

Reforming Multilateralism with a Social Justice Agenda

Speech IOE President Erol Kiresepi

L20 – Summit

30 August 2019 Tokyo Prince Hotel

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Dear Guy

Dear Sharan

Dear Colleagues and Friends from the L20

Thank you very much for the invitation to your L20 Summit. It has become a good tradition that we invite each other to our respective summit and events. This is not only an important sign of social dialogue, but also offers the opportunity to exchange views before the G20 Labour Ministerial.

We had the discussion on reforming multilateralism just recently at the B7-Summit, and I would like to reiterate what I said at the panel in Aix-en-Provence, that **we don't need a new international governance structure. We have the institutions we need, most importantly the ILO.** What we need to do is to strengthen them to promote inclusive growth, economic prosperity and social resilience.

In view of the brevity of time allow me to make three points to elaborate this a bit further:

Firstly, we agreed on **key actions for the ILO in the Centenary Declaration**, so that the Organisation can better fulfil its mandate on decent work and social justice, including that a higher priority be given to skills development, the recognition of the unique role of the private sector, the emphasis on productivity and productive employment, the role of entrepreneurship, and, most importantly, the need for a proper business environment as a driver for decent work. The philosophy is that sustainable economic growth, based on productivity and an enabling environment for business together with decent work, are the pillars that underpin social justice. That is also the underlying philosophy of SDG 8, in which “economic growth”, “full

and productive employment” and “decent work for all” are fully interlinked. But believe me, we are also firmly committed to the social agenda. As agreed in the Declaration all workers should enjoy adequate protection in accordance with the Decent Work Agenda, especially regarding the respect for their fundamental rights. We will intensify our efforts with you to make progress on this area.

Secondly, despite the fact that we have with the ILO, the G20 and G7, the Agenda 2030, a fair amount of international institutions, mechanisms, cooperation and coordination on issues linked to decent work and social justice, and despite the fact that many commitments and pledges have been made at international level, progress towards SDG 8 is sluggish. The key challenge is to ensure compliance and efficient national implementation of these international commitments. We need more international action to support national action. **We don't need mere formal commitments at international level which add little, but more and better follow up at national and local level.** If we want to strengthen the multilateral systems to ensure it delivers on decent work and social justice, we have to focus on the issue of implementation and follow-up.

Allow me in this context also a small remark on the Alliance 8.7 report on child and forced labour in global supply chains, which Guy will present at the labour ministerial. The research by ILO, IOM, UNICEF and OECD shows that for instance **whereas 9 percent of child labour in Sub-Saharan Africa is linked to Global Supply Chains, 91 percent is in the domestic economy. It is there, at the national and local context where we need to achieve much more efficient change.** This does not mean that we deny the role of global supply chains can play in supporting this action

Thirdly, **we as social partners can make a difference - in the multilateral systems as well as at national level.** The issue of migrant workers` rights in Qatar and child and forced labour in Uzbekistan are only two examples where our joint action as IOE and ITUC triggered change on the ground. The full engagement of Social Partners is something we can offer to the multilateral system. We need to be more vocal defining our joint role. This is also the reason why IOE and ITUC aim for getting observer status vis-a-vis the UN General Assembly. The stronger involvement of social partners in the wider UN system becomes even more important in view of the UN reform and the efforts to implement the Agenda 2030. We, as Social Partners, have to work jointly at international, regional and national levels together to

contribute to the implementation of the Agenda 2030. If we, employers and workers, don't engage together, we will never be able to reach the SDGs,

Business and Labour have also a long-standing history in working together outside the ILO by delivering joint messages to the G7 and G20. With the joint IOE/BIAC-ITUC/TUAC statement together with the G7, we have this year the first tripartite statement in the G7, which can serve as a model for the future and for the G20.

Thank you.