

Closing Statement

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TICAD 8 ILO/JICA side event “Human Security and Emergency Jobs for Peace and Resilience”

I am very pleased to have been invited to do the closing of this event and to be able to highlight how timely this discussion is, especially now with the geopolitical dimensions of an increasing number of conflicts, but also in a region that has had to face decades of protracted crises, where regional social, economic, and environmental threats are not new.

- **As many are aware, Japan led the negotiations for the adoption of the “G20 Principles for quality infrastructure investment”.** The Declaration recognizes that *Infrastructure is a driver of economic prosperity and provides a solid basis for strong, sustainable, balanced and inclusive growth and sustainable development.* The first principle of this important policy instrument confirms the positive impact infrastructure has in terms of job creation throughout the infrastructure project cycle. This is where the ILO adds value, by creating more and better jobs through employment-intensive investment approaches, and by mainstreaming decent work principles.
- **As such, there is an evident infrastructure-employment nexus, but employment dimensions are often overlooked in many infrastructure projects.** Infrastructure and public works can absorb many workers, both skilled and low skilled, and activate the targeted labour force while enhancing the skills and employability of both employers (or contractors) and workers.
- **The ILO’s employment-intensive investment strategies target especially vulnerable communities, including refugees and displaced populations,** and their employment opportunities are linked with key socio-economic infrastructure assets. We are in the business of infrastructure development to leverage infrastructure investments as a conduit to promote job opportunities, gender empowerment and decent work.
- **JICA, on the other hand, has a large quality infrastructure investment portfolio,** not only community-level infrastructure but also large infrastructure development, both through grants and concessional loans. Large infrastructure works have a tendency to be capital or equipment-intensive and may not be very labour-intensive by nature.
- However, along the construction value chain, even for large infrastructure works, there is a scope to create more and better decent jobs – also appropriate wages for equal work. The ILO’s local resource-based approaches take a closer look at, for instance, construction material production and appropriate technologies, which can be labour-intensive. There is for example a growing demand and necessity to produce environmentally friendly construction materials.
- Foreign direct investments are of course important, but how those investments are designed and implemented can make a significant difference in creating multipliers in the local African economy. We should not forget that infrastructure development can, not only

create direct jobs, but also indirect and induced jobs and multiply the benefits in the local economy.

- **When we refer to local resources, it is not just about materials, but we refer also to the need to strengthen local institutions, and work with local employers and especially, local community workers.** Local capacity development can be a common ground for further collaboration between ILO and JICA. The ILO has worked with JICA in the past, for instance, on labour-based vocational training centres in Africa to develop and upgrade accredited labour-based technologies in various African countries. These TVET institutions, such as in Kenya (KIHABT in Kisii), Tanzania (ATTI in Mbeya), and Uganda (MELTEC in Mount Elgon) are still operating vocational training with some of the labour-based technologies that JICA and ILO supported in the past.
- **The ILO continues to support regional platforms of labour-based practitioners as well as TVET institutions to transfer and share knowledge on appropriate technologies for infrastructure works.** The next 19th edition of the regional seminar for labour-based practitioners will be held next year in Rwanda, and we welcome you and development partners to join this seminar that will culminate with the adoption of a Ministerial declaration. This platform I believe will deepen the cooperation not only between the ILO and development partners but also will further strengthen our support to many of our African local partners.
- **According to our survey data, growing needs are in the areas of investing in green works, or green infrastructure, including nature-based solutions for disaster resilience.** In many fragile contexts where we operate, water is becoming scarcer, desertification and biodiversity loss are accelerating, and climate is changing. As a consequence, the poor continue to suffer the most from the climatic change and environmental degradation. Employment intensive investments Programme (EIIP) not only offer concrete measures to adapt to the impacts of climate change but are also able to promote a just transition to greener economies.
- I understand that in Tunisia there are also concrete possibilities for us to collaborate with JICA and others to offer job opportunities to address the increasing numbers of forest fires (118 forest fires in a period of 48 hours reducing livelihoods for 10% of the population). The ILO has worked with the National Agronomic Institute of Tunisia to evaluate the potential employment impact of the forestry sector and studies on the labour market have taken place to establish TVET centres with possible certification in this sector.
- **Employment and predictable sources of income are central for human security** and a human-centred approach. Jobs offer immediate economic security. However, *decent* jobs contribute not only to economy but also to social and health-related security through improved occupational safety and health measures and skills, environmental security through enhanced adaptation to climate change, food security through green works and resilient agricultural infrastructure, etc.

- I hope that today's event gave some good concrete examples of how the nexus of infrastructure and employment can be closely interlinked to the benefit of local communities, all essential to a human centred approach in the context of fragility.
- We hope to deepen our partnership with various development partners, including JICA, and we thank the Government of Japan for being supportive to the ILO and to these employment-intensive investment approaches, also supporting the capacity development of local institutions, to achieve human security where jobs are needed for peace and resilience, and as part of the humanitarian development peace nexus.

With that I thank you all and wish you a good afternoon and nice evening for those colleagues in Japan.