



## **G20 Labor and Employment Ministers' Statement on COVID-19**

**Virtual Meeting, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, April 23, 2020**

The outbreak and spread of coronavirus (COVID-19) is an unprecedented global challenge that requires a coordinated global response. At the Extraordinary G20 Leaders' Summit held on 26th March 2020, in the spirit of solidarity, our Leaders committed to do whatever it takes to overcome this pandemic and determined to spare no effort, both individually and collectively, to tackle the intertwined health, social and economic impact and to safeguard people's jobs and income. In accordance with our Leaders' commitment and determination we, the G20 Labor and Employment Ministers, will continue to work together and in coordination with other G20 ministers to develop and implement comprehensive, effective measures to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on domestic and global labor markets and societies. Fighting and overcoming the pandemic is our highest and over-riding priority.

As part of the responses to the coronavirus outbreak, workers and their families across the globe are confronted with the need for hospitalization, quarantine, physical distancing measures, restrictions on travel, and mobility. In addition, due to both the imperative health measures taken and repercussions of the pandemic on economic activity, workers are facing elevated risks of job losses, reduced working hours, suspended employment relations and income loss. We will make every effort to protect our workers, particularly those who are considered vulnerable and not covered by adequate social protection. We will make every effort to avoid leaving them even further behind. As such, we cannot allow COVID-19 to widen inequalities, including gender inequalities, in the labor market and erode progress made thus far.

We will continue, in full global co-operation, to take a human-centered approach to promote employment, bolster social protection, stabilize labor relations, and promote the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work amid the pandemic prevention and control measures, with actions being taken in accordance with our national circumstances. Employment should be given priority in developing macroeconomic policy packages, and coordination between employment and other policy responses is important. In addition to protecting jobs and income, we will ensure that our social protection systems are sufficiently robust and adaptable to provide adequate support for all workers in need, regardless of their employment status, age, or gender. We will also continue to ensure the provision of adequate measures to protect workers, particularly for healthcare workers and those in other essential services who are most exposed to risks brought by COVID-19 through occupational safety and health measures and we will continue to promote decent work, including in global supply chains.

Our countries will continue to explore ways to support businesses and employers, especially micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), to be able to maintain employment and support affected workers through this challenging period. Measures will be developed in accordance with national circumstances and may include cash transfers, tax credits, grants, loans, and wage subsidies. We are already seeing these measures introduced in many G20 members and across the world. In addition, we will provide guidance and support to employers to enable them to take effective steps

to minimize the impact of COVID-19 on their operations, resources, supply chains, and especially their workforces.

We will work with key stakeholders in order to maximize the impact of our efforts. We will work with other G20 tracks to ensure that actions at the national and international level stimulate the economy and boost employment creation and retention. We recognize the importance of social dialogue and working in cooperation with the social partners on appropriate responses to the pandemic. Experience shows us that in times of crisis, social dialogue with workers' and employers' organizations results in responsive and durable solutions. Already, G20 Members are finding innovative ways of engaging in dialogue despite the social isolation we must endure.

We recognize and appreciate the contribution of International Labour Organization (ILO), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the World Bank Group (WBG) and will continue to seek their advice, as appropriate, to resolve short-term crises and to plan for medium and long-term recovery. In line with the G20 Leaders' Statement and the G20 Action Plan, we ask the ILO and the OECD to monitor and report on the impact of COVID-19 on employment and the effectiveness of the measures being taken across the world to mitigate its impact.

We will work relentlessly to share, devise and implement effective measures to reduce and negate the impact of COVID-19 on our labor markets, societies and wider economies, always remembering that our primary responsibility is to safeguard the health and wellbeing of our workers and their families.

We stand ready to meet again as needed to monitor progress and consider additional actions and commitments to aid the recovery of our labor markets and sustain progress against our common G20 goals.