd like to sincerely welcome our friends and specialists from the ILO, the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security, All-China Women's Federation, China Enterprise Confederation, and extend my warm congratulations to the successful opening of the Workshop!

The theme of this Workshop is "Strengthening Workers' Education, Promoting Gender Equality and Achieving Decent Work". Focusing on these topics, the participants will have in-depth discussion and exchange views among the ILO, Chinese trade unions and the other relevant parties on the plans, initiatives and achievements of strengthening workers' education, promoting gender equality and achieving decent work in the post-

crisis era. This Workshop will play a significant role in promoting the future cooperation between the ACFTU and the ILO and the harmonious development of the international trade union movement.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Protecting workers' legitimate rights and interests is the sacred mission of the Chinese trade unions. We concretely protect workers' right to education and continuously improve the overall quality of workers. The transformation of the development pattern is the main task facing China in its economic development for the time being and in the days to come. To really transform the growth pattern, the economic growth must be based on advancement of science, improvement of the quality of the workforce and innovation in the management style rather than consumption of more natural resources. In this process, there is broad space for trade unions to play an important role. In recent years, the overall quality of the workforce in China has greatly improved. Nevertheless the skill level of the workforce as a whole still remains low and thus the country is in urgent need of highly-skilled workers. Focusing on the needs of China to transform its growth pattern and develop strong human resources and technological innovation, the ACFTU is playing the role of a "Big School" to improve the overall quality of Chinese workers through the implementation of the Five Year Plan for the Improvement of the Overall Quality of Chinese Workers. The trade unions have stepped up efforts to improve the quality of workers in their moral values, scientific and technological knowledge as well as skill levels and build a knowledge-based, skilled and innovative workforce which can meet the needs of economic development. In this way, the trade unions have contributed to the transformation of growth pattern, promotion of sound and fast economic and social development and realization of the goal of building an overall moderately prosperous society.

The Chinese Trade Unions actively promote gender equality. Equality between men and women has been a long-standing policy of the Chinese government. Various laws and regulations, including the Constitution of the People's Republic of China, the Law of the Protection of the Rights and Interests of Women and the Guideline of Women's

Development in China, all ensure that the Chinese women enjoy the same rights and status in political, economic, cultural, social and family life as men do. The Chinese trade unions have prioritized the protection of women workers' legitimate rights and interests as an important part of trade union activities. The ACFTU has released the Opinion on Strengthening Enterprise-Level Trade Union Activities for Women Workers and the Opinion on Elevating the Quality of Women Workers and Their Contribution to the National Development to improve the overall quality of women workers and established demonstration schools for the training of women workers, helping 7,462,000 women workers to improve their educational attainment level and 7,844,000 women workers to upgrade their skill qualifications. The ACFTU has launched the campaigns of "Care for Women Workers" and "Love and Support Your Sisters" to help the poverty-stricken women workers with their practical difficulties in the areas of employment, medical care, housing, and the education of their children and protect the legitimate rights and interests of women workers to the maximum extent.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Decent work is a reflection of zeitgeist and the cornerstone for the respect and protection of human rights. The Chinese trade unions believe that the main task now is to ensure decent work and protect the basic rights and interests of workers. To achieve decent work, trade unions must actively promote national economic development to secure the economic rights and interests of workers, improve workers' education and skill levels to safeguard their rights to employment and development, and promote gender equality in the society to ensure equitable social rights for every worker. The ACFTU and the ILO has successfully cooperated in the process of promoting decent work. In the future, we are ready to strengthen the cooperation with the ILO on vocational education and gender equality. Together, we can make decent work for all a reality.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The acceleration of the economic globalization has made it possible for workers and trade unions of different countries to have more frequent exchanges. On the basis of the principles of independence, equality, mutual respect, and non-interference into internal

affairs, the ACFTU will strengthen its friendly relations with other national and international trade union organizations and make joint efforts with them to contribute to the full recovery of the world economy and the construction of a world of eternal peace and universal prosperity.

Lastly, I wish the Workshop a full success!

Thank you.