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## **IOE-DELOITTE-CIP DIGITAL CONFERENCE ON SKILLS AND JOBS TRANSFORMATION**

**1 SEPTEMBER 2020 (13:30-15:00 CEST)**

### **WELCOMING REMARKS BY IOE PRESIDENT MR EROL KIRESEPI**

Hello good afternoon, good morning or good evening where you are.

I am very pleased to see all of you again, joining us virtually from different parts of the world.

We cannot emphasize enough the concern of the international business community on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on jobs and on business operations. This is confirmed by the alarming data coming from the International Labour Organization, World Bank and OECD indicating the slowdown of economic activity and massive job losses in 2020-2021. It will take another decade for economic recovery unless policymakers make a concerted, collected effort to mitigate the damages made to full and productive employment.

The IOE is the largest private sector network in the world, encompassing more than 50 million companies in 147 countries. The severe economic impact caused by the Covid-19 crisis, has put strong pressures on various aspects of employment, including skills development. It is now more important than ever, for all stakeholders to come together in efforts to minimize the negative impact and ensure a prompt economic recovery. SDG 17 'Partnerships for Goals' needs to be strengthened at all levels and determined collaboration between the private and public sectors needs to be promoted and enhanced. This can be strengthened with the help of the multilateral and tripartite systems.

It is within this context, that the IOE is undertaking efforts to bring together various stakeholders from the business world, key policymakers and experts at the international level. The sharing of best practices, policy guidance and recommendations will help to, slowly but

surely, restore the confidence businesses need to restart their operations, especially the small and medium enterprises.

We will focus our discussions today on how education, skills development and training can help policymakers lay the right foundations for a strong, sustained and socially inclusive recovery.

As jobs are being transformed, new ways of working are being adapted and rapid uptake of technology are taking place - a mix of different skills will be needed by the workforce. Mastering technical and social skills is important because it helps workers to be more employable. It helps companies to be more innovative, productive, competitive and resilient. It helps countries to have more responsible, agile and creative citizens. Employers agree that it would be a mistake to undermine the importance of skills development and capacity building. We all need the right mindset to embrace and anticipate change.

As Co-Chair of the B20 Future of Work and Skills Task Force, I am committed, together with the IOE members, to strengthen the global skills agenda for a better and robust future of work. It is vital to build confidence, dynamism and resilience in labour markets. Together, we must provide an enabling environment for businesses to grow, thrive and innovate. And of course, we must boost employability at scale through education transformation and lifelong learning.

We will also take this opportunity to launch a *Future Skills Assessment* report to help policymakers navigate through this crisis and through the Future of Work. Special thanks go to the Qatar Government, Qatar Chamber of Commerce & Industry, the European Union, Deloitte and the Peer Review Group.

I would also like to thank Deloitte and CIP for partnering with us at this event. I am looking forward to the interventions by all of our special guests today and the questions from participants.

Thank you all for being with us. Back to you, Roberto.