



**Seventy-third session
of the
United Nations General Assembly**

**High-level Meeting
on the Future of Work
organized on the occasion
of the
100th Anniversary of the
International Labour Organization (ILO)**

**Informal Summary of the
President of the General Assembly**

General Assembly High-level Meeting on the Future of Work Organized on the occasion of the 100th Anniversary of the International Labour Organization

United Nations Headquarters, New York

10-11 April 2019

Introduction

The United Nations General Assembly convened a High-level Meeting to commemorate the one-hundredth anniversary of the establishment of the International Labour Organization, under the theme “The Future of Work”, on 10 April 2019 at UN Headquarters in New York, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 73/282. The overarching objective of the meeting was to share best practices, concrete solutions and ambitious recommendations for shaping the future of work, with decent work consistent with the commitments of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and beyond. The summary of the High-level meeting will contribute to the review of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 8 in the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF), under the auspices for the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in July 2019.

The High-level meeting was structured with an opening session followed by a commemorative plenary in the General Assembly Hall (10:00 am – 1:00pm), followed by an afternoon session (3:00 – 6:00 pm) comprised of two interactive panels in the Trusteeship Council Chamber on 10 April. Given the high demand for participation, the commemorative plenary was extended to 11 April (10:00 am – 4:00 pm). A High-Level Luncheon on “The ILO at 100: Collective Actions to Shape the Future of Work” was co-hosted by the President of the General Assembly and ILO Director General on 10 April.

The opening session heard important statements by the President of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, and the President of ECOSOC, ILO Director General, representatives from the International Trade Union Confederation, International Organization of Employers and the UN Major Group for Children and Youth. During the historical commemorative session, around 80 Member States and Permanent Observers to the UN delivered statements paying tribute to the ILO and its historical legacy and highlighting the challenges ahead.

Key Messages

- Member States congratulated the ILO on its 100th anniversary and expressed great appreciation for the agency's contribution to advancing social justice in the world. The internationally agreed labour normative framework composed of ILO conventions, recommendations, and its supervisory mechanisms has helped in shaping labour laws and institutions throughout the world, impacting the lives of millions of people and families.
- The effectiveness, resilience and longevity of the ILO stems from its tripartite structure (workers, employers and governments) through dialogue for shared solutions. The establishment and consolidation of social dialogue as an instrument of democratic governance is one of the most important legacies from ILO. The importance of continued and strengthened social dialogue and representative social partners was underlined, in particular, to the context of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.
- Member States also highly valued the technical assistance provided by the ILO to improve labour laws and institutions which aim to incorporate international standards. Building on the ILO's undisputable international leadership on labour and employment issues, Member States called for a reassertion of the ILO's role in global governance through policy coherence, in the spirit of the UN reform.
- Decent Work, another fundamental legacy of the ILO, has been broadly accepted as a core engine for a fair globalization, social equity, sustainable and sustained development as specified in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- Progress towards achievement of SDG 8 has been slower than foreseen. Despite some positive experiences, the world is off track in a number of targets related to SDG 8; decent work deficits remain widespread. This includes the ratification and implementation of the ILO standards and proper functioning of the ILO's supervisory system.
- On the future work, there is wide agreement that the world of work is experiencing rapid transformations brought by technological advances, demographic transitions and climate change, leading to profound impact on the nature of work, new forms of employment and to the creation and destruction of jobs in many sectors. While these changes will create opportunities for some, many others face the risk of increased vulnerability and inequality.
- The "fourth industrial revolution" – meaning the accelerated technological advancement, including automation, artificial intelligence, digitalization and other

new technologies – has created rapidly changing demand for certain skills. Increased and widespread investment in education, skills training, and lifelong learning is needed to avoid skills mismatch which ultimately lead to perpetuating and even widening pre-existing economic inequalities.

- Demographic changes have resulted in increased young population in some regions and accelerated ageing in others. These shifts have exacerbated challenges in core areas such as youth unemployment, migration, and increased pressure on health care, social services and social protection systems. Action must be taken to mitigate these challenges, and to protect and empower people to navigate through transitions and seize new opportunities derived from economic development.
- Economic inequality between and within countries and regions are often worst felt by the 780 million workers living in poverty. Globalization has increased inequalities and technological advances further deepen income gaps. Mechanisms should be in place to promote a fairer distribution of the benefits of economic growth and technological advances throughout the regions and along the global supply chain and socio-economic spectrum.
- The extension of social protection systems, including floors, was recognized as a crucial way to combat poverty, mitigate inequalities and promote inclusive and sustainable growth. As the majority of the world populations still lacks access to basic social protection, countries need to redouble efforts to promote universal social protection coverage.
- The effect of climate change on labour markets was also discussed and emphasis was placed on the need for sustainable green economies and jobs. The transition towards a low carbon and greener economy can have a net positive effect on job creation provided that the necessary policies are in place to facilitate the worker's transitions among economic sectors. Member States were encouraged to include social and labour measures as part of their nationally defined commitments to mitigate climate change.
- There is a need to increase progress on gender equality and women's economic empowerment. Progress on achieving gender equality in the labour market should be a key force for the future of work and in achieving SDGs. However, there has been slow progress in closing gender employment gaps. The gender pay gap remains at an average of 20% worldwide and women remain highly vulnerable and continue to face discrimination, violence and harassment in many forms. The disproportionate burden of unpaid care and domestic work on women was identified as a critical issue.
- The expansion of new forms of working arrangements and non-standard forms of work, in particular in the gig economy, should not compromise the quality of jobs.

Regardless of contractual arrangement or employment status, workers should enjoy access to decent working conditions, including fundamental rights, adequate wages, social protection, health and safety at work. When possible, technology should facilitate the transition from the informal to the formal economy.

- While addressing the future of work, Member States should not lose sight of the problems in the labour market, such as child labour and forced labour. At the current pace of reduction, the 2030 Agenda target to eradicate child labour by 2025 will not be met. Likewise, globally around 40 million persons are victims of modern slavery. Member States were urged to sign and ratify the 2014 Protocol to the Convention on Forced Labour and to take the necessary measures to eliminate all forms of forced labour, human trafficking and modern slavery.
- Both the root causes of forced migration, and discrimination against the rights of migrant workers require attention and action. The advancement of decent work for migrant workers as established in the Global Compact on Migration for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration constitutes a crucial step towards more inclusive and productive societies. Measures include the promotion of fair recruitment practices, skills and social security portability, combatting discrimination and promotion of fundamental rights for migrant workers.
- The access of persons with disabilities to labour markets was also discussed. Member States agreed on the potential use of technology to unlock productive capacity and enhance opportunities to promote decent work for people with disabilities.
- The ILO has been a pioneer in the recognition of rights of indigenous peoples. The ILO Convention no. 169 was the first international treaty to recognize indigenous persons as holders of collective rights and of the responsibility of governments to protect these rights. It is imperative to include and address the specific needs and rights of indigenous persons, and to utilize from this unique knowledge towards the pursuit of sustainable development.
- Member States called for a renewed and strengthened social contract with a human-centred agenda in accordance with the Report of the Global Commission on the Future of Work; also including increased investment in people's capabilities and in the institutions of work along with the promotion of decent work and sustainable development.
- The promotion of decent work can prevent social instability and conflict, while access to decent work can be jeopardized by situations of conflict. It is also an important means to build durable peace and the protection of standards in times of instability or crisis.

- Health and safety at work is an integral element of decent work. Efforts should be made to drastically reduce the 2.8 million deaths caused by work related injuries and diseases. Special attention should be paid to the new forms of occupational hazards and diseases in the future of work.
- Trade unions and employer's organizations play a vital role in ensuring decent work. All workers should enjoy the right to freedom of association. Union representatives and activists should not be subjected to violence.
- Necessary measures should be put in place to promote sustainable enterprises and to change incentives, accounting practices and reporting mechanisms to promote and align business models with the sustainable development agenda with a future of work with decent work. Every effort must be made to create an environment where sustainable business can flourish. To achieve an adequate future of work, we must ensure a prosperous future for business while ensuring the wellbeing of the employer/labourer.
- It is fundamental to enhance participation of young people in the policy making and to take measures to increase their trust in the institutions. International, regional and national institutions must be recalibrated to align with the aspirations of the 2030 Agenda.
- Member States are looking forward to the outcome of the International Labour Conference 2019 and its connections with the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the promotion of a future of work with social justice.

Summary by Segments of the Programme:

Opening Segment – 10 April

H.E. Ms. María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, President of the 73rd session of the General Assembly, opened the meeting, remarking that the ILO had produced many firsts. The ILO was the first specialized agency of the United Nations, the first organization to bring governments, workers and employers together for ongoing dialogue on social justice, and the first organization to express the need to give workers a stake in decision making that matches their essential contribution. Decent work is one of her priorities for the 73rd session. She affirmed that the commemorative event was also an opportunity to strengthen our resolve to realize SDG 8 on decent work for all.

She noted that the founders of ILO understood that growing economic interdependence, being itself a tool for peace, would need international cooperation on labour and solidarity with workers. They knew that “peace can only be established if it is based on social justice”, particularly in a world where injustice was rife. Delivery of SDG 8 is paramount and decent work is central to efforts to fight poverty and inequality and the ILO is the standard bearer for this goal. Issues of social justice will become even more important as the world of work changes, and decent work must become a reality for all.

H.E. Mr. António Guterres, Secretary-General of the UN, noted that the ILO remains one of the most unique gathering spaces in the international system with its tripartite structure serving as a source of strength and legitimacy. He highlighted the central role played by the ILO in the struggle for social progress through conflict and peace, democracy and dictatorship, decolonization and the Cold War, globalization and turbulence. In more recent years, the ILO has been prominent in recognizing the need to develop a fair globalization that expands opportunities, reduces inequalities and answers people’s demands for decent work. He underscored that humanity is living in a time of profound uncertainty, disruption and technological transformation. Innovations would help power economies and ensure progress on the SDGs but would also cause great disruption in labour markets with the creation and destruction of many jobs. Investments in education and strengthened systems of social protection were needed. He called on Member States to renew their collective commitment to international cooperation.

Mr. Guy Ryder, Director-General of the ILO, acknowledged that the organization was the most positive and enduring product of the Treaty of Versailles. It was the first step in the construction of the multilateral system and a forbearer of the United Nations. The “wild dream” of the ILO had prevailed and has shaped labour laws and practices across the globe and given substance to its constitutional principle that labour is not a commodity but a necessity to achieve economic and social wellbeing. He reflected on the ILO’s survival through the dark period of the first half of the twentieth century, and its emergence in the form of the Declaration of Philadelphia which inspired the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. He reflected on the strength of the ILO’s partnership with the UN from the outset.

He noted that the apparent triumph of a universal liberal economy in the 1990s brought the challenge of ensuring a social dimension to a model of globalization driven by deregulation of markets and fueled by new technologies. The ILO's Declaration of Fundamental Principles and Rights and Work, and the Decent Work Agenda – jobs, social protection, social dialogue and rights – were key responses to this challenge.

Mr. Ryder reflected that the ILO and organizations of the multilateral system now operate in a time of great uncertainty and amidst widespread disillusion about prospects for sustainable social and economic progress, with even the principles of multilateralism being called into question. There is a demand for the renewal of the social contract between government and people, and at work between labour and capital, predicated on fairness, equality, cooperation, development, shared opportunity, prosperity, and inclusivity and sustainability. The 2030 Agenda was a response to this, with decent work at its core.

The ILO Global Commission on the Future of Work Report makes the point that the future will be dictated not by technological development, but by the choices we make about the future we want and our common purpose in its realization. All actors must take responsibility to realize the ambitions of the 2030 Agenda, particularly in the multilateral system. He concluded by reflecting on the injustice that gave rise to the establishment of the ILO, the progress that had been made over the past century, and the continued existence of injustices despite this progress and the continued need for action.

H.E. Ms. Inga Rhonda King, President of ECOSOC and Permanent Representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, emphasized that workers in today's labour market needed an entirely new set of skills and a new system of education, including the promotion of lifelong learning. Technological, demographic, climate, social and environmental changes all considerably impact the world of work. Focus must be on reducing inequalities and fostering greater inclusion as envisaged in the 2030 Agenda. 2019 was an important year for the ILO with the in-depth review of SDG 8 at the HLPF in July.

Ms. Sharan Burrow, General Secretary of the International Trade Union Confederation, sought the consensus of today's leaders across governments, employers and trade unions to ensure the rights and social justice envisaged by the ILO Constitution and Philadelphia Declaration were upheld. Although the world is three times richer than 20 years ago, inequality is now at an overwhelming global risk. Up to 94% of workers in the global supply chain are working in insecure, low-wage, and often unsafe jobs. Evidence of a global slump in wages and collective bargaining is leading to stagnant demand and emerging social unrest. The rights to freedom of association and collective bargaining are increasingly denied. 60% of the global workforce are in informal work and progress for women is stagnant. Working people have lost trust in institutions, globalization and democracy itself. The failure of the social contract with this model of globalization has put people, the global economy, and multilateralism at risk. She called for a renewed social contract and dedication to SDG 8, ensuring decent work for all workers, including informal workers and platform workers. Employers, workers and governments each share a responsibility for ensuring a floor of rights and distributions.

Mr. Erol Kiresepi, President of the International Organization of Employers, noted the importance of the ILO tripartite governance. He stated that employers believe that labour is not a commodity. The IOE is thankful to the ILO for building the capacity of employers' organizations and for protecting employers' organizations that are under threat. The skills needed in this fourth industrial revolution will be in short supply. The IOE believed the private sector envisaged a future of work that was person-centred. To achieve a human-centred future of work, a prosperous future for business is needed. Without sustained growth, social progress is likely to stall and even be reversed. Employers wish to be part of the solution, offering input on shaping a future with human dignity at its heart. Attitudes towards work and business must be transformed. Governments, employers and workers have a shared responsibility to shape the future of work. To achieve this balanced dialogue, employers, governments and workers' organizations must be more connected and heard at the UN. The link between UN decisions and the impact on the workplace must be better understood and strengthened. IOE will continue to contribute to ILO's reassertion to its leading role in the UN as an expert in labour rights, social protection and social dialogue, but also in employment creation and enterprise development.

Ms. Jolly Amatya, Youth Representative from the UN Major Group for Children and Youth, highlighted that \$1.7 trillion is spent each year on military expenses because economic models do not differentiate between the production of instruments of war and instruments of well-being. Wages are stagnated despite large rises in productivity. Despite existential threats, young people have taken action. Combatting climate change is essential as there will be no jobs to protect if, based on the predicted level of destruction from climate change, no action was taken. She reported that the three key recommendations of the 2019 ECOSOC Youth Forum's review of the implementation of SDG 8 include: the need to move away from GDP and shift economic models to those that value and measure the well-being of all, the integrity of the planet and be replaced by alternative development strategies; importance must be placed on transitions to governance structures that are inclusive of all and based on intergenerational dialogue, participation and collaboration; and young people's trust in institutions must be rebuilt with institutions being recalibrated to align with the goals of the 2030 Agenda. Young people's call to action is that all stakeholders must work together, with each other and for each other, for a just and peaceful planet.

Plenary Session (10-11 April)

During the Plenary Session, Member States discussed:

Multi-dimensional Changes in the World of Work

- Substantial emphasis was placed on the changing world of work as a result of multiple factors, including technological advancement, globalization, demographic changes, environmental changes and changes to the economy.

- These transformations are creating both opportunities and unforeseen challenges within the labour market.
- The role of the ILO remains vital and relevant in addressing emerging challenges and enabling an informed debate on the future of work. Member States considered the ILO's Future of Work initiative an important guide in deciding the direction of the transforming labour market.
- There must be an enduring commitment to uphold the values of decent work throughout this multi-dimensional evolution.

Technological Advancement and Increased Need for Skills Development & Lifelong Learning

- Particular attention was dedicated to what was termed the “fourth industrial revolution”, defined by increased technological advancement, automation, artificial intelligence, digitalization, and a rapidly changing demand for certain skills.
- This “fourth industrial revolution” would bring about opportunities and challenges. Opportunities were not likely to be equally distributed, with the majority of new jobs requiring technological skills and qualifications, and jobs at the lower end of the economic spectrum facing the highest risks of automation.
- Gains made by technological advances should be for the benefit of all of humanity and measures must be taken to ensure no one is left behind.
- In order to counteract potential inequalities and challenges, there was a need for increased education, training, skills development and lifelong learning to equip the workforce with skills and competencies that will meet the changing demands of the market.

Demographic Changes

- Demographic changes are bringing about new challenges. Rapidly expanding youth populations are increasing youth unemployment and migratory pressures in some regions, while aging populations are increasing pressure on care and social security systems in others.
- There is a need to involve the youth in decision-making and increase dialogue in order to design effective solutions.
- The potential of young persons to contribute towards sustainable development was recognized. The growing youth population accompanied by a slowing global employment rate poses a threat to the successful transition of young persons from education to decent work and impedes global economic growth and development as a whole.
- The promotion of “silver-hair” economy, consisting of the creation of jobs for older persons, was suggested as a response to population aging.

Economic Inequalities

- The inequality of economic progress across and within regions and countries was highlighted. Globalization has increased inequalities and technological advances threaten to deepen preexisting inequalities.
- The slowing rate of global employment and jobs trends that sideline young people and women are problematic.
- 780 million workers worldwide do not earn enough to lift themselves out of poverty.
- There are increasing inequalities in access to decent work. Sustainable jobs-rich growth and increased social protection policies would assist in tackling inequality and poverty eradication.

Social Protection

- Adequate social protection policies, including floors, are essential in reducing inequalities, eradicating poverty and boosting inclusive, sustained and sustainable economic growth.
- The majority of persons in the world do not have any social protection. The need for social protection is not only a labour issue but a human rights issue, as enshrined in Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The increase in non-standard forms of employment will pose additional challenges to social protection systems.

Climate Change and Green Jobs

- There was an emphasis placed on the need for green economies, which would create millions of jobs in the adaptation of sustainable practices and clean technologies.
- It was acknowledged that a significant number of jobs would be lost in traditional industry with high levels of energy consumption and pollution.
- The promotion of green jobs and green economies would counteract this loss while fostering low-carbon and sustainable growth. It was suggested that incentives should be provided to enterprises creating green jobs. Adequate skills and policies to facilitate transitions will be needed.
- It was also recognized that climate change would have severe effects on industries such as agriculture in many regions, leading to increased migratory pressure, increased rural inequality and instability.

Gender Equality and Women's Economic Empowerment

- Progress in gender equality has slowed. Women continue to be paid 20% less on average than men; women are disproportionately suffering from precarious labour conditions, more likely to be working in the informal sectors, more likely to be victims of sexual harassment in the workplace and carry the majority of the burden of unpaid care work.
- Social norms, disparities between women and men's contribution to unpaid work, and workplace discrimination all limit women's access to equal opportunities. Challenging

these norms will be crucial in increasing women's equality in work and increasing women's economic empowerment.

- The protection of women's equal rights and participation in the labour market are key for the future of work and for the achievement of the SDGs. Measures such as equal pay laws, equal pay audits and gender quotas can help ensure equal pay for work of equal value.

Child Labour

- The eradication of child labour is of high importance, including child marriage and all forms of child exploitation. 152 million children are in child labour despite the identification of the root causes and areas of practice.
- Many Member States underlined the need to increase efforts to tackle the continuing issue of child labour.

Ending Forced Labour

- Despite universal prohibition, there are 40 million victims of forced labour in the world. This is the highest number recorded during any time in history. 16 million of these victims are in the global supply chain. There must be efforts made both by governments and the private sector.
- Member States were urged to sign and ratify the 2014 Protocol to the Convention on Forced Labour (C029) to provide protection and appropriate remedies to victims of forced labour and to sanction those responsible for it. Where this was not possible, Member States were urged to develop national policies to combat modern forms of slavery.
- The work of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons and ILO initiative Alliance 8.7, the Global Alliance to Eradicate Forced Labour, Modern Slavery, Human Trafficking and Child Labour, were praised for their work related to this issue.

Migration and Migrant Workers

- Migrant workers face intersectional vulnerabilities and discrimination. Migrant workers are the most likely to become victims of human trafficking, and often migrant workers face discrimination, xenophobia, low wages, and exclusion in host countries. Women and children are particularly vulnerable in this regard.
- There is a need to address both the root causes of migration, and to increase access to decent work and to protect the rights of migrant workers.
- Lack of economic and employment opportunities were identified as drivers for migration. Climate change would also create an increase of migrant workers in some regions, particularly those working in the agricultural sector. It was noted that labour migration should be a matter of choice rather than compulsion.
- Enabling migrant workers to access legal protection and basic social services, proved to be one successful approach to combat vulnerabilities.

Persons with Disabilities

- Member States noted that discrimination is still present in the world of work, particularly for persons with disabilities and persons with HIV and AIDS.
- Emphasis was placed on the need to respect and promote more inclusive workplaces. Combatting discrimination is an essential part of promoting decent work.
- Member States also stressed the need to reduce employment gaps and to increase opportunities for all, particularly for those with disabilities.
- Persons with disabilities need to be included in development projects and policies.

Indigenous Peoples

- ILO Convention 169 on indigenous and tribal peoples was the first international treaty to recognize the existence of indigenous peoples as holders of collective rights, and the responsibility of the governments to protect these rights. It requires respect for the cultures and ways of life of the indigenous peoples, recognizing their rights over land and natural resources as well as their right to decide their priorities in the development process.
- The needs of young people, including young indigenous peoples, must be addressed, and they must be given access to the job market. Some Member States discussed national action plans seeking to target disadvantaged or isolated groups of young persons.

Tripartite Structure of the ILO and Social Dialogue

- A subject of continuous praise was the tripartite functioning system of the ILO. The tripartite model of the ILO has proven itself as one of the most effective and original contributions to international law, by equally involving governments, employers and workers. It was commended as one of the main reasons for the ILO's effectiveness and longevity. It is an example of the strengths of multilateralism.
- Commitments to this tripartite collaboration must be strengthened, as it is the best vehicle for change in accordance with the 2030 Agenda.
- Continued social dialogue, as well as strong and representative social partners, are vital to the managing the changing future of work. Inclusive social dialogue and collective bargaining should be promoted. Social dialogue is increasingly necessary in a context of global developments in employment, as well as in labour relations.

SDG 8 and the Review of SDG 8 at the High-Level Plenary Forum in July

- It was noted that progress has been slow in reaching the targets set out by SDG 8. Increased efforts are needed to attain the target of “full and productive employment and decent work for all and equal pay for equal value” in particular. The world is off track in meeting a number of SDG 8 targets; efforts will need to be redoubled to fulfill the commitments of the 2030 Agenda.

- The promotion of ratification and implementation of the ILO standards and proper functioning of the standard supervisory system of the ILO are crucial for the realization of the targets of SDG 8. The strict implementation of the ILO Conventions, particularly the 8 core conventions is a step forward to achieving the SDGs, particularly SDG 8.
- The interconnected nature of SDG 8 with other SDGs, such as SDG 5, SDG 1, and SDG 10, was highlighted. This requires a strong multipartite system of cooperation.
- Many Member States reaffirmed their commitments to SDG 8. Member States look forward to the review of SDG 8 at the HLPF this year and recognize its crucial importance to developing countries.

Renewed Social Contract and Human-centred Approach

- It was repeatedly stated that there was a need for a renewed and strengthened social contract. Some Member States encouraged the establishment of a Universal Labour Guarantee which would ensure all workers enjoy fundamental workers' rights; ensure the achievement of a balance between work and personal life and gives voice through social dialogue.
- Many Member States endorsed the call for human-centred agenda based on a social contract placing people and work at the centre of economic and social policy and business practice using a rights-based approach.

Health and Safety in the Workplace

- The importance of health and safety at work is a crucial part of decent work. Some 2.7 million workers die annually from work related injuries and diseases. Preventing fatal accidents and diseases was recommended as an area of focus.
- Many Member States have adopted regulations and legislation to increase health and safety in the workplace.

Decent Work and Situations of Conflict and Instability

- Reflecting upon the ILO's founding message, "there will be no peace without social justice", Member States supported the idea that decent work for all diminishes the probability of social instability and conflict. On the other hand, the existence of conflict and instability negatively affects people's access to decent work.
- Armed conflict and security problems, coupled with new threats such as terrorism and extremism, and proliferation of weapons continue to impact negatively on access to decent work and economic stability, leaving millions in precarious situations. We should aim to strengthen action for the prevention of conflict and the creation of durable peace in order to ensure access to decent work.

Rights of Unions and Freedom of Association

- The role of trade unions and defending the right to freedom of association are important issues. Social justice is not possible without respect for human rights,

including the right to freedom of association. There is a shared responsibility to safeguard union rights. All violence against union representatives and activists is unacceptable.

- There should be incentives for increasing unionization and strengthening collective bargaining mechanisms.

Future of Work and the International Labour Conference 2019

- Many Member States praised the report of the Global Commission on the Future of Work as an opportunity to rethink their own realities and to discuss possible guidance in a time of extreme changes.
- Member States expressed the opinion that the Report of the Global Commission on the Future of Work and outcome document of the 2019 International Labour Conference should inform and guide the multilateral action on the future of work.

Interactive Panel Discussions

H.E. Ms. Maria Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, President of the 73rd session of the General Assembly, opened the afternoon panel discussions by underscoring the need to create 40 million jobs every year by 2030 to meet the demands of new entrants to the labour market. The challenge was also to improve the quality of jobs since the majority of workers remain without protections and remain trapped in low paying jobs and suffer from poor living conditions. To ensure the future of decent work, solutions must be tailored to the special needs of young people while mitigating the impacts of rapid technological change on workers and seizing new opportunities. While automation could potentially eliminate 75 million jobs, it could also create 133 million jobs if properly implemented.

Mr. Guy Ryder, Director-General ILO, acknowledged the many expressions of support for the mission of ILO. He cautioned that while considering issues associated with the future of work and the “fourth industrial revolution”, the outstanding development challenges such as child labour, modern slavery, mass unemployment, marginalisation, gender inequality must be overcome. Navigating technological advances and the struggle against global warming are integral to the future of work with decent work for all.

H.E. Jean-Claude Juncker, European Commission President emphasized the shared values and aspirations of the European Union and the ILO. He underscored the European Pillar of Social Rights, which was a commitment by EU members to achieve and promote core decent work goals including equal pay for work of equal value, better work life balance and skills training for the future of work.

First Panel - “Addressing Unfinished Commitments to Achieve Decent Work for All”

Moderator, *Mr. Steven Greenhouse*, author and former *New York Times* labour and workplace reporter, opened the session lamenting that media outlets had been gradually covering less

about labour issues and more about the tech industry. Discussions on the future of work must not ignore the majority of workers who are not in the tech industry.

H.E. Mr. Ernesto Murro, Minister of Labour and Social Affairs of Uruguay, reiterated that peace and social justice were linked. Social justice, decent work and inclusion were required to have a functioning society. The achievements of the ILO over the past 100 years were admirable, but stressed that it was important to ask what was needed to further those goals into the future. Uruguay had increased household income through obligatory collective bargaining measures which had led to 17 years of sustained economic growth, increased pensions, and salaries. Domestically, social protection had reached more than 95% of persons in retirement. The percentage of women working in the informal economy had dropped lower than that of men. Sound labour policy had been instrumental in expanding decent work including by extending social protection to 70% of domestic workers, the lowest inequality among Latin American countries, and a doubling of the number of jobs over the past 15 years. Social dialogue was an important part of creating new legislation in Uruguay. Labour, health and security norms were produced by councils which brought workers, employers and government officials together. Wage policy through collective bargaining had helped decrease unemployment. Active labour market policies were being promoted for persons with disabilities including through a new law requiring the hiring of persons with disabilities in the private sector. Affirmative action was necessary for equality of opportunity and inclusion of marginalized groups.

Professor Jeffrey Sachs, American economist, noted that “climate sanity” and jobs go hand in hand. Reckless environmental destruction would inevitably create instability and kill off jobs. Low carbon and green economies would create far more jobs. Upgrading education levels in Sub-Saharan African are necessary to meet the changing demands of the future of work. Human jobs of the future would require decent education and training because manual and low-skill work would be mechanised. Mechanisation was reaching rural areas and jobs in those areas would also be put at risk. Governments should put a significant portion of their budgets behind education and training in order to prepare for the future of work.

Ms. Reema Nanavaty, head of the Self-Employed Women’s Association of India (SEWA), explained that poverty was a form of violence with the consent of society. Organising as poor women workers was the surest way to attain dignity and respect and to achieve full employment. The capacity building of rural workers to set the conditions for families to engage in education for their children was key for eliminating child labour. Increasing decent work would also eliminate the conditions that fuelled child labour.

Mr. Mthunzi Mdwaba, CEO of TZoro IBC, emphasized the importance of SDG 8 to the business community. He said that since the private sector drove economic growth, it was important to support it by enabling entrepreneurs, assessing the impact of regulation on economic growth, increasing sources of income, and implementing support strategies. Mr. Mdwaba argued that the manner in which countries’ productivity is measured is unsuitable because it is too complicated to gauge the processes countries put in place. In response to comments by the United States International Council on Disabilities (USICD), Mr. Mdwaba acknowledged that, in addition to being inclusive of people with disability, we needed to cater for persons with disabilities as individuals rather than as a homogenous group and address individual needs.

Mr. Mdwaba stated that the disparities within as well as between countries in terms of access to social services and outcomes can be massively important. He concluded that we need to be open to new ideas and change in order to solve these issues.

Second Panel - "Shaping the Future of Work"

H.E. Ms. Anniken Hauglie, Minister of Labour and Social Inclusion for Norway, highlighted that in Norway, 75% of the total national wealth was attributable to human capital and mentioned a plan to establish a tripartite committee to look into the consequences of the digitization of work on workers.

Mr. Angel Gurría, Secretary-General of Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), warned that half of the workforce will suffer some displacement due to digitization of jobs. Mr. Gurría explored the possible best practices to help workers through job transitions and how to make the labour market more inclusive. He emphasized the unequal distribution of challenges for those of lower socio-economic standing which the future of work will bring and the need to mitigate the potential pitfalls. Mr. Gurría talked about the gaps in social protections for new work, in particular for platform work and self-employment. People in these job categories tended to lack access to the same kinds of protections and provisions as other types of workers, which needs to be addressed. Mr. Gurría stated that 4 out of 10 new jobs in the OECD were created in digital intensive sectors and warned that if we do not keep up with skills creation we can end up leaving a lot of people out.

Mr. Rob Acker, CEO of Salesforce, explained that the organization uses technology in creating personalized outcomes for individuals in education and track them through the workforce to collect solid data on work. This data, Acker continued, could help expand the reach of education and training to underserved communities as well as to help understand the current situation. Mr. Acker talked about the "1 1 1 model". This was a model in which 1% of technology, 1% of workers time, and 1% of profits go back into the community. He said that one of the main aspects was mentoring in schools and give back to local economies. Trends show that employees of the future seem to tend to prioritize giving back over wages, forcing companies to change how they do business.

Ms. Winnie Byanyima, Executive-Director of Oxfam International, talked about the threat of businesses valuing excessive returns of capital at the expense of labour issues. This would inevitably lead to a deepening of inequality. Ms. Byanyima stated that while the top 26 billionaires were earning \$2.5 billion every day, the bottom half were getting poorer. She suggested that this showed that the current economic paradigm was rewarding wealth over work. She expressed that we must ensure that countries move in the direction of having big businesses paying their fair share. Ms. Byanyima concluded by acknowledging that, while big companies were doing some good work for workers' rights, the "greedy" shareholder model of value would continue to harm workers.

Ms. Laura Ripani, lead specialist in the Labor Markets and Social Security Division of the Inter-American Development Bank, noted that although there was the potential for automation to

replace jobs, there was also the possibility for more labour augmentation equipment which create jobs. She also suggested that jobs lost in this process might give way to new jobs, referencing the idea brought up by Rob Acker that 65% of the jobs of tomorrow do not yet exist. She said that the skills that would be important in this future of work are digital, socio-emotional (teambuilding, management) as well as critical thinking and adaptability. Ms. Ripani walked through the risks for platform workers including a blurred relationship between employer and worker, and the loss of protections and basic labour rights. She also mentioned the potential benefits including giving workers more flexible schedules to take care of children and the elderly, and potential environmental benefits from the increase in telecommuting leading to a decrease in the use of polluting transportation methods.