



**INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION
OFFICE FOR THE UNITED NATIONS**

**76th Session of the General Assembly
Third Committee**

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Mr Chair,

The launch of the Third Committee comes at a time when an estimated 8.8 percent of total working hours, equivalent to the hours worked in one year by 255 million full-time workers, were lost in 2020. Relative to pre-crisis trends, it is estimated that 75 million jobs will have been lost in 2021 and 23 million in 2022, corresponding to a loss of US\$ 3.7 trillion in labour income before government support.

This situation threatens to halt progress on social development. The sharp increase observed in poverty and inequalities has kept millions of people trapped in vicious cycles of working poverty and informality, where social protection, minimum wages and labour rights are inexistent. The hardest-hit sectors are also those which employ the most at risk, especially women and youth but also those working in low-skilled jobs; migrants and those belonging to ethnic and racial minorities; older persons; and those with disabilities or living with HIV/AIDS.

The crisis is not over. It has halted development while putting in danger the lives of those we depend on the most. Among them, over 1.6 Million seafarers who make their living from the oceans, working on ships that carry more than 80 per cent of world trade. The pandemic brought restrictions that have trapped hundreds of thousands on their

ships, stranded and unable to disembark or travel home. Others are faced with such problems as lack of access to medical care ashore, even when their medical issues are not Covid related. All seafarers need access to vaccination and all of them deserve decent working conditions.

Last year, the UN General Assembly adopted Resolution A/75/L.37 concerning International cooperation to address challenges faced by seafarers as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic to support global supply chains. It is vital that all Member States act upon this resolution immediately and fully apply the ILO Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, as amended. Failure to do so will likely lead to further disruptions in global supply chains and undermine economic recovery.

Another example relates to the vulnerability of children. It is tragic that on this International Year for the elimination of child labour, an alarming 160 Million children are found in child labour, the first increase in years. Half of these children are in hazardous work that puts their safety, health, and sometimes even their lives at risk. And nine million additional children are at risk of being pushed into child labor by the end of 2022 as a result of the pandemic. The ILO Convention N.182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour provides the legal framework to prevent violations against children. While it has achieved universal ratification in 2019, it must be fully respected and supported by legislative action at the country level.

Mr Chair, please also allow me to provide this committee with an update on ILO Convention 190 which recognizes the right of everyone to work free from violence and harassment, including gender-based violence and harassment. It has been well documented that the Covid 19 pandemic has led to a surge of domestic violence and harassment at work, online and offline. This cannot be tolerated. As of today, eight countries have ratified the ILO Convention 190 and several others have taken steps toward its ratification. We encourage all governments to join the call and take the necessary steps towards the ratification and implementation of C.190.

Finally Mr Chair, there may not be a vaccine for unemployment and working poverty but there are solutions nevertheless. They come in the form of programmes and initiatives like the Global Accelerator for Jobs and Social Protection which was just recently launched by the Secretary General to create at least 400 million jobs by 2030; and they stem from resolutions and conventions such as those mentioned for seafarers, for children or for women and men at work.

As we invest in a human centered recovery and focus on building resilience through the pursuit of social justice and social development, the ILO looks forward to working with this committee.

I thank you.