

AFRICAN SOCIAL PARTNERS' JOBS & SKILLS SUMMIT

ALGIERS, ALGERIA, 22-23 APRIL 2017

SUMMARY REPORT

The African Social Partners' Summit in Algiers agreed on a call for action delivered to African Ministers of Labour and Employment

At a two-day jobs and skills summit in Algiers on 22-23 April, the African social partners agreed on a call for action on employment which was delivered to the African Union Ministers of Labour and Employment on 26 April.

Jointly organised by the General Confederation of Algerian Enterprises (CGEA), the International Organisation of Employers (IOE) and the Jobs for Africa Foundation, the summit had the support of Business Africa, the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the European Union (EU), the African Development Bank (AfDB), and the Group of African, Caribbean & Pacific States (ACP).

CGEA President Saïda Neghza opened this high-level summit alongside union leaders, Abdelmadjid Sidi-Saïd, Secretary-General of the General Union of Algerian Workers (UGTA) and Arezki Mehzoud, Secretary-General of the Organisation for African Trade Union Unity (OATUU) in a further demonstration of the close cooperation, and expression of the joint vision, underpinning the Blueprint for Jobs in Africa, endorsed by the social partners in Casablanca in December 2015. The CGEA's former President, Habib Yousfi, also intervened, describing the youth unemployment crisis as "scandalous".

A top labour ministry official represented HE Abdelmalek Sellal, Algeria's Prime Minister, and congratulated the organisers on the relevance and timeliness of the summit, welcomed the guests to his country and underscored the importance of social dialogue and tripartism, key elements in the country's National and Economic Pact for Growth.

The IOE's Secretary-General Linda Kromjong highlighted the symbolic nature of the venue – Algeria's top Hotel Management School – which was providing young people from all over francophone Africa with the employability skills needed to meet labour market needs.

Six distinct sessions discussed strategies for inclusive growth; the role of employment and competitiveness pacts; key elements of a competitive business climate that promotes enterprise development and the creation of decent jobs; strategies for bridging the skills mismatch; youth and women's entrepreneurship; and how to proceed with the tripartite implementation of the Blueprint for Jobs in Africa using as a starting point the Action Plan, which was the outcome document from the social partners' December 2016 meeting in Tunis hosted by UTICA.

On day two, sub-regional working group sessions had the task of considering a list of African Development Bank projects around Africa, and were urged to identify areas where the social partners could be involved with ministries at national level to enhance implementation and outcomes.

The francophone groups of countries identified projects supporting SME development, with special focus on youth- and women-led agri-enterprises in the rural economy; and enhancing women's access to their economic and social rights by starting their own companies. The anglophone group chose to

focus on Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), favouring an evidence-based approach that prioritizes policy design to elevate the status of vocation training, and to support recognition and accreditation. Agri-business, manufacturing, services, renewable energies and infrastructure were identified as job-rich sectors meriting the involvement of the social partners.

Day two concluded with the endorsement by the social partners of a call for action on employment to the African Union. Based on the Blueprint for Jobs in Africa, the recommendations were presented on 26 April by Jobs for Africa Foundation President, Jamal Belahrach, to the African Ministers of Labour and Employment. Prior interventions were made on 24 and 25 April by the IOE's Senior Adviser for Africa, Frederick Muia during the Second Meeting of the Specialized Technical Committee on Social Development, Labour and Employment.

The Algiers Call for Action takes up the social partners' longstanding argument for transforming the demographic dividend represented by Africa's youth into a competitive advantage that contributes to inclusive growth, job creation, sustainable development and security on the continent.
