

**Minister's speech
at the 104th International Labour Conference**

10 June, 2015

**Madam President and distinguished
delegates!**

Globally,
our growth engine is losing its steam
and the economy is losing
its job creation capacity.

Consequently,
the world now is troubled with
unemployment of over 200 million.

It is also worth noting that
employment types will become
more diversified.

And,
it is all the more worrisome that
inequality will only get worse
in the future according to forecast.
At this critical juncture,
discussing our future tasks
at this Conference
for 2019 ILO “Centenary Initiative”
carries a significant meaning.

I am sure
it will help us predict the future of work
and the prediction will lay a foundation
for tripartite constituents
to work together for a better future of work.

Just like other countries,
Korea is also undergoing economic
and social changes.

The economy and employment are slowing, global competition is increasing and the population is ageing.

In addition, Korea recognizes the need to improve our outdated labor market structure.

Especially, seniority-based wage system, long-working hours, and inefficient labor market regulations are aggravating youth unemployment, lack of decent jobs, and labor market inequality.

In response to these challenges, the Korean government embarked on reforming the labor market.

Firstly,

the government is focusing on sharing economic gains between large companies and SMEs and reducing the gap between regular- and non-regular workers.

To this end, we plan to encourage conglomerates to spend a part of their profits on improving working conditions of workers at SMEs.

In addition, we will step up efforts to eliminate unfair business practices

to strengthen a foundation for sustainable growth.

Secondly,

the government aims to expand competency-oriented recruitment for youth so as to help them easily find right jobs for their talent and aptitude.

Efforts will be also put to make sure that fairness is fully respected at workplaces.

Under such environment, workers will be rewarded for their work and promoted according to their competency and achievements.

Furthermore,

the government is actively promoting a work-study dual system to nurture talents required by businesses.

Under the system, businesses provide hands-on training for student-workers at workplaces.

Thirdly, the government set ‘work-family balance’ as one of the key national agenda in order to fully unleash the potential of female workers.

The government is expanding support for the reduced working hours for childcare as well as increasing child-care centers.

On top of that,
for female workers
whose career is discontinued,
customized employment services are in
place
to support their reemployment
along with efforts to increase
decent part-time jobs.

Last but not least,
the Korean government aims to
further expand and enhance
its social safety net.

Protection will be strengthened
for vulnerable groups
by eliminating blind spots
in social insurance programs.

With a purpose to improve income distribution, the minimum wage will be increased stage-by-stage.

Madam President and distinguished delegates!

As stated, the Korean government is determined to foster a new employment framework for workers, jobseekers, and even the future generations.

We envision the future where parents, sons, and daughters share equal job opportunities.

There is a saying,
“If you want to go fast, go alone.
If you want to go far, go together.”

We need to cooperate with each other
and grow together in the world of work
in order to achieve sustainable growth.

When the tripartite constituents
from member countries work together,
I am certain that
we will achieve a better future of work.

I hope the 104th ILC becomes a venue
to share experience and wisdom
of member countries
and to proactively engage in discussions
on future plans.

Thank you.