



**High Level Event of the 73rd General Assembly on  
The Future of Work with Decent Work**

**Remarks by**

**H.E. Ambassador Inga Rhonda King  
President of the Economic and Social Council  
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President of the General Assembly,  
Secretary-General of the United Nations,  
Mr. Guy Ryder,  
Ms. Sharan Burrow,  
Mr. Erol Kiresepi,  
Excellencies,  
Colleagues,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am honoured to join you at this High-level Event of the 73<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly on the occasion of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the International Labour Organization. I congratulate ILO on this important milestone and commend its leadership in promoting social justice and prosperity for all.

The founding of the ILO is based on the idea that “universal and lasting peace can be established only if it is based upon social justice”. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development envisages a world of universal respect for human rights and human dignity, the rule of law, justice, equality and non-discrimination.

Decent work for all has a key role to play in achieving sustainable development and the dignity of people. This is highlighted by Sustainable Development Goal 8 which aims to “promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all”. The recognition that work, and not just any work but “Decent Work”, is a cornerstone of social justice and peace, continues to demonstrate the relevance of ILO in the twenty-first century, a time in which the world of work is radically changing.

Technological changes and innovation, which could be a driver of growth and development, are also transforming existing job profiles and related skill requirements. Together with changes in demographics, globalization, climate change, economic trends, social change and environmental concerns, they will impact the world of work.

Today's workers need an entirely different set of skills and a new system of education and learning to adjust to a constantly changing labour market. A core concern now and in the future is helping workers adjust to constant change and disruption.

Our focus must also be on reducing inequalities and fostering greater inclusion as envisioned in the 2030 Agenda. Your discussions will help find ways to respond to opportunities and the negative consequences associated with changing labour markets.

Excellencies,

2019 is an important year for the ILO, not only because of its centenary, but also because the High-level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development, convened under the auspices of ECOSOC in July, will conduct an in-depth review of SDG 8. And I commend ILO for taking the lead in this review. The HLPF in July will also be reviewing other SDGs that have strong interlinkages with SDG8. These include SDG4 on education, SDG10 on reducing inequalities, SDG13 on climate change, SDG16 on peaceful societies and robust institutions and SDG17 on means of implementation.

During the July HLPF, 50 countries will be presenting Voluntary National Reviews during the July session. These national reports will allow assessments of progress and identify challenges at the national, regional and global level.

Distinguished delegates,

ILO has been an active and engaged partner of the Economic and Social Council, particularly in promoting the centrality of job creation and social protection as critical to inclusive growth and sustainable development. At the same time, ECOSOC and its functional and regional commissions are an important link in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Labour issues are always an important item for these functional commissions. This year, for example, social protection has been addressed through the priority themes of both the Commission on the Status of Women and the Commission for Social Development.

And yesterday, we just concluded the ECOSOC Youth Forum, which had a dedicated session to review the implementation of SDG8. We witnessed the enthusiasm and commitment of over 800 young participants to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs during

the Youth Forum. And I am grateful to the President of the General Assembly for giving them an opportunity to share the key messages and recommendations from the Youth Forum during this high-level meeting.

Excellencies,

The expectations are high this year. In addition to the July HLPF under the auspices of ECOSOC, we will have an HLPF Summit under the auspices of the General Assembly in September (*as the President of the General Assembly noted in her opening*). We must sustain the momentum around the HLPF as we do need a robust follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda to ensure its implementation is on track. And we must commit to accelerating action in implementing the SDGs at the HLPF Summit.

This high-level meeting on the Future of Work, therefore, is very timely. And the outcome of your discussions will be a key contribution to both the HLPFs.

The Economic and Social Council will continue to work towards making decent work a reality for all and to realizing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, leaving no one behind.

Thank you.