



Declaration of the Eighth BRICS Labour and Employment Ministers' Meeting

July 14th, 2022, China

Introduction

1. We, the Ministers of Labour and Employment from the Federative Republic of Brazil, the Russian Federation, the Republic of India, the People's Republic of China and the Republic of South Africa, met virtually on July 14th, 2022 for the Eighth BRICS Labour and Employment Ministers' Meeting, to share respective policy development, and discuss and agree on how to address labour and employment challenges commonly faced by BRICS countries.

2. We note with concern that the global labour market is still under the shadow of the COVID-19 pandemic, combined with current and future challenges caused by climate change, technological transition and demographic shifts, etc. These create a severe barrier to achieving the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals and a human-centered inclusive recovery. We are grateful to the BRICS Network of Labour Research Institutes for their research on "Employment and Income Support in the Context of the COVID-19 Crisis" and will continue to work together to address these challenges.

3. We acknowledge that a broad consensus on labour, employment and social security has been reached at the BRICS Labour and Employment Ministers' meetings since their inception in 2015. It provided efficient solutions for the consideration of the BRICS leaders and contributed positively to improving people's well-being in the BRICS countries, boosting productive employment and facilitating the realization of decent work for all. We reaffirm that we will fulfill the commitments made at previous Labour and Employment Ministers' meetings, continue practical cooperation, exchanges and mutual learning in the field of labour and employment as well as social protection, and promote an inclusive, sustainable and resilient recovery of the labour markets in our five countries.

4. The theme of BRICS China Chairmanship is "Foster High-quality BRICS Partnership, Usher in a New Era for Global Development". We will focus on promoting green jobs for sustainable development, developing skills for a resilient recovery and protecting workers' rights in new forms of employment, and propose BRICS solutions.

Promoting Green Jobs for Sustainable Development

5. With the growing prominence of climate change, a major global issue relevant to human survival and development, countries around the world have taken action to explore green growth and low-carbon development paths for sustainability. BRICS countries have formulated green growth and sustainable development strategies and emission reduction targets, and actively explored ways to promote



green jobs with some initial results achieved and useful experiences gained.

6. However, BRICS countries are facing many challenges in promoting green jobs. Further efforts towards a better definition, measurement and statistical analysis of green jobs can build on existing tools such as the ILO Guidelines concerning a statistical definition of employment in the environmental sector. Mechanisms for jointly promoting green jobs across sectors and institutions need to be improved. The lack of skills that would enable workers to leverage the green transition is prominent, the pressure of job loss in green transformation cannot be ignored, and the impact of COVID-19 and other factors on slowing down the development of green jobs is still persistent.

7. We acknowledge that promoting green jobs is an imperative for addressing climate change, accelerating the transformation of economic development models and facilitating green growth, low-carbon and sustainable development. It can help increase both the quantity and quality of jobs. We will act to acquire a deeper understanding of green jobs, adopt policy measures for employment and human resources development that meet the needs of green growth, low-carbon and sustainable development together with other government agencies and social partners. This would help take advantage of the triple benefits of mitigating and adapting to climate change with a just transition for all, developing the economy and boosting employment.

8. We recognize that the necessary work to promote green jobs and a just transition for all is to be strengthened. To that end, we will strengthen research and conduct case studies on green jobs and just transition in key industries and sectors. We will engage our Labour Research Institutes in this endeavor.

9. To address the skills' gap in green low-carbon economy, we will build and improve skills development and lifelong learning systems. We will also support innovative solutions in mobilizing sustainable public and private resources, and promote shared responsibility and coordination among multi-faceted partners and a diverse range of industries. In this way, government departments, vocational institutions, businesses, professional associations and social partners, and training institutions can work hand in hand and facilitate the green transition.

10. We acknowledge the guiding role of exploring and building a green occupational classification system in promoting green jobs. We will further develop the formulation and application of standards for green occupations, facilitate the green occupational system to gradually set and finetune the competency-based learning outcomes and curricula at universities and colleges, vocational and training institutions. At the same time, we will guide, develop and regulate new green jobs emerging in the process of green transformation in a well-planned way to create more jobs opportunities for green growth and sustainable development.

11. We will continue to promote inclusive development and green recovery. While adopting policy measures on employment and climate change, BRICS countries need to pay attention to industrial sectors and regions under the pressure of employment in the green transformation, in particular people who have lost their jobs



or face difficulties in securing employment. To meet these challenges, we will actively provide employment services, respond to unemployment issues in a prudent way, and realize an equitable transformation.

12. We will make efforts to promote decent work in green and low-carbon industries, further prevent, control and eliminate occupational health hazards, and incentivize improvement of their working environment, equipment and facilities. We will strive to align green jobs with poverty alleviation via the green economy. Jobs in ecological conservation will be created for the benefit of people in less-developed areas with a huge demand for environmental protection and restoration, and thus help poor people achieve green jobs and poverty alleviation.

13. We support the deepening of BRICS cooperation on green jobs, with a focus on relevant training, sharing training resources in areas of strengths among BRICS members, and jointly conducting training programs for teachers and training providers.

Skills Development for a Resilient Recovery

14. We recognize that skills mismatch is the most serious challenge facing today's labour markets. The Covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated labour disparities, with women, youth, people with disabilities, migrant workers, workers in the informal economy, and low-skilled workers being disproportionately affected.

15. Skills are the core and most basic labour factor linking technological innovation with production practices, and play an important role in promoting economic growth and social progress. In the face of the future changes and practical needs of the world of work, we will strive to integrate skills development policies with policies on employment, population and economic development, strengthen the system of skills development and lifelong learning, foster skills development ecosystems, and create opportunities to drive economic recovery, create quality employment, and contribute to inclusive and sustainable growth.

16. We will advocate greater inter-ministerial coordination as well as government policy support to encourage companies to increase investment in skills development, expand apprenticeship programs, improve the quality and scope of work-based learning, and promote sustainable business development. At the same time, we will strengthen social dialogue and increase the participation of social partners in skills standard setting, curriculum development, and skills demand forecasting.

17. We note that digitization and technological innovation have a profound impact on the labour market, and BRICS countries also need to prepare for greater automation in the coming years and strengthen the upskilling and reskilling of workers. We will develop basic digital skills to improve digital literacy for all.

18. The Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on skills development, and despite its abatement, many people are still unable to attend face-to-face training. As remote and hybrid learning is not widespread enough, many people are missing out on training opportunities. We will support and encourage the innovation in and



improvement of training methods, promote remote, mobile or hybrid learning models, and expand the coverage of skills development.

19. We will take action to rethink how to develop skills in the context of a severe skills mismatch. We will support measures to forecast skills demand, improve occupational standards, innovate in education and training methods, raise awareness about training solutions and career guidance, reform the way skills are evaluated, and invest in the life-long learning of teachers and training facilitators.

20. Improving the job availability and job quality for vulnerable groups in the labour market has been a focus of BRICS countries' skills development policies. For workers in rural and disadvantaged areas, skills development is one of the major interventions to improve their employability and increase their income. We support targeted skills development policies, and precise and effective interventions to improve the accessibility and quality of skills development in rural and disadvantaged areas.

21. Vocational skills competitions play an important role in enhancing the attractiveness and recognition of vocational and technical education. Therefore, we will take action to establish local, regional and national vocational skills competition systems suited to national conditions and characteristics, strengthen publicity and societal promotion of vocational skills competitions, and raise awareness of young people about diversified learning solutions to acquire skills and provide quality career guidance to build careers accordingly.

22. We support the formulation and implementation of policies and programs for promoting skills development and lifelong learning systems that will drive the development of the green and digital economies towards a just transition.

23. We encourage the strengthening of cooperation in skills development and will explore the development of a system for mutual recognition of skills among BRICS countries.

Protecting Workers' Rights in New Forms of Employment

24. Digital technology, especially mobile Internet technology, has given rise to new forms of employment represented in particular by digital labour platforms. The continued ravages of Covid-19 have further accelerated the proliferation of new forms of employment in various industries. This has brought unprecedented opportunities to BRICS countries, but also posed new challenges to the protection of workers' rights.

25. We recall the *ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work* in 2019, and remain committed to the BRICS Labour and Employment Ministers' Declarations, including that on governance in the future of work (China, 2017), future of work in the digital economy (Russia, 2020), and the role of gig and platform workers in the labour market (India, 2021). We will continue to promote the human-centered approach to shape the future of work and protecting the rights of workers in new forms of employment.

26. We remain committed to exploring ways to promote decent work for workers in new forms of employment. In this regard it is essential that we extend



social protection to them and continue to improve public employment services. To this end, we have reached consensus and adopted a guidance (Annex) for further discussions.

27. We recognize the role played by tripartite mechanism and active social dialogue in new forms of employment. Protecting the rights of workers requires the joint efforts of the government, trade unions and employers' organizations. We welcome the participation of social partners in the formulation and implementation of policies to protect the rights of workers in new forms of employment.

28. We welcome initiatives of the BRICS Network of Labour Research Institutes to continue in-depth studies on protecting the rights of workers in new forms of employment. We will maintain regular and close contact with relevant international organizations when necessary, and share advanced legislative experiences and good practices on the protection of workers' rights in new forms of employment with other countries.

29. We welcome the ILO's continued cooperation and further discussions with its constituents, including BRICS countries, and other international organizations about international labour standards on the protection of workers' rights in new forms of employment.

The Way Forward

30. We will act in line with this Declaration as a response to the call of the BRICS leaders as a demonstration of our confidence and determination to achieve a human-centered recovery and as a reference for our five countries to work together for stronger, healthier and sustainable global development.

31. We appreciate our social partners for their valuable contribution in addressing the challenges facing the world of work. We will further strengthen social dialogue, listen more to the views of our social partners, and promote inclusive development of the labour market.

32. We thank the ILO and the ISSA for their technical support for the 2022 BRICS Labour and Employment Ministers' Meeting and will continue to work closely with them.

33. We thank China's Presidency for organizing the Eighth BRICS Labour and Employment Ministers' Meeting and meetings of the Employment Working Group, and look forward to our next meeting in 2023 under the Presidency of the Republic of South Africa.



Annex

The BRICS Guidance on Protecting the Rights of Workers in New Forms of Employment

1. We note that digital technology, especially mobile Internet technology, has given rise to new forms of employment represented by digital labour platforms. The continued ravages of Covid-19 have further accelerated the proliferation of new forms of employment in various industries. We observe that the emergence and rapid growth of new forms of employment is changing the future of work.

2. We agree that, for BRICS countries, new forms of employment have brought opportunities, met the needs of employers and employees, and become an important means to create new jobs. The new forms of employment also provide opportunities to young people, women, people with disabilities, elderly, migrants, the low-skilled and the long-term unemployed among others to earn relatively higher incomes, contributing to the inclusive growth of the BRICS economies. We are also aware that the rapid development of new forms of employment poses new challenges to the protection of workers' rights.

3. We recall the *ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work* in 2019, and remain committed to the BRICS Labour and Employment Ministers' Declarations, including that on governance in the future of work (China, 2017), future of work in the digital economy (Russia, 2020), and the role of gig and platform workers in the labour market (India, 2021). We will continue to promote the human-centered approach to shape the future of work and protect the rights of workers in new forms of employment.

4. We recognize that multiple contractual arrangements exist simultaneously for workers in new forms of employment. We will strive to make the classification of employment status clear, accurate and consistent and emphasize the need to respect the rights of people working through digital platforms and provide them with appropriate protections.

5. We reaffirm the principles of decent work and fair labour practice and the need to promote equal access to various job opportunities brought about by digital technologies for workers in new forms of employment.

6. We recognize that workers in new forms of employment shall enjoy an adequate amount of rest to maintain their physical and mental health well-being.

7. We will support the improvement of national standards for occupational safety and health protection and encourage training and education for workers and enterprises to minimize occupational injuries that workers in new forms of employment may face in the course of their work.

8. We will take into account the unique challenges of social security for workers in new forms of employment and improve our respective countries' social security



systems, in an effort to provide access to social security for all workers.

9. We support trade unions' efforts and encourage social dialogue, including collective bargaining and tripartite cooperation to improve working conditions for new forms of employment, based on the characteristics of the industry as per national circumstances.

10. We recognize the positive role of a corporate culture of care and support for workers and encourage employers to create such culture for workers in new forms of employment. We also support companies to improve transparency and fairness of their platform algorithms and democratic participation as an important way to protect workers in new forms of employment.

11. We strive to provide advisory services on labour policies among others, for workers and enterprises involved in new forms of employment, and employment services for all types of workers engaged in new forms of employment during the process of digital transformation.

12. We welcome relevant government departments domestically to strengthen communication, share data resources, innovate in collaborative governance models and increase the level and capacity of digital governance to enable more efficient protection of workers' rights in new forms of employment.

13. We will promote mediation and arbitration of relevant labour disputes in the light of our national conditions so as to protect the rights of workers in new forms of employment.

14. We support exploring national statistical methods for collecting data on workers in new forms of employment and their working conditions, so as to provide guidance for future policy-making related to them.

15. We welcome initiatives of the BRICS Network of Labour Research Institutes to continue in-depth studies on protecting the rights of workers in new forms of employment. We will maintain regular and close contact with relevant international organizations when necessary, and share advanced legislative experiences and good practices on the protection of workers' rights in new forms of employment with other countries.

16. We welcome the ILO's continued cooperation and further discussions with its constituents, including BRICS countries, and other international organizations about international labour standards on the protection of workers' rights in new forms of employment.