

**STATEMENT BY DEPUTY MINISTER JULIET VARLYAKOVA FOR
THE 110TH SESSION OF THE INTERNATIONAL LABOR
CONFERENCE,**

June 7, 2022, XX HALL, PALACE OF NATIONS

Dear Mr. Director General Ryder,

Your Excellencies,

Dear constituents,

It is an honour for me to take part in this session of the International Labour Conference (ILC), which for my great pleasure this year is being held in person.

As in the past two years, again in the current year, the global efforts continue to be focused on addressing the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, which unfortunately is not over yet. Director General Ryder describes it very precisely in his report as a "hammer blow to the global economy"¹. A blow that was extremely severe for all countries, especially those with least developed economies and fiscal capacity. Achieving the sustainable development goals, as well as social justice, is impossible without paying special attention to the problems these countries are facing. Global inequalities continue to grow, with wars and armed conflicts in different parts of the world in addition to the COVID-19 pandemic. The current war in Ukraine poses serious risks not only to the world of work, but creates risks of a food, financial and energy crisis on a global scale.

The ILO has repeatedly proven throughout the years its important role in supporting countries in crisis and challenge situations. Allow me also to emphasize the importance of the Doha Program of Action, for which the ILO has a crucial role to play. International labour standards and tripartism are key ways to ensure decent work in all countries.

At the national level, I would like to note that one of the main priorities of the National Employment Strategy of the Republic of Bulgaria is to improve the quality of the workforce in accordance with the needs of the economy. In the short term, the focus will be on acquiring digital and vocational skills, and increasing employment to pre-pandemic levels. In the long run, the measures under the National Recovery and Sustainability Plan will be the tool for mitigating the negative impact and supporting the restructuring of the economy.

Let me conclude by noting that it is no coincidence that the term "international community" is a term accepted and largely used in public international law. Speaking of "community", we are talking about both common responsibilities and common

rights and goals - for peace, social justice and decent work for all, without an exception and in the spirit of the “no one to be left behind” principle.

On behalf of Bulgaria, I would like to thank Mr. Ryder for his great contribution to the organization's work as Director-General, whose term coincided with an extremely difficult period on a global scale with regard to the pandemic, but nevertheless he successfully led the ILO and its tripartite constituents through these unprecedented challenges. I thank him for his efforts and support, his dedication and determination, in the spirit of excellent social dialogue, and for strengthening the ILO's leading role in the UN system for decent work. I express my strong belief to work very productively also with his successor and wish both - Mr. Ryder and Mr. Hounbo every success.

Thank you!

¹ The report of the Director-General of the ILO "**The least developed countries: Crisis, structural transformation and the future of work**" is dedicated to the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on the least developed countries, as well as the impact of various crises and conflicts, including the war in Ukraine