



**Statement by H.E. Mr. Sunil Sitaldin
Permanent Representative of the
Republic of Suriname to the United Nations
Special Meeting of the Economic and Social Council
*The future of work: towards a productive, inclusive and
sustainable global society*
23-24 January 2024, ECLAC Headquarters, Santiago, Chile**

At the outset, I take the opportunity to commend Her Excellency Paula Narváez, President of ECOSOC for her leadership in convening this important meeting at the headquarters of ECLAC in Santiago, Chile, and for the excellent arrangements made in this regard.

Suriname has assumed its duties as a new member of ECOSOC as of January first and you may count on our full support. We look forward to working with all the members of ECOSOC.

We would like to thank all speakers for their valuable remarks.

Madam President,

As we all know, the multiple global and national crises, including international finance and debt challenges, effects of the climate crisis and the impact of the alarming geopolitical tensions, have put tremendous pressure on the implementation of the SDGs.

Suriname recognizes that the impact of these crises have underscored the urgent need to create better conditions for sustainable, inclusive and sustained economic growth, shared prosperity, and decent work for all, taking into account the different levels of national development and capacities.

The main drivers of recent transformations in the world of work, including technological innovation, the transition to green economies, global integration, demographic changes and other global trends require policy interventions that take into account fundamental pre-conditions, such as inclusivity, productivity, investing in human capital, national and global partnerships, to ensure durable solutions.

Among the challenges are the impact of global crises, persisting inequalities within and between countries, difficulties faced by developing countries to access affordable financing, the digital gap, unemployment, and brain drain.

Madam President,

Suriname believes that the following measures are necessary to ensure decent work for all, namely:

- Creating job opportunities, in particular for youth, women, indigenous and tribal people and persons with disabilities.

- Ensure access for all workers to market-oriented, technical and vocational education and strengthening of existing training institutions.

- Creating funding facilities that are accessible for all; within this context access to affordable finance remains crucial for developing countries.

- We need to leverage the benefits of technological advances, to ensure an inclusive, accessible, transparent, safe and secure, digitally transformative environment for all. Workforce skills development and the transfer of technology are crucial to bridge the existing digital gaps.

- We should continue to strengthen strategic national and global partnerships to address the challenges and opportunities of a changing labour market, as this will positively contribute to our economies, societies and the environment.
- Wage growth to offset the impact of inflation and the high cost of living.
- The need to address brain drain, which is a major challenge for developing countries.
- Addressing the challenges of informal employment, gender disparities and high youth employment in developing countries.
- Regulate the phenomenon of remote workers that arose as a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Taking into account the critical importance of decent work as an enabler for sustainable poverty alleviation, inclusive growth and development, Suriname has initiated several policy and legislative measures with an emphasis on:

- job opportunities, productivity and sustainable growth
- livelihood, human capital and a skilled workforce
- labour market governance and labour rights.

An important aspect is the creation of an enabling environment for business and entrepreneurship. Several funds have been established to contribute to financing opportunities for micro, small and medium enterprises.

Strengthening the existing training institutions and further development of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, especially in rural and interior areas, remain key areas of intervention.

Through market-oriented and vocational education, our people will be trained to enable them to be assured of a job, in the new sector of oil and gas, the aqua-industry, tourism and agricultural sectors.

The Center for Innovation and Productivity (CIP) was established to promote productivity and innovation within both the private and public sectors in order to increase productivity and improve competitiveness; and there are ongoing.

Suriname is committed to ensure better working conditions, better social protection for workers and a safe labour market that is inclusive for all.

Together with international partners and through social dialogue with public and private partners, Suriname will continue to work towards strengthening labour market institutions to design and implement active labour market programmes, focusing on women, youth, persons with disabilities, and people living in rural and interior areas.

In closing, Madam President,

Together with our national and global partners, Suriname is committed to navigating the opportunities and challenges presented by the evolving labour market, with a dedicated focus on ensuring decent work for all, aligned with the SDGs.

Thank you.

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