



**L** LABOUR **20**  
**JAPAN 2019**

# **L20 STATEMENT TO THE G20 LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT MINISTERS' MEETING**

**MATSUYAMA, JAPAN 1-2 SEPTEMBER 2019**

**“In order to address rising inequalities and where necessary declining labour income shares, we agree to undertake a mix of policies appropriate to our national circumstances including improving wage-setting mechanisms, institutions for social dialogue, social protection systems, employment services and active labour market policies.”**

*G20 Labour and Employment Ministers Declaration, Ankara, September 4, 2015*

**I**n 2019, we are observing the most extensive slowdown since 2011 affecting 70% of the global economy. International organisations warn that global debt is three times the global output and corporate bond debt now stands at double the amount before the financial crisis. At the same time, the climate crisis threatens the livelihoods of billions of people and has already forced millions to migrate. Scientists warn that the cost of inaction or further delays will be much higher, most especially for vulnerable people in developing, transition and industrial economies. As the economic growth model pushes more and more workers into precarious work and undermines labour market institutions, global income inequality continues to rise. Deepening wealth inequality even further, the benefits and profits of technological innovation and digitalisation are captured by a tiny elite.

## Taking Action to Realise the Goals of the ILO Centenary Declaration on the Future of Work

We urge the G20 Labour and Employment Ministers to lead global efforts to promote and implement the social contract that guarantees workers' rights irrespective of employment status or nationality, provides a minimum living wage in a safe working environment, increases employees' sovereignty over working time, and builds social justice into transitions in the changing nature of the future of work and the zero-carbon economy.

- **Establish a Labour Protection Floor.** The ILO Commission on the Future of Work called on governments to ensure a Universal Labour Guarantee. This was reflected in the ILO Centenary Declaration as a labour protection floor, and it applies to all workers. It should be accompanied by a guarantee for universal social protection from birth to old age.
- **Eliminate precariousness in employment.** Collective bargaining and social dialogue at all levels are essential to deliver fair wages and working conditions, advance equity, and manage structural changes, including those needed to implement a just transition to a zero-carbon economy and prepare the labour force for the digital economy. G20 governments must ratify and effectively implement all ILO Conventions on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and coordinate policy so as to encourage and require other governments to follow suit.
- **Discourage non-standards forms of work in the platform economy.** The L20 calls the Ministers to take early action to tackle bogus self-employment in the platform economy and limit its negative distributive effects. Measures should guarantee equal labour protection and collective bargaining in platforms, as in the rest of the economy, consistent with international labour standards that apply to all workers.
- **Remedy long working hours and increase workers' control over working time.** Reducing overtime and the right to "disconnect" would substantially improve workers' control over their hours and contribute to work-life balance.
- **Ensure access to lifelong learning for all.** Everyone should have access to good quality state funded Early Childhood Education and Care, fully funded Primary and Secondary schools, a good quality Technical Vocational Education and Training sector with secure institutions that develop capabilities in their students, an accessible higher education sector and learning opportunities throughout life.
- **Ensure the right to social protection, including pensions, in line with ILO Convention 102 and Recommendation 202.** Governments should be increasing efforts to expand social protection, including contributory social security and social protection floors in line with ILO standards, in order to deliver on international commitments to extend coverage, including the SDGs.
- **Realise full gender equality.** At the current rate of change, achieving the Brisbane target of increasing female labour market participation by 25% by 2025 appears unreachable. The G20 should increase efforts to attain this goal and enhance access to social protection, essential services and sustainable infrastructure for women and girls. Moreover, the G20 should lead the ratification and implementation of the newly adopted ILO Convention against Violence and Harassment (No. 190).
- **Advocate for an ambitious reform of the multilateral system as agreed in the ILO Centenary Declaration.** The Ministers should take action to give the ILO a central role in the multilateral system as outlined in the Centenary Declaration.

## Advocating for Progressive Economic and Social Policies for Decent Work and the Agenda 2030

The G20 Employment and Labour Ministers should take an initiative to increase the relevance of the wider G20 process and promote global policy coherence.

- **Advocate for an international framework for human-centred technological innovation.** The G20 should launch a multilateral effort outside the WTO to create a standard for personal data protection, access, and use, including workers' data; protect workers' rights in the face of workplace surveillance and often-discriminating algorithmically generated decisions; and regulate the taxation of digital activity.
- **Tackle tax evasion and ensuring progressive taxation.** Taxing the profits of multinational enterprises on the basis of a formula apportionment, which treats multinational enterprises and their subsidiaries as a single entity, would help limit profit shifting. A minimum global tax rate should be defined. Country-by-country public reporting and reinforcing national tax administrations with sufficient staff, physical resources and training programmes is essential.
- **Restore states' fiscal space to stabilize labour markets and pursue full employment.** The G20 Labour Ministers should call for a systematic review of regional fiscal rules, and instead of austerity, promote reflationary measures that would allow unemployment to fall further and wage growth to recover.
- **Increase public investment in the care economy and in infrastructure.** Investing in the care economy and in infrastructure has a great potential for decent job creation and formalisation as well as achieving national goals like cutting emissions and decarbonisation.
- **Invest in public services to promote a better redistribution of wealth.** Public services guarantee the general interest, the equal rights and treatment of all citizens and are the foundation of social cohesion. Essential to fight against all social, economic and environmental inequalities, public services allow a redistribution of wealth and ensure the role of a social buffer. G20 governments should renew their commitment to design and finance quality public services.
- **Promote a Just Transition to a zero-carbon economy.** Governments have to establish and guarantee social dialogue processes at national, regional and sectoral level to ensure that the Just Transition measures agreed are adequate to build people's trust in ambitious climate policies.
- **Protect migrant workers' rights.** Minimum living wages should be ensured for all workers and not depend upon one's migration status. Migrant workers should be informed in their first language or in a language they understand of the rights and rules concerning labour-related laws, social security systems and how to join a union.
- **Eliminate Modern Slavery.** The Ministers should step up efforts to implement the 2018 G20 Strategy to eradicate child labour, forced labour, human trafficking and modern slavery in the world of work.
- **Formalise the informal economy, in line with ILO Recommendation 204, and extend labour protections to informal workers.** Governments should develop comprehensive national action plans to improve the quality of employment, taking into consideration sectoral, regional, national specificities and strengths – including clear goals and staged implementation, strategies with peer review processes and the participation of social partners, as agreed by the 2015 LEMM.
- **Require human rights due diligence in supply chains.** Trade unions call on the Labour Ministers to require under national law, mandatory human rights due diligence throughout the supply chain, robust grievance and access to remedy to ensure the full implementation of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs).

## Improve G20 Policy Coordination and Deliver on All Past Commitments

- **Implement all past commitments.** The G20 governments must implement national policies that are consistent with their international commitments, including those made in previous G20 forums. The L20 urges all future Presidencies to make implementation a key priority and dedicate time to establish self-review, peer review and independent review processes, as well as assessing the outcomes of G20 policy coordination.
- **Be institutionally creative for policy coherence.** Labour Ministers should resume meetings with Finance Ministers and the Employment Working Group should work closely with the Framework Working Group. Further, the Employment Working Group should strengthen the work of the Sub-group on Income Share with a view to ensure coherent global action to reduce income inequality and achieve the fulfilment of SDG 8 on Decent Work by its universally promised deadline of 2030. There is a compelling argument to maintain policy coordination with Education Ministers established under Argentina's Presidency. In order to enhance its policy resources available within the multilateral system, the Working Group should invite the UNCTAD to participate in Employment Working Groups and the Ministers' Meeting in order to integrate important policy advice.
- **Upgrade labour representation in the G20.** The L20 calls the G20, beyond the Labour Ministers' Meeting, to establish labour representation in other Ministerial and Leaders' meetings and take into account the inputs of workers – studies, policy recommendations, good practices, and experiences that demonstrate effective social partnership.

There is a real danger of an impending financial crisis that can further damage the world economy and working people, and it is essential and urgent that G20 Leaders and Labour Ministers anticipate and design measures, based on the lessons of the 2008 crisis, to limit the damage on workers and communities, and lead to a new world order – one that serves social justice, equality, and sustainability.



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