



International
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Madame Chair,

Decent work depends on healthy ecosystems. The economic and social disruption caused by the COVID-19 crisis is undoubtedly unprecedented both in scale and nature.

Over 250 million full-time equivalent jobs were lost due to the pandemic.

Inequality rose worldwide with an increase in the number of working people in extreme poverty by 31 million.

This has impacted millions of workers, their families, as well as the business owners' across the world.

Some 85% of the companies reported that COVID-19 had a high or medium level financial impact on their business.

The pandemic is a striking reminder of the imperatives of sustainable development in its integrated and interrelated economic, social and environmental dimensions.

Almost 1.2 billion jobs directly depend on natural resources and a healthy environment, particularly in sectors such as farming, fishing and forestry.

When climate and environmental degradation occurs, it threatens ecosystem services, jobs and people first, especially in developing countries and Small Island Developing States.

Therefore, climate action must go hand-in-hand with efforts to promote decent work, build sustainable enterprises and livelihoods across the world.

The latest report of the Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change has warned the frequency and intensity of natural events such as hurricanes, flooding and heat waves across the world will increase.

As human activity is a cause of global warming, we must agree that the solution to global warming must be led by people too.

Consequently, the world of work has a primary responsibility and a unique role in the fight against climate change. We must act and we must care.

The ILO tripartite constituents have agreed that to advance social justice, they must integrate an environmental dimension into the Decent Work Agenda.

Addressing the climate and decent work challenges in an integrated manner is of fundamental relevance.

A healthy planet can lead to more and better jobs

Decisive climate action can yield more gains for the economy and people than losses. There is clear evidence that we are on a positive narrative.

Estimates of the ILO suggest that moving towards Net-Zero with measures in the energy sector and a circular economy could deliver 100 million more jobs by 2030.

However, we must not disregard the deep transformations required in economic and social systems, and the displacement of jobs in sectors that will decline, and a just transition addresses exactly those challenges.

Policies matter

The jobs growth will not happen by default. Massive investments are required to equip people as well as enterprises for smooth transitions in labour markets.

We must deploy the full range of policies and measures in a coherent, coordinated and impactful manner.

This implies comprehensive policy frameworks that address all the dimensions of the environment – decent work equation, both positive and negative, ensuring that no one is left behind. In other words, achieving a just transition for all.

A just transition is about maximising economic and social outcomes, while effectively managing risks in the ecological transition.

For the world of work, the direction of travel is clear. The future of work and that of the economy and society demand production and consumption patterns oriented towards the future, not the past.

This is why the ILO tripartite constituents; governments, employers' and workers' organisations, have developed the "*Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all*".

The Guidelines present a clear roadmap and lay out concrete policy areas to act on growth, industrial and sectoral policies, enterprise, skills, occupational safety and health, social protection, labour market policies, rights, and social dialogue and tripartism.

The latest International Labour Conference adopted a *Call to action for a human-centred, socially inclusive and green recovery*, placing a just transition to sustainable economies and societies as a central dimension of the recovery from the COVID-19 crisis.

A greener, more resilient, and more equitable world is within our reach. However, it requires deep changes in economic and social systems.

Driving such a transformative change is possible only through strong social consensus, which makes social dialogue, involving governments and social partners so critical.

The role of business

Just transition cannot be confined to the realm of public policies. The private sector is an essential driving force to achieve a just transition.

Supporting business adaptation to climate change and strengthening business resilience to mitigate adverse effects are of utmost importance.

This is particularly important for small and medium sized enterprises, which account for more than 50% of jobs and greenhouse gas emissions.

Sustaining the economy, preserving jobs and securing livelihoods in our common home require of enterprises innovation, sustainable investments and an unprecedented social commitment.

Several employers' organizations and companies have pledged to integrate decent work and just transition actions in their business strategies, investment plans and operations.

ILO action

We are only a few months to the next UN climate change conference COP26, and this is a decisive moment.

To support action by governments, employers and workers organizations, the ILO and several international partners have launched the Climate Action for Jobs Initiative as one of the initiatives resulting from the 2019 Climate Action Summit.

This multistakeholder alliance including UN agencies, cities, and civil society, helps countries to find solutions to the twin and defining challenges of our time: fast-tracking climate action on the one hand and promoting decent work and advancing social justice, on the other.

The Climate Action for Jobs Initiative is designed to contribute to the decade of action, it rallies several UN and non-UN entities and works with 48 countries that have committed to place jobs, livelihoods and social justice at the centre of ambitious climate action.

The Climate Action for Jobs Initiative is part of the new Global Accelerator for Jobs and Social Protection launched by the UN Secretary General on 28 September under the UN Financing for Development process.

Thank you.