

IOE-Business Africa Enterprise Forum, Algiers, 17-18 February 2019 – Intervention on: How EOs in Africa can have their say in the global policy discourse in the ILO and beyond.

Mr Mthunzi Mdwaba, IOE Vice-President to the ILO

Greetings to all, bonjour, habari. Colleagues this is a great day, we thank the Algerians for hosting us as well as the International Organisation of Employers, together with Business Africa.

You will be aware that this is the great occasion of the centenary celebration of the ILO. In relation to the centenary celebrations the global Commission on the Future of Work was set up in which we had 28 members from all over the world, constituted of colleagues from the informal sector, from the business environment, from trade unions, from academia and all walks of life and included in the 28 were also the Ex officio commissioners such as the leaders of the workers, the leader of the governments, the leader of the employers, represented by myself, as well as the Director-General of the ILO.

Having finished this process on the 22nd of January we can very happily report that we have a very very good report that has a number of fresh perspectives, really signalling the amount of debate and discussions that we had and the generosity we had from all the colleagues who participated who gave freely of their time and we're energetically wanting to see the shaping of a better world. The most important part of course with all of this as aspirational as the report is and you will have received or will receive the guidance notes that we as the IOE have put together for all our employers and the private sector to guide you on how to proceed in preparing for the International Labor Conference. You will see that the majority of the report is something we support, it's something we believe can truly contribute to shaping a better world.

However there are areas of the report such as the universal labor guarantee, time sovereignty, the lack of mentioning enough of the role of the private sector that we think needs to be strengthened and I would encourage you to really spend a lot of time on that as well as something called an international digital platform that we do not support. Very important as we move forward is the role that the ILO must play in skills, it is our belief that the ILO needs to be a thought leader in the leveraging of the environment from a skilling, upskilling, reskilling point of view and we believe that we already have a center such as the Turin center of the ILO which is a very easy kind of captive audience that we already have attended by 187 member States.

We believe that informality which Africa, as our continent, has in abundance is a serious matter that needs to be looked into as we move forward. How do we deal with informality? Have we been dealing with informality correctly in the past? Is the route that we've taken the right way? Especially as you talk about Social Protection, as you talk about how we are able to look after all our people, is this the right way to go?

We must of course also look a lot at how we look at attitudes, attitudinal change is probably one of the biggest areas we need to look at and this relates to how we as business, from a human rights point of view, in terms of responsible business conduct, we are able to embrace and integrate human rights into the way we deal with people, into the way we behave as good corporate citizens, as leaders of business in our communities. How do we ensure that we have good attitudinal change towards how we approach the youth, how we integrate the youth, how we integrate issues relating

to women, how we integrate a changed world that is able to impact our people a lot better as we move forward.

The future of work is about how does Africa take a front seat, how does Africa lead, how does Africa make sure that it's not left behind? This is an opportunity for us not to be just consumers as we have been in the past. How do we change the systems that we have when we know that they are not working? How do we as I've used an example of Black Panther and the fictitious city of Wakanda that approaches things differently through technology, thriving with technology, thriving with working together. How do we ensure that we have a better world is ultimately what we need to come up with, an Africa playing a significant leading role in it. Thank you, best of luck, enjoy.