

2019 ASEAN LABOUR MINISTERS' STATEMENT ON THE FUTURE OF WORK: EMBRACING TECHNOLOGY FOR INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

Adopted in Singapore on 29 April 2019

WE, the Labour Ministers of Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (hereinafter referred to as "ASEAN"), namely Brunei Darussalam, the Kingdom of Cambodia, the Republic of Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, the Republic of the Philippines, the Republic of Singapore, the Kingdom of Thailand and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam on the occasion of the Singapore Conference on the Future of Work, Embracing Technology; Inclusive Growth – Special Session of ASEAN Labour Ministers on Future of Work held in Singapore on 29 April 2019;

WELCOMING the International Labour Organization's Future of Work Centenary Initiative, particularly the launch of the Global Commission's Report, "Work for a brighter future";

REITERATING our support for the Future of Work Centenary Initiative by responding, as one ASEAN Community, to the recommendations in the Global Commission's Report;

REAFFIRMING our shared commitment to address common challenges facing the ASEAN Community in promoting inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all, in support of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, ASEAN Community Vision 2025, and the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Blueprint 2025;

COGNISANT of transformative changes, such as technological advances, demographic transition and the rise of the green economy, that offer both opportunities and challenges for workers and businesses in the ASEAN Community;

RECOGNISING therefore the importance of ASEAN Member States making further efforts in preparing our workers and businesses for, and protecting them against, the impact of these transformative changes on the future of work;

AFFIRMING the purposes of ASEAN as stipulated in the ASEAN Charter to, among others, develop human resources and promote sustainable development;

FURTHER AFFIRMING the commitment in the ASEAN Leaders' Vision for a Resilient and Innovative ASEAN adopted at the 32nd ASEAN Summit to embrace the opportunities afforded by new technologies and innovation arising from the digital revolution while building resilience against potential disruptive effects;

WHILE COMMENDING the on-going support and work of ASEAN Member States under the ASEAN Labour Ministers' Work Programme 2016-2020 that aims to build and ASEAN workforce with enhanced competitiveness and engaged in safe and decent work derived from productive employment, harmonious and progressive workplaces, and adequate social protection;

AND EMPHASISING the value and important role that tripartite partners and social dialogue continue to have in ensuring mutually beneficial economic progress, and contributing towards adaptable workers and businesses for, and protecting them against, the changes in the world of work;

DO HEREBY:

Strive to undertake the following actions, taking into account the respective capacities and resources of the Member States, to prepare the ASEAN workforce and businesses for a future of work, while recognising that the impact of the transitions may differ among ASEAN's diverse economies, sectors and groups of workers:

1. Strengthen capacity of public and private institutions to prepare the workforce for the future of work and better enable them to take advantage of new technology and participate in the global labour market through closer cooperation with industries, improving technical and vocational education and training (TVET) standards, and using TVET to skill, upskill and re-skill our workers;
2. Increase participation of women, people with disabilities, elderly and youth in, including but not limited to, science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM)-related careers by adopting policies, initiatives and trainings on technological skills and digital platforms, for these groups to facilitate their access to decent work;
3. Encourage and support efforts of businesses, including micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, to invest in decent work according to international standards and to harness and manage technology which will improve the quantity and quality of jobs in existing and emerging sectors of employment;
4. Share best practices among ASEAN Member States on implementing responsive policies and initiatives to address the changing nature of employment relationships, including labour market information systems, to facilitate job searches by ASEAN's workforce;
5. Promote fiscally sustainable public and private national social protection initiatives in ASEAN Member States to uphold or improve our workers' well-being and improve their retirement adequacy;
6. Support efforts of employers' and workers' organisations in the development of necessary capabilities for collective representation and social dialogue to better represent and balance employers' and workers' interests in an evolving labour market and landscape;
7. Strengthen tripartite relations to enable all partners to work collectively towards continued sustainable development of the ASEAN Community and creation of decent work for our workforce;
8. Enhance collaboration with relevant stakeholders, such as other ASEAN sectoral bodies, to facilitate a coordinated ASEAN response in preparing the ASEAN workforce and businesses; and
9. Increase cooperation between ASEAN and ASEAN's external partners, including the International Labour Organization, to facilitate sharing of models, best practices, and experiences in preparing workers to adapt to future jobs.

We task the ASEAN Senior Labour Officials Meeting (SLOM) with the support of the SLOM Working Group on Progressive Labour Practices to Enhance the Competitiveness of ASEAN (SLOM-WG) to implement this Statement, including mobilizing appropriate resources, subject to the national laws, regulations and policies of Member States.

Done in Singapore, this Twenty-Ninth Day of April in the Year Two Thousand and Nineteen, in a single original copy in the English language.

For Brunei Darussalam:
H.E. PEHIN ABU BAKAR APONG
Minister of Home Affairs

For the Kingdom of Cambodia:
H.E. HENG SOUR
Secretary of State of Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training

For the Republic of Indonesia:
H.E. M. HANIF DHAKIRI
Minister of Manpower

For the Lao People's Democratic Republic:
H.E. BAYKHAM KHATTIYA
Deputy Minister of Labour and Social Welfare

For Malaysia:
H.E. M. KULASEGARAN
Minister of Human Resources

For the Republic of Union of Myanmar:
H.E. THEIN SWE
Union Minister of Labour, Immigration and Population

For the Republic of the Philippines:
H.E. SILVERSTRE H. BELLO III
Secretary of the Philippines' Department of Labour and Employment

For the Republic of Singapore:
H.E. JOSEPHIE TEO
Minister of Manpower

For the Kingdom of Thailand:
POLICE GENERAL AMNAT UNARDNGAM
Vice Minister of Labour

For the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam:
H.E. DOAN MAU DIEP
Vice Minister of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs