

PLENARY SPEECH

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Mr. President; Distinguished Delegates;

I would like to thank the Director-General and the ILO for bringing back Social Justice and Decent Work into limelight through the creation of the Global Coalition for Social Justice. Ghana Trades Union Congress is a proud member of the Coalition. We urge all unions that have not yet joined the coalition to join without further delay.

This noble vision of the Director-General does not only enhance ILO's image in the multilateral system, but it is also a clarion call on all of us (i.e., governments, unions, employers, civil society organizations, NGOs, multilateral institutions, especially the international financial institutions) to review and re-examine our goals, policies, laws, practices, activities, traditions, cultures and norms within the framework of social justice. The creation of the Coalition is very timely, given the fast-changing world of work and the acrimonious geopolitics we are witnessing today.

Last year, the Prime Minister of Barbados, Mia Motley, reminded us that social justice is simply about **fairness**. She said if we are fair to one another, we will achieve social justice. I agree with her. Social Justice is a universal principle that must be embraced by all, regardless of our nationality, race, sex, ethnicity, socio-economic status and location.

If we, the social partners in the ILO, are promoting social justice then we should demonstrate that we are ahead of those we are inviting to join the Global Coalition for Social Justice. Governments must be fair to their people, especially the most vulnerable citizens. Employers must be fair to their employees and their unions. Unions must be fair in their dealings with employers and governments.

And, together, as social partners operating in the labour market, we must be fair to women, young people, informal economy workers, migrant workers, workers from minority groups, and we must be fair to people with disability. One of the things we can do together, as social partners, is to continue to adopt appropriate recommendations and conventions here at the International Labour Conference to protect the most vulnerable in the world of work.

Governments, businesses, policy makers and international institutions should not focus exclusively on economic growth, power, and money. We should pay attention to social justice in all what we do. Because that is the foundation for universal peace and harmony.

As one great son of Africa, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, said "Do your little bit of good where you are; it's those little bits of good put together that overwhelm the world".

I thank you for your attention.