



# G20 Labour & Employment Ministers meeting

**L20 Address by Sharan Burrow**

**10 September 2020**

Ministers, Leaders of International Organisations,

COVID-19 is far from over and as the world faces the probability of a massive global recession the global workforce is in trouble. The social contract is broken, with historic levels of inequality, 60% of jobs being informal, including new internet-mediated and platform business jobs, and growing in precarity. Women and young people were increasingly excluded, migrant workers denied rights and with unliveable minimum wages and declining collective bargaining being a casualty of a 'profit first' economy, this must change. And that was before the 400 million jobs lost and the 1.6 billion informal workers facing destitution.

**We need your leadership and support for a new social contract that builds recovery and resilience against future global shocks.**

We are all committed to acting collectively to save lives and that must include workers who are on the frontlines whether it's health, production, transport or key services. Workplace safety and protection must be a priority.

**Recognising COVID-19 as a workplace disease should be a collective priority for this meeting.**

And as we look to save lives, we must include income support through social protection for those without work in the formal and informal sectors. National action for health, jobs and social protection is critical and we urge you to maintain and increase your efforts. International coordination too is crucial, solidarity for the poorest and most vulnerable of nations so we do not lose lives from destitution.

**We ask again that you signal to Finance Ministers and the G20 leaders your support for a global fund for social protection to initiate comprehensive support in those countries.**

Global governance has never been more important for jobs and business continuity. A Labour protection floor with rights, living wages, safe work and social protection for all workers irrespective of employment arrangements in line with the ILO Centenary Declaration and the UN SDGs. While too many SMEs and vulnerable supply chains are failing the explosion of telework and exploitation by global technology companies are two other areas for your attention. Labour market regulation, including formalisation of informal work, is now vital to avert the collapse of labour markets. In too many countries, rights and compliance are increasingly ignored with business models that facilitate dehumanising exploitation and risk lives.

The work plans you have laid out in previous years for inclusion and equality of women and young people, raising labour income share with minimum living wages and strengthened collective bargaining, rights in supply chains with due diligence measures, formalising informal work, and others must not be abandoned as inequality and desperation is rendered even worse with COVID19.

Job retention and wage support schemes must be kept going, and the Youth Plan must be decisively implemented.

## **Past G20 commitments are foundations for rebuilding decent work**

This meeting comes at a critical time when we must continue the fight for lives but also lay the foundations for a recovery that with a focus on jobs. This means investment in jobs, investment in infrastructure, industry policy for climate transition, public transport, health, education and care, development and repair of eco-systems and sustainable agriculture as well as digital connectivity for all. Your partnership with finance ministers is critical for vital investment in jobs, associated business continuity and financing the recovery with social protection and Just Transition. Past commitments must be met, with the goals of more equal labour markets and sustainability.

## **Labour and Finance Ministers must work together.**

Only jobs and social protection - inclusive labour markets - can rebuild hope and the trust of working people everywhere, even as we simultaneously take urgent action on climate.

As leaders with the power to establish the pathways for recovery that invest in jobs, protect rights and living wages, to rebuild strong labour market institutions for all workers in line with past commitments and to ensure universal social protection, we ask that you put Just Transition at the heart of recovery through social dialogue. Workers and employers with you must help design a future of just and sustainable work.

## **Let's start today.**