



105th Session of the International Labour Conference

**Statement by Hon. W.D.J. Seneviratne,
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Hon. Chair,
Vice Chairs to the Conference,
your Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen

It is a great pleasure for me to address this august assembly of 105th session of ILO, on behalf of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, as the Minister of Labour and Trade Union Relations.

Reading the Report of the Director General, for 105th session, 2016, I was impressed that it addresses a theme of key strategic significance to ILO its' future direction of work which examines responsibilities and opportunities of ILO and its constituents in the implementation of UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In this process the frame work towards "End to Poverty Initiative" has already been established and ILO will move forward. I am glad to announce that Sri Lanka as a constituent will make every endeavor to be an active partner of ILO in achieving these anticipated goals.

The DG's report highlights ILO Commitment on upgrading multinational system coherence and delivery capacities anticipating distinct advantages of decent work for sustainable development and for eradication of poverty. The other parallel policy coherence in the International System is promotion of social justice and Fair Globalization. While commending the effort of ILO partnership and coherence, as a representative of a developing country I respectfully state that in this process we encounter many obstacles in achieving these goals. The natural hazards, economic

crisis, disturbances of international trade, inflation, price fluctuations etc. are some of them in the path of sustainable development and road blocks in streamlining of eradication of poverty. Amidst of all these we strive hard to maintain the on-going decent work programme.

In this process Sri Lanka is moving in right direction; formulation of National Employment and Human Resource Policy followed by ratification of ILO Convention 122, Gender Policy, formulation of Sri Lankan Road Map for the Elimination of Worst forms of Child Labour by 2015, National Road Map for Youth Employment, Livelihood recovery and employment creation in conflict and disaster affected areas, support extended towards strengthening of public employment services, National Labour Migration Policy for Sri Lanka, Automation of Labour Administration System promoting fundamental principles and Rights at Work in Export Processing Zones (EPZ), undertaking translation of International Labour Standards in to Domestic Courts through Labour Tribunal and Affiliate Jurisdiction etc, are few examples of our effort towards Decent Work Programme in collaboration with ILO Country Office.

Madam Chair,

To strengthen the Decent Work Programme I am happy to announce that Sri Lanka in the 1st quarter of 2016 enacted two significant laws on wages geared to decent wage set up. The 'National Minimum Wages Act No.3 of 2016' is an historical event by which for the first time in the country mandatory national monthly minimum wage was fixed payable to all workers by all employers in the country. The other parallel law was the 'Budgetary Relief Allowance of workers Act No.4 of 2016' under which a wage increase was stipulated uniformly applicable to all workers.

Sri Lanka respect and implement the principles of tripartite consultation. The National Labour Advisory Council (NLAC) now in operation over two decades is the national forum for consultation and we are to develop the same methodology at regional level.

Sri Lanka having acquired the membership of ILO in 1948 to date play an active role recognizing and observing the ILO Standards. Having ratified 41, ILO Conventions including all core conventions, the country is giving effect to them by law and in practice. The government of Sri Lanka is geared to Good Governance adopting the principles of consultation, tolerance and compromise in every sphere of activity including the realm of labour administration.

In conclusion I commend and congratulate the ILO area Office Staff in Colombo for their fullest cooperation extended to Sri Lanka with technical assistance in all avenues.

I herewith send greetings of His Excellency the President of Sri Lanka, Maithiripala Sirisena wishing a successful and fruitful deliberations of 105th session.

May the world of work achieve the everlasting industrial peace.

Thank you.