

106th ILO Conference 2017

Plenary Sitting Monday 12 June 2017 10.00 am

Speech by Ms Catelene Passchier, Worker Delegate from the Netherlands

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Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Director General in this year's report 'Work in a changing climate: The Green Initiative' sets out to further develop the engagement of the ILO and its constituents in the fight against climate change.

He does so with an appropriate sense of urgency.

Let me begin by complimenting the DG with the Report, expressing our support and recommending the adoption of its suggestions for the road forward.

Trade unions in the Netherlands agree, that sustainable economic growth, fighting climate change and good quality jobs can go together.

At the same time recognize the complexity of the relation between action against climate change and decent employment.

The distribution of benefits and costs of the transition to a green economy is uneven, and has winners and losers.

Therefore, the Dutch trade unions attach great importance to the involvement of trade unions in the decisions on the process of transition.

We recently participated in tripartite negotiations on sustainable energy and the circular economy, to make sure that these transitions take place in a way that is fair to the workers involved.

And we promote fair solutions for the much needed transitions in the construction and transport sectors.

We would like to encourage the ILO to strengthen the sectoral approach on climate change, and to mainstream the issue of just transition as a cross cutting driver in all areas of its work.

Linking the Green Initiative to the work on Global Supply Chains can lead to creative and effective new solutions.

The transition to a green economy is only one of the major changes that workers are facing.

The increase in precarious jobs with insecurity of employment and income makes it more difficult for working people to support the transition to a green economy.

As the report states, skills training and adequate social security should be available to workers whose jobs are lost in the transition, or who are victims of the consequences of climate change.

But this is not enough to build the necessary support.

Employment policy, skills development and social security must also address the other insecurities.

Trade unions in the Netherlands welcome the progress made in the development of instruments to combat climate change and to promote a just transition.

We strongly support the multilateral approach and welcome the commitments of the ILO to the Paris Agreement.

However, not all instruments developed are being used by governments, and not all financial commitments are substantiated.

Progress is too slow.

Closer monitoring is needed, and we fully agree with the suggestion to have an ILO instrument on Just Transition.

But climate change and all its consequences is not the only major change our world is facing.

Therefore, integration in the other Centenary Initiatives and especially the Future of Work discussion is necessary.

Also the Women at Work initiative should be linked to the Green Initiative.
The consequences of climate change for women must get special priority.

Finally, we thank the Director General for his annual Report on the Situation of Workers of the occupied Arab territories.

This year we see the 50th anniversary of the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories.

This occupation must end.

We therefore support the calls for international engagement to end the occupation and restore the Palestinian rights.

Each year, the consequences of this occupation for Palestinian workers and for the Palestinian economy are getting more suffocating.

This year's Report pays special attention to the vulnerability of Palestinian workers to exploitation when they work in Israel or in the Israeli settlements.

We commend a strong ILO engagement in the promotion of decent work for Palestinian workers.

Thank you very much for your attention.