

Closing Plenary
The 12th Summit of the Global Forum on Migration and
Development (GFMD)
Quito, 23 January 2020

Closing statement
Mr Juan Felipe Hunt Ortiz
ILO Regional Director Latin America and the Caribbean, a.i.

H.E. Amb. Santiago Chávez, outgoing Chair of the 2019 GFMD

H.E. Mr. Nasser bin Thani Al Hamli, Minister of Human Resources and Emiratisation, United Arab Emirates, Incoming GFMD 2020 Chair
H.E. Mr. Nasser bin Thani Al Hamli, Minister of Human Resources and Emiratisation, United Arab Emirates;

H.E. Amb. Cristian Espinoza, Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility of the Republic of Ecuador

H.E. Ms. Maria-Noel Vaeza, Regional Director for the Americas and the Caribbean, UN Women

Dear friends,

First of all, I would like to congratulate the Government of Ecuador for the brilliant organization of the Global Forum on Migration and Development. It has been an intense and rich summit that touched upon many aspects of the migratory phenomenon, included new actors in the discussion (such as the local authorities) and deepened the role of others (such as the private sector).

ILO has greatly valued the process of the GFMD process since its inception, not only because it has provided a key means for government dialogue, but as well a mechanism to promote partnerships among all relevant actors including on labour migration which is central to ILO's mandate.

As a tripartite organization, ILO encourages social dialogue in the development and implementation of labour migration policies. This brings durability and legitimacy to programmes that support decent work.

Most migration is directly or indirectly related to the world of work, where there are now 164 million migrant workers or 70% of all working age migrants, and nearly half are women.

Decent work deficits, humanitarian issues and other challenges such as climate change exacerbate these situations and will continue to drive migration across the world.

International migration governance is indeed complex, and not less so when it remains fragmented, with increasing political polarization. Yet, when it is properly governed, it can contribute important benefits towards labour markets, economic growth for business and development benefits for migrants and their families.

ILO's standards are particularly important in this regard as they lay the foundation for achieving decent work for all, including for realizing fundamental rights and freedoms, reducing vulnerability and exploitation.

When migration and employment policies are well coordinated, we can make progress in eliminating recruitment fees and costs for migrant workers which reduce their savings and, in worst cases, lead to human trafficking and debt bondage.

Women migrant workers can be placed in particularly vulnerable situations, facing a higher risk of discrimination in wages, working conditions and opportunities.

The ILO welcomes the discussions at this Summit:

- On the importance of regional and bilateral agreements for labour migration and migrant workers' protection; and
- On the recognition and certification of skills.

The ILO is very much willing to strengthen its activities in the context of the GFMD and as member of the UN Network on Migration, and to assist States moving to implement the GCM and the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

The ILO also supports the initiatives that have taken place in the framework of this Global Forum over the past year towards countering the negative rhetoric surrounding migration.

The ILO shares the view that partnerships among Governments, academia, media, mayors and migrants, as well as with world of work actors --business, employers' and workers organizations and trade unions --are critical in shaping evidence-based dialogue and public perceptions.

The ILO is convinced that more is needed in our collective action to increase visibility and capacity of response.

As we look to the future (as the ILO did in 2019, year of its Centenary), we can recognize that International migration is a reflection of global shifts, challenges and transformations, including in technology, in the world of work.

During last year's centenary, the ILO gave concerted attention to considering how to address the various dimensions related to the changing nature of work, and how we can help prepare for a future of work *we want*.

This helped to shape the Centenary declaration which gives direction to ILO's priority areas of work, including:

- A call to deepen our work and leadership around labour migration;
- The promotion of decent work for all, including migrant workers, refugees and those displaced.

A human-centred approach to the future of work is crucial if we are to continue to meet labour markets needs while also ensuring workers are protected and can fulfil their potential without discrimination or exploitation.

I would like to finish my speech by wishing the incoming Chair of the Global Forum the greatest success for its mandate.

The ILO looks forward to continuing its support of initiatives and partnerships on labour migration, including on the topics for GFMD 2020 related to the future of work and employment.

We look forward to a constructive year ahead with the GFMD and to continuing to play our role with sister agencies as a member of the Executive Committee of the UN Network on Migration.

Thank you.