

**INTERVENTION FOR YANG BERHORMAT PEHIN ORANG KAYA
SERI KERNA DATO SERI SETIA (DR.) HAJI AWANG ABU BAKAR
BIN HAJI APONG,
MINISTER AT THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS FOR THE FIRST
G20 LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT MINISTERIAL MEETING
(VIRTUAL)
WEDNESDAY, 23 JUNE 2021**

Good day and good evening distinguished delegates of the First G20 Labour and Employment Ministerial Meeting.

First and foremost, I would like to thank the Italian G20 Presidency for inviting Brunei Darussalam as the ASEAN Chair for 2021. We are honoured to be invited as a guest and we appreciate the opportunity to share briefly on some of the progressive and meaningful work of ASEAN as deliverables for this year in respect of the priorities proposed by the Italian Presidency.

Ladies and gentlemen,

In October of last year, ASEAN Labour Ministers had adopted the first-of-its-kind **ASEAN Guidelines on Gender Mainstreaming into Labour and Employment Policies Towards Decent Work for All**.

The Guideline was a culmination of cooperation between ASEAN Senior Labour Officials, ASEAN Cooperation on Women (or ACW), with the support of the ASEAN Secretariat and ASEAN-Korea Cooperation Fund (AKCF), and targets four specific areas of focus, namely: employment promotion; decent working conditions; social and maternity protection, and international labour migration and its operationalization in 2021 as outlined in the ASEAN Labour Ministers' Work Programme 2021-2025.

Through these Guidelines, the ASEAN Member States aim to mainstream the principles of gender equality in labour and employment policies and practices in line with international standards towards gender equality in the world of work and decent work for all, including the principle of equal pay for work of equal value.

Thus, ASEAN are collectively aspiring towards the integration of gender equality and gender-responsive employment in work for our region through a unified recognition by Government agencies responsible for labour and employment, national women's entities, employers' and workers' organisations and women's organisations.

Ladies and gentlemen,

ASEAN Labour Ministers and Senior Labour Officials have also continuously placed substantial emphasis on the need for inclusive and forward-looking social security mechanisms that can extend consideration and protection to potentially marginalized segments of the population, especially in the context of the future of work.

This year, with the support of the ASEAN Secretariat and the International Labour Organization (ILO), the **Senior Labour Officials Meeting Working Group on Progressive Labour Practices to Enhance the Competitiveness of ASEAN** aims to conduct a follow-up study on the extension of social security to workers in informal employment in our region. ASEAN is resolved in reviewing recent trends in informal employment, understanding the challenges and opportunities in extending social security at the regional and national levels and determine the gaps and needs of specific groups of workers that are more likely to be excluded from social protection coverage.

Through this study, ASEAN Labour Ministers will be able to draw conclusions and recommendations to further facilitate the regional and respective national policies debate on the extension of social protection coverage.

Mr Chair

Ladies and gentlemen,

In April 2019, ASEAN Labour Ministers had adopted a statement on the **Future of Work: Embracing Technology for Inclusive and Sustainable Growth**. Through this statement, ASEAN Labour Ministers' reaffirmed their commitment to prepare ASEAN's workforce and businesses for the future of work, whilst recognizing that the impacts from technological advancement and transition may differ among ASEAN's diverse economies, sectors and groups of workers.

This Statement emphasizes a collective intention to improve education and training standards to harness technology; to increase the labour force participation of women and vulnerable social groups; to promote fiscally

sustainable public and private national social protection initiatives; and to support efforts for collective representation and social dialogue.

Also, in June of last year, ASEAN Heads of State, during the 36th ASEAN Summit, had adopted the **ASEAN Declaration on Human Resources Development for the Changing World of Work and Its Roadmap**.

This forward-looking Declaration re-emphasized the need for life-long learning and cooperation with the private sector and inter-agency collaboration. It also calls for the creation of an implementation roadmap to translate the aspirations of the ASEAN Declaration into concrete strategies and actions that will complement the work plans of ASEAN Labour Ministers, ASEAN Education Ministers Meeting, the ASEAN TVET Council and other relevant sectoral bodies - towards the attainment of ASEAN's Vision 2025 of a people-oriented, people-centred ASEAN Community in line with the theme for Brunei Darussalam ASEAN Chairmanship 2021 "We Care, We Prepare, We Prosper".

Distinguished delegates, Ladies & Gentlemen, I thank you for your kind attention, and we hope for your health and safety during these challenging and unprecedented times.