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# IOE – ITUC Joint Statement on the Just Transition Work Programme at COP29

**BAKU, Azerbaijan** - 13 November 2024

The International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), representing nearly 200 million workers in 165 countries and the International Organisation of Employers (IOE), representing 50 million companies in 144 countries, are speaking with one voice today to remind governments together that they, as social partners and independent constituents of the International Labour Organization (ILO), as key actors in the real economy are urging COP29 to further develop and implement a global framework and national measures that ensure a Just Transition is supported and is impactful.

We, representatives of employers and trade unions at COP29, are concerned that COP29 negotiations on a Just Transition Work Programme are failing to implement and ensure the foundation and consensus on Just Transition which the very same governments with the engagement of trade unions and employers have agreed to at the International Labour Conference in June 2023<sup>1</sup>. The International Labour Conference endorsed the ILO Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all (2015) which provides the central reference for policymaking and a basis for action. Their implementation should be accelerated and scaled up through a reinvigorated framework for action consisting of four interrelated and mutually supportive elements namely: (i) promoting inclusive, sustainable and job-rich economies; (ii) advancing social justice; (iii) managing the process of just transition; and (iv) financing a just transition.

We urge Parties to consider and focus national measures on the following key elements:

- To be just and promote ownership, the transition needs anticipation and management with the social partners through social dialogue, projection of skills needs to avoid massive job and livelihood losses due to climate change and climate policies that do not take into account socioeconomic impacts on workers and companies.
- All transition policies have to be built on the respect and promotion of the Fundamental Labour Rights defined at the ILO and recognized at COP28 in the JTWP. This includes the right to freedom of association and collective bargaining. Social protection policies developed with the social partners to accompany workers and employers in the transition process are also crucial. This would also support the transition from informal to formal economies.

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<sup>1</sup> At the International Labour Conference in June 2023, the tripartite participants widely endorsed the [Guidelines for Just Transition](#) through the adopted [Resolution](#), as the central reference for policy making and a basis for action on just transition, to be implemented at the national level. They stress that **“Transitions need concerted efforts and must be planned and structured in a way that addresses employment losses, decent work deficits, inequality and sectoral and educational misalignments. Policies have to be coherent and balanced and must address the nexus between climate change, decent work and sustainable development”**. We also draw the COP’s attention to the recent B20 and L20 [joint statement](#) in this context.



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- Just Transition policies need to foster sustainable enterprise development. Governments play an essential role as architects of this environment, creating the right conditions for economic growth and institutional development with a focus on green skills development and addressing the needs of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to ensure they are not left behind in the just transition to a net-zero economy.
- Skills must become a priority for policy makers: facilitating collaborative strategies to advance the skills agenda, including through anticipation, planning, mapping, national skills councils and dedicated policy, education and training frameworks, ensuring that workers are equipped with the skills needed towards the transition to net-zero economies.
- Targeted industrial policies are used not only for economic development purposes but also to respond to myriad contemporary challenges, such as fostering business transformation for sustainable production, creating jobs and reducing poverty, participating in the technological revolution and in global value chains, promoting efficient and clean energy and greening the economy.
- Parties need to send clear signals in NDCs, NAPs, and LT-LEDS, showing their commitment to Just Transition. The next round of NDCs provides a timely opportunity for Parties to communicate labour-market focused national frameworks along with concrete measures, and social partners must be at the table during their development. These tools need to be supported by clear, consistent policies and regulations that will mobilize business investment, as well as measures to support sectors, workers and communities as they transition away from fossil fuels towards clean energy.

**Unions and Employers do not want the employment dimension to be diluted in the important discussions taking place in Baku.** Both the national and the international dimensions of Just Transition are equally important to deliver economies and contribute to social justice as well as climate action.

Misguided environmental policies – developed without the consideration or involvement of workers or employers - can lead to job losses, negative labour market impacts and socio-economic challenges. Failing to account for the barriers affecting certain regions, sectors, and enterprises in the climate transition—and to actively mitigate the related vulnerabilities in a transitioning world—is liable to result in a disorderly, incomplete, and costly transition, compounding the disruptions from the physical impacts of climate change. In contrast, addressing these challenges and enabling all stakeholders to participate and thrive in the transition is known as a just transition.

The negotiators at COP29 can consider the elements of the Resolution from the International Labour Conference as a solid basis to reach a common understanding of just transition for the Work Programme and policy framework to inform pathways towards a just transition.

IOE and ITUC stand ready to work with governments at the national and global level to achieve a Just Transition.