

Solution Forum 2 “Energy, Climate Change and Decent work”

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Statement by Mr. Jürgen Schwettmann, Director, Partnerships and Development Cooperation, ILO

Minister,
Your Excellency,
Distinguished panellists,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to start by thanking all the participants and speakers for their insights on scalable solutions based on South south and triangular cooperation (SSTC) initiatives that have successfully promoted the integration of employment, decent work and social inclusion in sustainable development strategies.

This afternoon, we had the honour to listen to five panellists who have shared with us innovative solutions to tackle challenges of the green economy. They have highlighted the cooperation between countries of the Global South as well as the benefits of triangular cooperation involving countries of the “North”.

I believe the presentations have been enriching for all of us as they come from different perspectives and contexts. It is worth noting that our panellists represent governments and workers whose actions are central to the ILO mandate.

I would like to particularly thank the **Honourable Minister Errol McLeod** for his keynote presentation where he clearly illustrated examples of how Trinidad and Tobago has taken the initiative and leadership to cooperate with other countries of the South in the field of energy and in advocating for the promotion of decent work.

Similarly, it was very enriching to count on the presence of **Ambassador Laercio Antonio Vinhas**, as Brazil was one of the first partners of the ILO in the promotion of decent work through South-South and triangular cooperation mechanisms. His presentation highlighted examples of how Brazil has- through South south cooperation- linked environmental sustainability and decent work. I am grateful to Ambassador Vinhas for his remarks on the follow-up of the Rio+20 Summit that was hosted by Brazil earlier this year. I also welcome his comments on the importance of the linkages between the three pillars of sustainable development (namely, social, environmental and economic).

I am also thankful to **Dr. Christo Marais** who has given us his insights on South Africa innovative initiatives for climate change adaptation and mitigation. The way South Africa has cooperated with countries of the South in this field, namely, Mozambique and Zimbabwe, is an example to follow. We believe that after this forum, this cooperation will be enhanced and more countries will be interested to learn from the South African experience.

South Africa has also become an important partner for the ILO, especially under the India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) framework. The IBSA group has worked closely towards the promotion of the lessons learned from innovative initiatives such as India’s **Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA)**, Brazil’s **Bolsa Familia** and South Africa’s **Community**

Works. These forward thinking initiatives were showcased as strategic policies for public employment during the IBSA international conference on South-South cooperation held in New Delhi last March. ("Innovations in public employment programmes and sustainable inclusive growth" (New Delhi, 1-3 March, 2012)

In addition, during the 2010 **Global South-South Development Expo** (GSSD) hosted by the ILO, Brazil, India and South Africa (IBSA) have strengthened their links by signing a Declaration of Intent on South-South and triangular cooperation (SSTC) pertaining to the decent work agenda. This Declaration reaffirms the intent to build upon the ILO South-South cooperation programme expertise in order to foster greater solidarity and enhance cooperation among countries and social partners in the world of work.

Finally, I was glad to hear the workers' perspective thanks to **Mr. Brian Kohler**. His interesting presentation has placed a particular emphasis on the triangular dimension of cooperation. The ILO recognizes the remarkable role of IndustriALL-the union represented by Mr. Kohler- in the promotion of worker's rights in the Global South. IndustriALL actions in the energy and mining sectors especially in developing countries, is essential to promote decent, safe and sustainable jobs. To further emphasise Mr. Kohler contribution, I would like to quote a meaningful message he shared with us: "As trade unionists, we have a **responsibility to ourselves, our families, and our communities**. We must speak for today's workers - and future workers. Sustainable development is the goal. Just Transition is the path. Sustainability must be the basis of a sound industrial policy, to preserve existing jobs and create new jobs that provide **decent work in a greener economy**. There are no jobs on a dead planet."

This message is particularly relevant to the challenging post-Rio+20 agenda bearing in mind that the global economic downturn has placed employment policies at the core of national development strategies. Promoting sustainable and decent work for all is paramount to the ILO mandate. I would like to reiterate the important role that South south and triangular cooperation (SSTC) could play in this regards.

The potential of today's solution forum in promoting best practices is immense and the ILO will support social partners to develop results-based initiatives to face the challenges that lie ahead. ILO's comparative advantage in increasing institutional awareness and capacity to identify and implement South and triangular cooperation (SSTC) is embodied in the **South-South and triangular cooperation (SSTC) strategy** that was endorsed by the Governing Body of the ILO in March of this year ("*South-South and triangular cooperation: The way forward*"). The ILO has been facilitating knowledge sharing and has provided technical advice and support among countries in the South for several decades targeting the four pillars of the Decent Work Agenda. For instance, the ILO Inter-American Centre for Knowledge Development in Vocational Training (ILO-CINTERFOR) has been promoting SSTC through a regional knowledge-sharing platform and network for skills development policies since 1963.

To conclude,

I would like to point out the importance and the potential of these meetings to share South-South cooperation experiences, and the ILO would strive to facilitate the continuations of this process. The

exchange of views, experiences and best practices presented today are indeed the right way forward. I expect that we continue to work together and pool efforts to deal with global challenges.

ILO constituents and partners believe in the benefits of SSTC because it is guided by the principles of solidarity and non-conditionality. This partnership between equals is central to the mainstreaming of the decent work agenda. Such cooperation may take various forms depending on national contexts and countries needs. In addition, I would like to highlight the ILO's recognition of the potential role that SSTC can play in the future sustainable development frameworks. The strengthening of national response capacity and coordination mechanisms, as well as the commitment of social partners, is crucial to the sustainability of results and actions. The new development framework that will guide the post-2015 agenda needs to incorporate a critical social dimension along with environmental and economic concerns. It is therefore clear that SSTC strategies and mechanisms are vital in the realisation of the Millennium development goals by 2015 and in shaping the post-2015 sustainable world of work.