

G20 URGED TO IMPLEMENT COMMITMENT TO JOBS, SOCIAL PROTECTION

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SEOUL (ILO News): Amidst widespread concern about the slow recovery in employment, Mr. Juan Somavia, Director General of the International Labour Organization (ILO)*, urged the G20 Leaders to implement their commitment to the central role of social protection and decent work in global recovery.

The G20 Leaders' Declaration states that "we are determined to put jobs at the heart of the recovery and to provide social protection and decent work and also to ensure accelerated growth in low income countries".

"Worldwide concern over jobs deficits has helped focus Leaders' minds on coordinated action to bolster recovery. The Seoul Summit confirmed that creating quality jobs must be at the heart of global economic recovery. I urge the G20 to implement this commitment and pledge the ILO's full cooperation," said Mr. Somavia, who participated in the Summit.

"Rebalancing the global economy so that growth is both strong and sustainable requires more than adjustments to currencies and financial regimes. Investing in social protection and quality jobs will encourage entrepreneurship and investment in the real economy and get sustainable growth moving," he said.

He drew attention to the "shared growth" championed by the G20 Seoul Summit, adding "this approach spreads the benefits of growth within countries and narrows the gap between developing and higher income countries." He added, "ensuring that wages move ahead in line with productivity is essential to sustainable growth".

The ILO Director-General highlighted the importance of the "Seoul Development Consensus for Shared Growth" adopted by the G20 Leaders. "I particularly welcome the G20 approach to development centred on investment, jobs and social protection," said Mr. Somavia. "The recognition that social protection is an investment in higher productivity and resilient growth is encouraging," he added.

Mr. Somavia noted that the ILO's Decent Work Agenda and Global Jobs Pact were increasingly entering the mainstream of the G20's approach to balanced growth and development.

**The ILO is the United Nations specialized agency that deals with work and work-related issues*

In a deepening of their Framework for Strong, Sustainable and Balanced Growth, Leaders adopted the Seoul Action Plan on cooperative and country-specific policy actions. The ILO is called upon to continue to provide its expertise to the G20-led review of country commitments and progress under the Framework. In this respect, Leaders called for continued close collaboration between the IMF and the ILO.

The ILO is also requested to contribute to a multi-year development action plan spanning nine pillars of growth, ranging from private investment and trade to job creation, skills development, social protection and food security.

The G20 Leaders considered a joint OECD, ILO, World Bank and WTO report calling for a coherent approach to trade and employment policies.**

The G20 Leaders' Declaration in Seoul acknowledged contributions from the Business Summit on private sector-led growth and job creation. Leaders also decided to increase consultations with the wider international community, including trade unions.

Mr. Somavia drew attention to the effective efforts by trade union leaders on the eve of the Summit in pressing the G20 on the importance of acting to accelerate recovery in employment. They were attending a conference in Seoul organized by the International Trade Union Confederation, the Trade Union Advisory Council to the OECD, Global Unions and their Korean affiliates.

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** "Seizing the Benefits of Trade for Employment and Growth", released 09.00 GMT 12 November