



United Nations
Framework Convention on
Climate Change

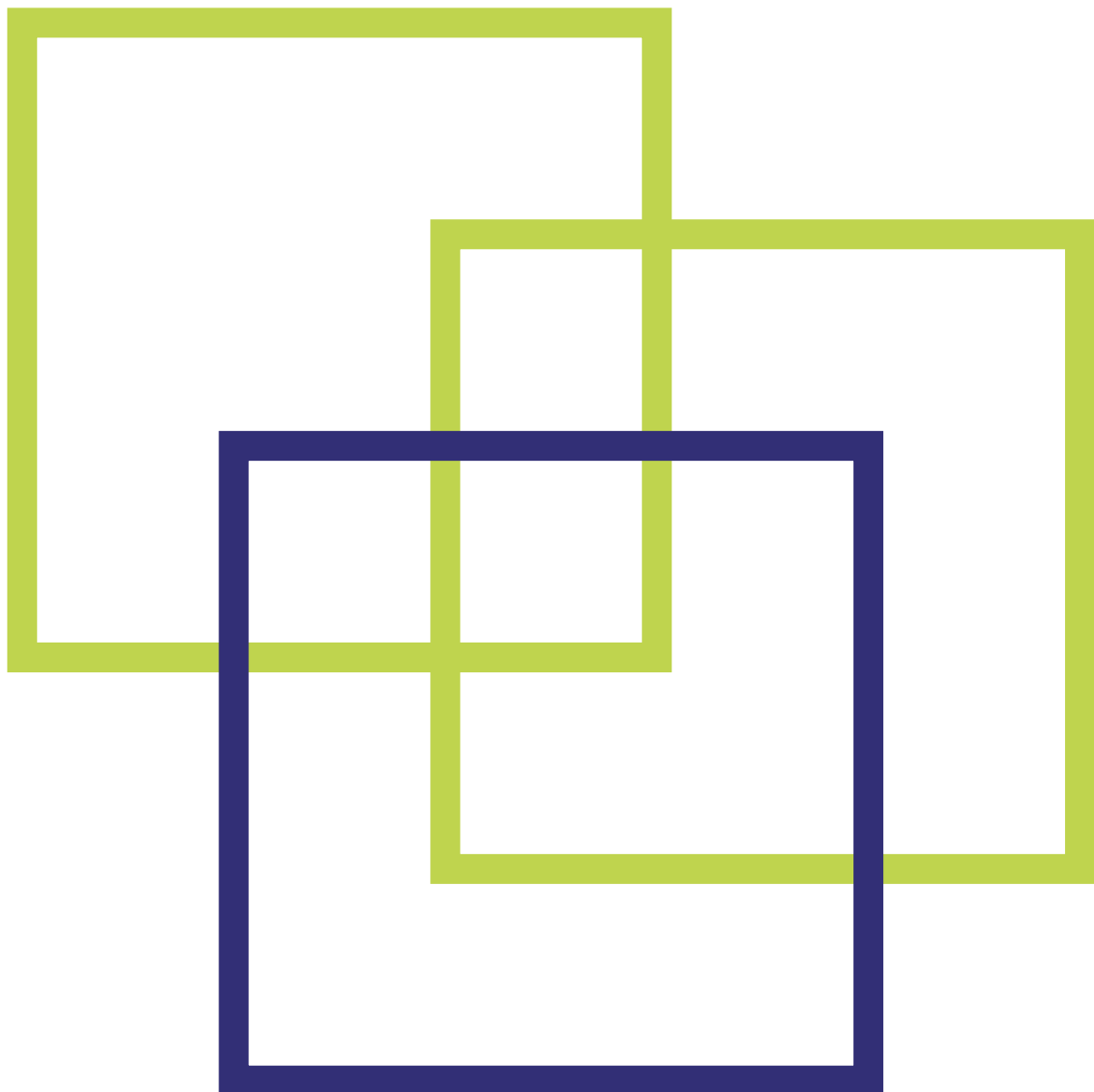


International
Labour
Organization

Global Forum on Just Transition

Climate change, decent work and
sustainable development

Final Report



Geneva, 5 December 2017

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Foreword

Climate change poses major challenges to the world of work. Heat waves and increased hot weather are already becoming a serious threat decent working conditions leading to lower productivity for workers and enterprises, and loss to economies and societies. A just transition aims to ensure a decent life for millions of people, women and young children, and vulnerable groups, around the world. A just transition recognizes that policy responses to climate change will impact economies and societies in many ways. But when considering labour market implications, the nature and scale of impacts will defer from country to country. New jobs will be created, other jobs substituted, yet others eliminated without substitution. Yet evidences suggest that overall, net job gains are possible, if the policies needed are in place to make the transition valuable for all.

This *1st Global Forum on Just Transition* aims to put the ILO as a convener on the issue of Just Transition and address a critical dimension of the global efforts to move towards more environmentally sustainable economies and societies. Delegates from more than 30 countries have joined this event, making it a truly global and multi-stakeholder platform.

This Forum is organized jointly by the ILO and the UN Climate Change secretariat, UNFCCC, which has pursued an active and productive collaboration with the ILO since last year. The issue of Just Transition is pertinent to the Climate Change Convention. The Paris Agreement itself recognize the importance of addressing the impacts of responses measures against climate change. As countries prepare for a review of their nationally-determined contributions (NDCs) to raise the ambition level in 2020, the issues of just transition are essential to address the environmental challenge and leave no one behind.

Policies, planning, dialogue and common understanding matter, because at stake are jobs, incomes, and livelihoods of millions of people. Maximising opportunities for job creation and minimising and mitigating risks of job losses and social disruption while addressing climate change is therefore a necessity to raise the level of ambition and the decision for countries to commit or not to climate action.

The ILO Centenary Green Initiative integrates environmental sustainability into the ILO Decent Work Agenda in order to pursue its mandate for social justice effectively. Its tripartite structure puts the ILO in a unique position to bring together representatives of governments, workers and employers' organizations to forge consensus and mobilize all actors around common goals of decent jobs in a safe climate.

Vic Van Vuuren

Director

Enterprises Department

International Labour Organization



William Kojo Agyemang-Bonsu

Manager

Mitigation and Transparency Support

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Background

1. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change provide a global framework to combat climate change, pave the way to a low-carbon and climate-resistant future and set the course for human wellbeing. The Paris agreement noted the imperatives of a just transition of the workforce and the creation of decent work as essential elements in global and national responses to climate change. In November 2015, the ILO constituents representing governments, workers and employers' organizations formulated a set of Guidelines for a just transition to environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all. These guidelines offer a framework and a practical tool to ensure that national and global action to tackle climate change advance employment creation goals, social justice and just transitions for workers, enterprises and communities.

2. The first Global Forum was held on 5 December 2017 and was attended by delegates from more than 30 countries. It consisted of a high-level opening by senior ILO and UN officials, Geneva-based Ambassadors and representatives of workers and employers' organizations, followed by interactive sessions sharing country experiences and a policy dialogue on just transition.

3. The purpose of the Global Forum on Just Transition was to:

- I. Establish a global platform to share national and international experiences on just transition in country contexts, to take stock of global research and to build momentum for action on climate change, as a result of the ILO-UNFCCC partnership.
- II. Contribute to the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA) which took place at the same time in Nairobi, and build on the outcomes of COP23 while foreseeing the COP24.

Session One

Opening

1. The Director of the ILO Enterprises Department, Mr Vic Van Vuuren, welcomed all participants, introduced the members of the High-Level Panel and noted that the Guidelines formulated by ILO constituents offer a guiding framework and practical tools for countries to build on to establish the policies and processes required in their national contexts. The ILO tripartite structure can forge consensus and mobilise all actors around the common goal of decent jobs in a safe climate.

2. Mr Van Vuuren emphasised that there will be significant changes in the world of work because of job losses in certain industries and the fact that enterprises will need to function and produce in new ways to



account for carbon effects and pricing of carbon. The fear of job losses could overshadow opportunities for decent and green jobs. The common goal, therefore, is to maximise the opportunities for job creation, and to minimise and mitigate the risks of job losses and social disruption.

3. Mr Van Vuuren also mentioned the gender dimensions and issues specific to indigenous and tribal people that can be addressed. Women as economic actors are likely to be more affected than others, exacerbating discrimination and inequality. At the same time, women play a major role in climate action and generating green jobs, for example, grassroots and indigenous women through their traditional knowledge based activities in natural resources management.

4. In his opening remarks, Mr William Kojo Agyemang-Bonsu, Manager, Mitigation and Transparency Support Programme, UN Climate Change Secretariat, UNFCCC, emphasised that the transition to a green economy is not a new phenomenon arising solely from increased climate integration actions. The matter of concern, however, is the pace at which this current transition is happening, and which, if not properly managed, could leave many people behind.

5. Mr Kojo Agyemang-Bonsu noted that new jobs might not be created at the same pace and at the same time as the transition. Therefore, there is a need for cautious development and implementation of national transition plans. While response measures are actions towards low carbon societies and economies, the economic and social impacts are part of international negotiations on climate change. It is important that to work collaboratively on this issue and build the capacity of countries to address these challenges.

6. The Special Envoy for Climate Change, Poland's High Level Champion for COP24, Mr Tomasz Chruszczow, said millions of square kilometres of deforestation and degradation, and chaotic development of mega cities have changed the environment, climate and planet. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) - starting from no poverty and zero hunger - are central to the future and how we implement climate change policies.

7. Mr Chruszczow cited Poland's transition from a centrally, planned inefficient economy 30 years ago. He said the impact of the transition was mitigated through a number of measures, including a free allocation of emissions allowance, financial schemes for environmental investment, tax exemption, social measures and domestic regulations to enhance energy efficiency in the building sectors.

8. Ms Sharan Burrow, General Secretary of the International Trade Union Confederation, called for ambitious action on climate change in order to ensure a future for humanity that is based on zero poverty and zero carbon. She said that from a trade union perspective, just transition means no stranded workers and no



stranded communities.

9. Ms Burrow said just transition must be included in national development plans as well as investment and exit strategies. Without just transition measures, there will be opposition as people are deeply anxious about their jobs. Ms Burrow also called for new financial mechanisms and creative, risk-free start-up investments in renewable energy.

10. In a video message to the Forum, Ms Linda Kromjong, Secretary General of the International Organisation of Employers, called upon governments to make sure they put a legal framework in place that supports businesses in a transition in a sustainable manner. The ILO guidelines offer a framework to tackle environmental challenges, advance job creation, and appropriate transitions for workers and enterprises on an equal footing.

11. Speaking on behalf of employers, Ms Kromjong emphasised that just transition should not mean new standards and said channels should be developed to facilitate private sector participation in the UNFCCC process.

Session Two

Setting the context: Global climate action and jobs

Participants noted that discussions on just transition tend to focus on the energy sector, but there are also important issues at stake in the tourism industry, fisheries and other sectors. Mr Moustapha Kamal Gueye, Coordinator, Green Jobs Programme, ILO, moderated the panel.

12. Ms Kusum Lata, Team Lead, Mitigation Impact Analysis and Support Unit, UN Climate Change Secretariat, UNFCCC, focused on work done under the Convention and in developing modalities for the new Forum to work in a presentation on “*Challenges of capacity building: Efforts to manage Just Transition under the Convention and Paris Agreement*”. A just transition framework could be used by environmental policy makers to consider a just transition for their national workforce, which maximizes the positive impacts and minimizes the negative ones.

13. Ms Lata said securing adequate and decent employment for all jobseekers is one of the biggest challenges globally. Agriculture and energy are vulnerable sectors in terms of response measures and are also the biggest employers.

14. The Managing Director of Climate Strategies, Mr Andrzej Blachowicz, expressed the opinion that surpris-



singly little analysis has been done on past transitions in terms of collecting data and analysing trends. He cited a Climate Strategies project, which concludes in 2018, and focuses on painting pathways of sustainable transitions for Australia, China, Germany, India, Poland, and South Africa. The project also examined five countries in Europe, and the United States.

15. Mr Blachowicz outlined four lessons that have been learnt from coal transitions and industrial transformations to avoid adverse impacts on work: anticipate, build local economic resilience, and invest in human capital, and coordinate with local stakeholders.

16. Mr Jaco Tavenier, Green Growth Coordinator, Environment Directorate, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, said that advancing economic growth does not mean locking the world into a high-emissions future. Pro-growth reforms should be combined with coherent climate policy and alignment with policies across the economy. Moreover, the combined actions of more ambitious climate policies and economic reform will still deliver a net GDP increase in the long run.

17. Ms Catherine Saget, Chief, Work, Income and Equity Unit, ILO, noted that the ILO will publish its World Employment and Social Outlook (WESO) flagship report on greening with jobs in May 2018. The report will address the impact of transition on the economy, the number of jobs globally, by region, country, sector and skills. Preliminary results from the employment scenario based on renewable energy would lead to net job creation of 64 million at the global level. However, there are important regional differences.

Session Three

Sharing country experiences

The panel discussed national experiences of transition across countries, and distilled key policy messages and learning that can be derived from past reforms. Ms Cristina Martinez, Senior specialist, Environment and Decent work, ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, moderated the panel.

18. Ms Martinez said ASEAN is preparing a Ministerial Declaration on green jobs and transition that will be presented in May 2018. She noted that during the ILO Future of Work Conference in the Pacific Islands, the island nations were very interested in looking at other countries' initiatives and good practices. A working Group was established on decent work and just transition.

189. Ms Konstancja Piatkowska, Deputy Director of Climate and Air Protection Department, Ministry of the Environment, Poland, discussed the major economic, political and social transition that Poland has experienced since 1989, and highlighted key achievements and challenges during the process.



20. Ms Piatkowska emphasized that 30 years ago Poland reached the highest level of emissions and has subsequently reduced emissions by more than 30 per cent. Poland accomplished this by: 1.) Shifting toward a more efficient and environmentally friendly economy, 2.) ensuring growth, and 3.) achieving balance in the labour market through a shift from heavy industries to technology, deregulation and by implementing innovative solutions, and privatisation.

21. Mr Rudolf Kuuzech, the Director of Finance and Administration of the Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations, Ghana, highlighted how opportunities and challenges for employment have been addressed through recent government policies. Ghana is highly vulnerable to climate change and its impacts pose risks for new jobs.

22. Mr Kuuzech discussed a disconnection between policies and implementation, and the need to strike the right balance in Ghana. He mentioned several successful areas of impact in the agriculture and construction sectors, but said challenges remained in the forestation, waste management and energy industries. Successes included smallholder schemes to ensure that poverty is addressed and food quality is assured, as well as a pilot bus programme in the capital, which will be expanded to other cities.

23. Mr Kuuzech also noted that Ghana was looking at how best to adopt the ILO Guidelines so that the country can incorporate them into policy actions and highlighted the need for a more vigorous tripartite governance structure at national level.

24. Mr Alex Fimpong, Chief Executive Officer, Ghana Employers' Association, underlined the important role employers have to play in the articulation of climate and labour policies that are mutually supportive.

25. Mr Isidro Antonio Asper, Vice-President, Federation of Free Workers, Philippines, said the Philippines has embarked on reforms in its mining sector with important implications for jobs.

He drew attention to a decision by the government to close 23 mining companies and suspend five others. Through the ILO, meetings were organised with trade unions and a nine-point policy framework agreed for transitioning workers in the mining industry.

26. Mr Asper said the policy framework includes measures to strengthen social dialogue mechanism and tripartism, build the capacity of institutions to implement new laws, ensure proper compensation measures, promote economic diversification, and to guarantee social protection and insurance.

27. Ms Ulrike Lehr, Senior Economist, Institute of Economic Structures Research, Germany, said the insti-



tute has monitored the German energy transition and examined the economic effects of climate change and mitigation. Germany is considered to be among countries having achieved significant progress in energy transitions away from coal and nuclear energy. In 2000, Germany decided to give substantial support to renewable energy and energy efficiency.

28. Ms Lehr identified the coal and transport industries as areas for further climate negotiation and said there were lots of potential strategies for greener transport.

Session Four

Parallel Session 1: Just transition policy dialogue – protecting people

The main objective of the panel on protecting people was to offer a platform for sharing views and experiences on how social protection can contribute to global climate action. The panel discussed the use of social policies to mitigate and minimize potential negative impacts on workers, communities and enterprises. Ms Valerie Schmitt, Deputy Director, Social Protection Department, ILO, moderated the panel.

Social protection is a series of measures that protect people against the financial consequences of many events that can occur in a lifetime. The role of social protection in global climate action is double. Firstly, it contributes to climate change adaptation and secondly, it contributes to climate change mitigation and helps with the just transition. Regarding adaptation, social protection can be used to protect populations that are victims of climate events such as droughts, typhoons and floods. Cash transfers or guaranteed public employment programs can help families that have been hit by these extreme climate events or by the progressive degradation of the environment.

Many countries are adapting their social protection systems or developing new schemes to ensure that these programs can offer an adapted response. Regarding mitigation, social protection can facilitate just transition. Green policies can contribute to the elimination of sources of income for households. For instance, shutting down mines as it is the case in the Philippines means reducing or suppressing the main or unique source of income for hundreds of thousands of households.

Similarly, eliminating fuel subsidies such as in Egypt is certainly good for the environment but has long lasting negative effects on poor households that were counting on these subsidies to buy the necessary fuel for their own consumption. These green policies may, therefore, not be socially acceptable unless they are accompanied with social protection measures (such as unemployment protection and social assistance).

29. Ms Heidi Garrett-Peltier, Assistant Research Professor, Political Economy Research Institute, University of Massachusetts, United States, presented a study that examined the prospects for transformative clean energy projects for New York State. The study found that investing \$31 billion in clean energy projects



would generate between 145,000 and 160, 000 jobs per year in the State.

30. Ms Garrett-Peltier said a just transition programme for the 13,400 workers in the fossil fuel sector will guarantee reemployment, as well as income, retraining, and relocation support, amounting to \$27 million per year. New York State can also achieve zero emissions by 2050 through continuing clean energy investments.

31. Mr Joaquim Bento, Professor, University of Sao Paolo, Brazil, noted that the country has employed a range of policies such as Bolsa verde or Bolsa familia to minimise the negative social impacts of economic and environmental policies. Mr Bento discussed two cash transfer programs, which both face challenges. The first is aimed at ending poverty and is related to health, child health and school attendance, while the second is a green transfer program focused on poor communities that live in deforestation areas. The green transfer program produces regressive results and should be transformed into a compensation policy.

32. Mr Bert de Wel, Senior Advisor, Just Transition Centre, International Trade Union Confederation, underlined the role trade unions can play in the formulation and implementation of economic and social policies to ensure a just transition for workers and communities.

33. Mr de Wel said the ILO guidelines were encouraging social dialogue at the company, national and international levels. The Just Transition Centre was created a year ago to assist affiliates with just transition policies and focuses on decent jobs and climate protection. For example, the Netherlands agreed with the trade unions to a step-by-step phase out of coal-fired plants, and to identify and finance retraining needs.

34. Mr Philip Gass, Senior Researcher, International Institute for Sustainable Development, noted that a number of countries have reformed fossil fuel subsidies in ways allowing a re-affectation of revenues towards social programmes. Mr Gass introduced a series of case studies, which indicated that fossil fuel subsidy reform would result in a 10 per cent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions around the globe. The studies looked at five countries – Canada, Indonesia, Mexico, Morocco, and the Netherlands – and showed that fossil fuel subsidy reforms are critical to reforming economies and achieving just transition. However, in the majority of countries, these subsidies do not go to the poor or near-poor households.

Parallel Session 2: Just transition policy dialogue – promoting jobs

The panel discussed opportunities and challenges for job creation in the context of global and national responses to climate change and considered the role of labour market and social policies. Ms Claire Harasty, Senior Specialist, Employment Policy Department, ILO, moderated the panel.



35. Mr Khalid Atlassi, Minister Plenipotentiary, Responsible for the social pole, Permanent Mission of Morocco in Geneva, highlighted that Morocco had hosted COP22 and presented several national programs addressing climate change while creating employment opportunities in the country. Mr Atlassi said Morocco has launched diverse sustainable development strategies, which should lead to the creation of around 250,000 jobs between 2017 and 2020. In addition, a new air pollution plan is expected to create thousands of jobs in the implementation phase. The country has an energy dependency of 95 per cent. It hopes, therefore, to create many jobs through the development of renewable energy as an alternative to brown energy imports, as well as with waste water treatment. The country is investing in technical education and vocational training for green jobs. Three training centers opened under a public-private partnership arrangement to provide continuous training opportunities for workers on solar energy and biogas sectors. Many actors are involved and synergies are necessary. Climate solidarity, however, depends on international cooperation.

36. Mr Federico Marquez, Senior Vice-President, Employers' Confederation of the Philippines (ECP), said the ECP initiated a regional dialogue with the tripartite advisers' committee and the Department of Labour in September on green jobs and transition.

37. Mr Marquez noted that the Philippines 2016 Green Jobs Act, which provides incentives for enterprises to promote job creation in the environmental sector, will focus on creating green jobs that contribute to conserving and protecting the environment, effective responses to ensure environmental integrity and decent work, as well as social dialogue between employers and workers to get the best outcomes. For example, 450 companies have already come up with initiatives to create employment in the environmental sectors. The Philippines employers are fully committed to green jobs.

38. Mr Federico Araya, Statistical Unit of Labour and Social Security, Ministry of Labour and Social Security, Uruguay, said more than 90 per cent of the country's electricity generation comes from clean energy sources. This success is due to a process that started in 2005 based on collective bargaining. It resulted in a transition from energy import to energy export with the creation of quality jobs. In 2015, there were 40,000 green jobs in Uruguay, i.e. 3 per cent of total employment. Workers employed in the oil sector were the poorest and had bad working conditions. With the transition, collective agreements led to the creation of workers' cooperatives to keep these workers employed under new conditions and with new activities. While women were under-represented in these sectors, and they are now increasingly being employed in the construction of windmills. The reconversion of the labour force and of enterprises happened through education and training.

39. Ms Margaret Chitiga-Mabugu, Director and Head of School of Public Management and Administration, University of Pretoria, South Africa, said the country has put in place a number of national programs aiming



at job creation while responding to environmental concerns and climate change. New green jobs are seen as the future for Africa and renewable energy as a very promising avenue for the reduction of inequalities, poverty and unemployment.

40. Ms Chitiga-Mabugu said that there are many conceptual frameworks on the relation between economic development and climate change. The country should review those and come up with one agreed framework, design a common and agreed upon diagnostic tool, and evaluate the current green initiatives, especially through the job lens. Training of civil servants to build the capacity to carry out these evaluations is necessary. The education system also has a key role to play in training skilled professionals who will be able to inform the government on measures to be taken.

41. Ms Olga Strietska-Ilina, Senior Skills and Employability Specialist, ILO, said skills are needed to enable job creation and transition in labour markets including for workers who might lose their jobs. All jobs will change, so training needs to adapt on a massive scale. The vision needs to be long term and comprehensive. Unfortunately, so far there has been huge progress in the climate change agenda, but not in the related skills agenda. Skills development may serve as an enabler of the green transition as well as a buffer protecting people and avoiding negative impacts. Not only skills development permit to take advantage of the new employment opportunities offered by the transition to a low carbon society, but they also smooth the impact of transition. Indeed, people with the lowest skills levels will be the most impacted by changes in skills demand in the transition to a green economy. We need to adjust technical and vocational training alongside with higher education and soft skills. Social dialogue plays a key role in ensuring that skills development is linked to enterprise and labour market needs.

42. In this context, Ms Strietska-Ilina mentioned the emerging demand from governments to assist them in developing human resources development plans for green jobs (e.g. the Philippines). The ILO in collaboration with the French Ministry of Ecological and Inclusive Transition, the French Development Agency, UNESCO and UNEVOC, developed a framework for policy analysis and guidance titled *Advancing Green Human Capital (2017)*. Its objective is to provide a set of general considerations that can help guide the process of designing and implementing such policies.

Session 5

Reporting back in plenary session

43. The transition to a low carbon society is a formidable opportunity for the creation of more and better employment. It is a potential way out of inequality, poverty and unemployment. Enabling the conversion of workers and new entrants into the labour market to access emerging occupations or sectors is a process re-



quiring social dialogue, as a tool to achieve such results, skills as enablers, and adequate policy as the engine. However three main challenges have been identified. Firstly, all stakeholders need to be involved. An organisational framework at the national level is therefore necessary to achieve success. Secondly, a large number of sectors are involved in the transition; policy coherence needs therefore to be ensured through the adoption of commonly agreed implementation plans, sound diagnostics, and appropriate training of the civil servants responsible for the implementation. Finally the funding of these plans risks to be the cornerstone of success.

44. There is a need for good diagnostics and tools to protect particularly vulnerable communities the direct consequences of climate change, such as population displacement, and forestation. Indeed, just transition is manageable in terms of costs and social protection measures and policies will ensure that green policies become acceptable. The limitations of some cash transfer programmes was highlighted and a U.S. case was welcomed as a successful example of a combined package, which included immediate cash compensation to workers in the fossil fuel sector who had lost their jobs as a result of transition. It was noted that few fuel subsidy reforms were accepted if accompanied by new cash transfer programmes. Workers' and employers' organisations need to be supported in building the business and economic case accompanying the just transition process.

Session six

Going forward: Advancing decent work and just transition for climate action

45. Ms Laurence Monnoyer-Smith, Commissioner General for Sustainable Development, Ministry of Ecological and Inclusive Transition, France, stressed the need for a global coalition on just transition.

46. Ms Monnoyer-Smith said it was necessary to consider the interactions between digital and ecological transitions, as the benefits in terms of employment are not the same everywhere in the world. The French Ministry is taking a whole set of approaches to ensure just transition, including creating objectives to work together, to anticipate the new needs and requirements, and challenges to employment.

47. Ms Monnoyer-Smith emphasized France's wish to act as a leader of just transition in a voluntary way through numerous and diverse actions. Under the Framework of the Sustainable Development Goals, France has proposed to create an international coalition, which would be built upon the *Just Transition Guidelines towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all*, with the aim to put the guidelines into practice, further develop them and share experience between countries, with the ambition to promote the link



between labour and environmental policies.

48. Mr Chruszczow, Special Envoy for Climate Change, Poland's High Level Champion for COP24, said just transition is key to sustainable development and must be elevated at the global political level, as well as in daily life. The equal right of development must include resources, knowledge, respecting everyone's sovereignty, which is a principle underlined in the Paris Climate Agreement.

Closing session

49. Mr Kojo Agyemang-Bonsu, Manager, Mitigation and Transparency Support Programme, UN Climate Change Secretariat, said that prior to the Forum the assessment had been that there was very little information in terms of scientific peer review literature available to support our work. However, today demonstrated that there is a lot of information available to tap into, to ensure just transition.

50. Mr Agyemang-Bonsu highlighted two important dimensions of just transition, namely the impact of climate change on societies and humans and how we can best address those impacts. The Forum focused on the technical aspects, on the actions governments and stakeholders are taking to address climate change mitigation, and how this impacts on employment.

51. Mr Agyemang-Bonsu emphasised that just transition should not be compromised in any way. Therefore, to promote just transition and to encourage the creation of jobs, communities should not be deprived of access to clean and affordable energy.

52. Mr Agyemang-Bonsu noted that just transition is not all about money. It is also about mindsets and people adjusting to new lifestyles.

53. Mr Agyemang-Bonsu echoed Ms Monnoyer-Smith call for the establishment of a global coalition to look at just transition and said it would only be successful if all stakeholders work together. In addition, just transition will only happen with long-term planning. He also raised the question of whether international finance has a role in supporting the shift to greener economies.

54. Mr Agyemang-Bonsu highlighted that the costs of implementing just transition are small in relation to other costs, and that sectors such as transportation have been overlooked.

55. Mr Van Vuuren, stressed the importance of taking the work of the Forum forward. The responsibilities are huge in ensuring that the blueprints at the global and national levels go down to the grassroots.



56. Mr Van Vuuren concluded that leadership and champions of the process are in short supply. Finding champions all around the world, may they be leaders and innovators in key positions, play an important role in in raising awareness and scaling up success stories of just transition.

