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(CIDI)



**XX INTER-AMERICAN CONFERENCE OF
MINISTERS OF LABOR (IACML)**

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**DECLARATION OF THE BUSINESS TECHNICAL
ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON LABOR MATTERS (CEATAL)**

IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE XX INTER-AMERICAN CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS OF LABOR (IACML) OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES (OAS), held on December 7 and 8, 2017, the Employers of the Americas, represented through the Business Technical Advisory Committee on Labor Matters (CEATAL), welcome the fact that the XX IACML has been tasked with reflection on its theme “BUILDING ON OUR ACHIEVEMENTS AND ADVANCING TOWARDS SOCIAL JUSTICE, DECENT WORK AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE AMERICAS”.

To contribute to the XX IACML, CEATAL hereby presents the following Declaration:
New technologies have significantly changed production and service delivery systems and thus the workplace and workforce by transforming the types and availability of jobs as well as the ways in which businesses plan, design and organize work.

The debate on the new world of work in the Americas is complex and diverse, and is different from sub region to sub region and country to country.

Profound transformations have taken place in the mature economies of the Americas. However, many countries in the hemisphere find themselves at a crossroad and the factors that will determine their future are many. A young and growing workforce – more urban, flexible and mobile, more technologically prepared, with greater participation by women, better educated, and more assertive – is demanding infrastructure, health care, education, services, and opportunities for work and personal growth.

Progress can and must be shaped in both developed and developing countries of the hemisphere not only to seize the opportunities but also to help those less willing or able to adapt to face the challenges.

The fourth industrial revolution can help the Americas to maximize its potential.

In this regard, CEATAL calls on the Ministers of Labour of the Americas, in coordination with other ministries and institutions and with collaboration from the OAS, the International Labor Organization (ILO), and other relevant international organization:

1. to **promote clear and consistent regulations while reducing bureaucracy for businesses to operate and innovate**. Simple, transparent, flexible and predictable legal frameworks and fewer structural barriers enable workplace flexibility and reduce tax burdens to facilitate transitions from informality to formality and to promote various forms of work. In this regard, CEATAL welcomes the commitment of the Ministers of Labour of the Americas as

stated in the Bridgetown Declaration (para 16) to policies that promote and facilitate the development of productive, competitive and sustainable enterprises, including micro, small and medium sized enterprises (MSMEs), recognizing their contribution to employment generation, economic growth and social inclusion and the determination to work towards the creation and maintenance of an enabling environment for the establishment and growth of sustainable enterprises.

2. to **urgently invest in education and skills development**. Ambition in the educational policies in the hemisphere is needed. The education sector should work much more closely with business to ensure that programmes are continuously updated according to real needs. This is very often not the case due to inexplicable prejudices and obsolete frameworks. The Americas needs a true change of paradigm in education models and vocational training to be able to embrace the new requirements of industry 4.0, robotics, artificial intelligence and the new realities of the productive world and the world of work. Technology should be utilized to maximize access to and delivery of quality skills-based education. This includes formal, institutional education and life-long learning. More real-time and dynamic information and data of employable skills is essential. Governments should identify jointly with the business community the skills needs of each country of the hemisphere and establish in cooperation with the social partners vocational training programs that instruct workers in skills that make them competitive in the new economy.
3. To **promote entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship education**. Much greater efforts must be made to encourage entrepreneurship, particularly among the young and women. This can be achieved through the development and implementation of ambitious plans that provide growth strategies for entrepreneurs such as innovation zones/hubs, financing, training etc. This also includes the reduction of administrative, regulatory and financial barriers and the linking of entrepreneurship to education.

CEATAL highlights and thanks the valuable and ongoing technical and political support of the International Organization of Employers (IOE) for coordinating and ensuring that the business perspective is reflected in the different activities, documents and political agreements made during the IACML.

CEATAL similarly highlights the valuable technical support provided by the Bureau of Employers' Activities of the ILO (ACT/EMP).

Finally, CEATAL thanks the Regional Office of the ILO for Latin America and the Caribbean for the support it provided so that the CEATAL delegation, with representatives from all the sub-regions, can participate in and contribute to the XX IACML.