



**Special sitting**

Tuesday, 14 June 2011, 10 a.m.

*President: Mr Nkili*

**ADDRESS BY HIS EXCELLENCY MR SUSILO BAMBANG  
YUDHOYONO, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF  
INDONESIA**

*Original French: The PRESIDENT*

Today, the Conference has the singular honour of receiving as a guest His Excellency Mr Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, President of Indonesia.

Mr President, you are a staunch defender of the ILO. The close bonds which exist between Indonesia and the ILO have developed over the years thanks to support from the highest authorities of your country and thanks to your own personal support, and your presence today at this 100th Session of the Conference is a vibrant testimony of this state of affairs. I shall now give the floor to Mr Juan Somavia, Secretary-General of the International Labour Conference, to welcome and introduce you.

*The SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE CONFERENCE*

Mr President, welcome to our house, and thank you for making this long journey to celebrate the 100th Session of the International Labour Conference, this tripartite parliament of work. Thank you for the importance you attach to our Organization, its values and its sanctions. With your visit we mark another milestone in ILO history – the first President of Indonesia to address our Conference.

It is fitting that Indonesia's voice is eminently present when the Conference is focusing on the need for a new era of social justice. You are the first Asian country to ratify all eight fundamental Conventions of the ILO.

With your strong personal involvement, you have launched an Indonesian Jobs Pact along the lines of the Global Jobs Pact, and we are cooperating in multiple fields together. Your Government, Indonesia, and the ILO have often enjoyed a strong partnership on pact-making issues. You are at the helm of a dynamic country with a powerful presence on the regional and global stages, currently Chair of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). I think that you embody the new confidence of an emerging world that is helping to shape a better future for all of us, and the ASEAN Charter is a major example of that.

Two days ago at the World Economic Forum's East Asia meeting in Jakarta, you called for a new globalism, keeping markets and societies open, turning potential conflict into potential cooperation. So, welcome to our tripartite house, where we strive

to transform different perspectives into balanced solutions!

With your pro-growth, pro-poor and pro-job strategy and a strong focus on the environment, you are confronting the formidable challenge of ensuring that all Indonesians have a fair chance at a decent life, and this is a big challenge. As I observe the reality of Indonesia, you have the collective will of the country to confront those challenges, and that collective will, of course, needs the leadership that you give it – and all of this in the wide and rich diversity of the Asian region which, as you say, is the continent of the future. It is a vision that seeks to restore hope to young people.

You are also at the forefront of a response to the global crisis, including through the G20, in addressing the concrete demands of people and the needs of the real economy. For example, your employment rate did not plummet in the crisis and has since grown significantly.

Your Excellency, you have said to one of your audiences: "Think local, think global, think positive, think big." It is a strong message to world leaders, but it is also a message to all international organizations, including the ILO. We should follow your advice.

As the cries for democracy and access to jobs and social justice echo around the world today, your voice and your action to secure a more just, peaceful and prosperous democratic Indonesia is very present in the minds of all of us. Your policies are guided by the principles that "nothing can change the fate of a country except the people itself and the conviction of a noble cause".

That noble cause, here in the ILO, is decent work, so that individuals, families and communities can lead their life in dignity. It is social justice for a fair globalization.

Mr President, your belief in our Organization is humbling, it is motivating. We look forward to the messages that you will share with us.

*Original French: The PRESIDENT*

I now have the honour of giving the floor to our distinguished guest, Mr Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, President of Indonesia.

*Mr Susilo Bambang YUDHOYONO (President of the Republic of Indonesia)*

*As salaam'alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh! May peace be upon us!*

It is a great honour for me to be the first Indonesian President to address this distinguished forum of the 100th Session of the International Labour Con-

ference. I bring you the warm greetings of the good people of Indonesia.

There is no issue more important to developing and developed countries today than jobs. For nations, jobs are the engines of development and progress, and for the individual a job means more than a salary. It means dignity and self-esteem and hope for a better future for his family. It makes him a stakeholder in society.

Across the world, nations, communities and corporations are struggling to achieve the twin objectives of creating jobs and promoting job security. It is the primary test of governments and corporations to provide and protect jobs. The ILO has been a champion in promoting job security. For almost a century now, the ILO has stood up for the rights of workers and set the laws and standards for fair and equitable employment. It has also developed a viable tripartite model involving governments, employers and workers. The positive role of the ILO was demonstrated during the recent global financial crisis.

In Indonesia, when the global financial crisis began to hit us in 2008, the first thing that we did was to synchronize policies and actions between central government, local government, the private sector and other parties. Of the five national priorities that we set together, three pertain directly to job security for workers.

First, we did everything possible to prevent layoffs. Then we ensured the health of the real sector where most of the jobs were located. And, finally, we enacted special measures to achieve economic and employment objectives. We also engaged the labour unions and workers to work together for our common interests, to keep the real sector running to avoid massive layoffs. This cooperation and understanding worked quite well, as is reflected in the fact that during 2008–09, out of 115 million workers, fewer than 0.5 per cent lost their jobs.

Among the countries of Asia and the rest of the world, Indonesia was one of those that was least affected by the crisis. The lesson was that the Government, the corporate world and the workers worked together to minimize unemployment in very difficult circumstances. Throughout this whole process the ILO was always helpful to us, especially in helping to forge the constructive consensus between the stakeholders.

As a country that sends workers abroad, Indonesia also made a strong international appeal to their employers to keep all their workers in spite of the difficult times, and we closely coordinated with those countries to ensure the continued employment of our migrant workers. I extend our gratitude to those governments that tried their best to be helpful to migrant workers in their countries.

Indeed, workers in the twenty-first century faced the twin prospects of opportunity and risk.

On the one hand, the worker's capacity to produce goods and services, driven by tremendous advances in science and technology, has grown exponentially.

On the other hand, the world is constantly in the grip of simultaneous pressures, all of which affect the workers and jobseekers. Many of them have been distressed by wars and other forms of armed conflicts which further disrupt economic activities. Many have had to deal with the repercussions of climate change, which affect productivity and create economic dislocation. Many have had to adapt to technological changes that have become so rapid

that we can hardly keep up. Today, some 205 million people are looking for work. The global unemployment rate stood at 6.2 per cent in 2010. The world simply does not yet have the capacity to absorb all the workforces into the market.

We are also witnessing the spectacle of massive labour migration. Whether this is the result of the global economic crisis or the consequence of turmoil in the Middle East and North Africa, it is a problem that must be urgently addressed.

Meanwhile, even though the world is recovering from the recent economic crisis, its aftermath has been felt in many parts of the world. These challenges will profoundly impact on the global employment situation and the plight of workers everywhere. This calls for greater international cooperation to address what are essentially local problems with global dimensions.

What, then, must be done? What is the way forward?

Let me suggest several measures. First, we need to promote pro-growth, pro-job, pro-poor development policies. In Indonesia we call this a growth-with-equity strategy. We should not go after growth for the sake of growth; we should generate employment opportunities so that people can find decent jobs.

One way to achieve this is to increase the buying power of households, strengthen the resilience of the private sector and promote investment. Because most jobs are created in the private sector, in practical terms we also must promote pro-business policies. These policies encourage companies to grow and produce more jobs to accommodate the growing army of jobseekers. We also need to promote more entrepreneurship so that university graduates can become job creators rather than jobseekers.

Second, job creation policies and strategies must be guided by a basis of sustainable development. They must be pro-environment. In Indonesia, we intend to advance a national green-skills strategy. We plan to pursue a decentralized youth entrepreneurship programme for green jobs and to take measures to foster entrepreneurship and self-employment in the green sector. We will do all this in close partnership with the private sector. We also look forward to the involvement of the ILO; together we should develop ideas on how we can address the challenge of climate change and the impact of global warming on the employment situation.

Third, the dignity of work must be promoted and protected. It is not enough that we provide jobs that ensure the workers' daily subsistence. They and their children should be guaranteed a future. Decent jobs entail dignity, equality and a sense of prosperity.

Let me include, among other elements, social security and social protection, adequate housing, as well as health and education benefits. As labour is an actor and a driver of development, workers should be among the first beneficiaries of the development process. Policies and strategies should be developed to ensure that workers get their full share of the economic pie. Greater attention should be given to young workers, as they provide the bulk of the future labour force.

Fourth, development policies should provide opportunities for the workers to participate in democratic governance. Democracy entails the participation of workers in the decision-making processes

that affect their lives. To bring about such a democratic process, there should be continued dialogue between the Government, employers and workers, for a win-win situation. In this process, it is important to ensure a proper balance between the need to protect the welfare of the workers, the imperative to promote their rights and democracy, and also the responsibility and obligation of the workers to maintain performance and productivity.

Fifth, there must be global cooperation to ensure that the benefits of globalization are shared equitably. Having the plight of workers in mind, we must find ways to promote greater coordination among related international forums such as the ILO, UNCTAD, the OECD and the G20. We also need to enhance capacity building, technology transfer and innovation through South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation.

Sixth, many countries have ratified ILO Conventions, but what is urgent now is the faithful implementation of these Conventions. We must see to it that the eight ILO fundamental Conventions are fully carried out in order to ensure that the workers enjoy social justice.

As has been said by Mr Somavia, Indonesia is the first Asian country to ratify all eight ILO fundamental Conventions, and I trust that their ratification will speed up and intensify the promotion and protection of the rights of Indonesian workers.

All these measures will, I believe, help to improve and shape the state of global employment. It will serve not only the dignity of workers but also the belief of this Organization, as expressed in the Preamble of the 1919 ILO Constitution that universal and lasting peace can be established only if it is based upon social justice.

Another critical matter that we need to address as we embrace the new era of social justice is the pride of migrant workers. It is estimated that there are 150 million documented migrant workers around the world. They are important players in this new era of social justice. We cannot ignore their contribution to the global labour market as well as to the economies of their home countries. We in Indonesia call these migrant workers economic heroes, because of their hard work and selfless devotion to the welfare of their families back home.

We must also support the ILO Convention on decent work for domestic workers, which I believe will be adopted at this session of the International Labour Conference. I believe that this Convention can provide guidance to the sending and host gov-

ernments to protect migrant domestic workers. This is an important issue for Indonesia, because relatively large portions of our migrant workers abroad are domestic workers. We have therefore taken institutional, administrative and legal steps to protect and empower our migrant workers.

My Government is intensifying cooperation with both domestic and foreign recruitment agencies to ensure the safety of migration and also the protection of migrants in the host countries. We have developed arrangements with host countries to ensure that their rights are respected and protected, including the right to the minimum wage and days off. We are also upgrading the knowledge and skills that will make them a greater asset to their employers and further contribute to the host economies. Those domestic workers who work within their own countries must also be given the same protection. Thus, this Convention will help us formulate effective national legislation and regulations for this purpose.

Also critical to the new era of social justice is the role of youth employment. With nearly half of the world's population under the age of 25, young people can make an important contribution to global prosperity. Yet an ILO report says that 81 million out of 620 million economically active 15-24 year-olds were unemployed at the end of 2009. This is the highest recorded number since 1991. We must therefore work together to prevent the increase in unemployment among young people. We must invest more in sectors that generate jobs for youth. We must also work towards a global coalition for youth employment.

The global crisis has cost countries and communities too much, especially in terms of the fate of the workers. What the world urgently needs today is our unwavering commitment to improve labour conditions. We cannot delay our efforts to meet these needs. Now is the time to act and formulate change for future generations and for the next century.

Finally, let us work together to bring about the best possible conditions for the workers of the world. Let us join hands to make this a new era of social justice.

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*Original French:* The PRESIDENT

On behalf of the Conference allow me to extend my sincere thanks for the edifying message which you have given to this assembly.

*(The Conference adjourned at 10.30 a.m.)*

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