



General Assembly

Distr.: General
5 April 2024

Original: English

Human Rights Council

Fifty-fifth session

26 February–5 April 2024

Agenda item 3

Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development

Resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council on 3 April 2024

55/9. Right to work

The Human Rights Council,

Guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations,

Reaffirming the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, and recalling all international human rights instruments relevant to the right to work, in particular the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the fundamental conventions of the International Labour Organization and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,

Reaffirming also previous Human Rights Council resolutions on the right to work, the most recent being resolution 49/11 of 31 March 2022,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 63/199 of 19 December 2008 on the International Labour Organization Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization, and Economic and Social Council resolutions 2007/2 of 17 July 2007, on the role of the United Nations system in providing full and productive employment and decent work for all, and 2008/18 of 24 July 2008, on promoting full employment and decent work for all,

Recalling also the International Labour Organization Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-up, adopted by the International Labour Conference at its eighty-sixth session, on 18 June 1998, and amended at its 110th session, on 11 June 2022, the Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization, adopted by the Conference at its ninety-seventh session, on 10 June 2008, the Global Jobs Pact, adopted by the Conference at its ninety-eighth session, on 19 June 2009, and the Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work, adopted by the Conference at its 108th session, on 21 June 2019,

Recognizing the primary role, mandate, expertise and specialization of the International Labour Organization within the United Nations system and through its unique tripartite structure and supervisory system in relation to the promotion and realization of decent work and full, productive and freely chosen employment for all, and recalling its initiatives and activities in that regard, including the Decent Work Agenda, and the centenary initiatives of the Organization,

Acknowledging the work of the treaty bodies, in particular the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, in relation to the right to work,



Acknowledging also the work of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, in particular the International Labour Organization, in supporting the efforts of States to promote inclusive, sustained economic growth, full, productive and freely chosen employment and decent work for all and the full realization of the right to work, and recognizing the important contributions made by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women in relation to the realization of the right to work for women,

Reaffirming that all human rights, civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights, including the right to development, are universal, indivisible, interdependent, interrelated and mutually reinforcing, and that all human rights must be treated in a fair and equal manner, on the same footing and with the same emphasis,

Emphasizing that States should undertake to guarantee that the right to work is to be exercised without discrimination of any kind as to race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, disability or other status,

Emphasizing also that the right to work is not only essential for realizing other human rights but also an inseparable and inherent part of human dignity and social justice, and is important in ensuring the satisfaction of human needs and values that are central to a dignified life,

Recognizing that, on the one hand, the development of automation enabled by advanced technologies, including robotics and artificial intelligence, brings the promise of higher productivity, job creation, better services and improved well-being, aimed at improving social inclusion, while on the other, it entails challenges that may have a broader impact on jobs, skills, wages and the nature of work itself that may vary widely across different regions and within countries, which could have an impact on those ill-equipped for the transition, including persons in vulnerable or marginalized situations,

Recognizing also that climate change poses an existential threat for all, and has already had an adverse impact on the full and effective enjoyment of the human rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, including the right to work,

Acknowledging that workers and communities affected by climate change actions, responses and impacts in the context of sustainable and inclusive economies should be covered by social protection, by broader investments aimed at creating economic opportunities and through appropriate training and assistance for job seekers, with a view to ensuring a just transition,

Recalling that the Paris Agreement takes into account the imperatives of a just transition of the workforce and the creation of decent work and quality jobs in accordance with nationally defined development priorities,

Reaffirming that social security systems can help to support a just transition and to minimize the impact of job losses by creating access to continuing education, improving labour market opportunities and transitioning individuals into newly created sustainable jobs,

Recognizing that the high incidence of the informal economy in all its aspects is a major challenge for the rights of workers, including the rights to work, to social security and to an adequate standard of living, and for inclusive development and the rule of law, and has a negative impact on the development of sustainable enterprises, public revenues and governments' scope of action, particularly with regard to economic, social and environmental policies,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the future of the right to work in connection with climate change actions, responses and impacts in the context of sustainable and inclusive economies;¹

2. *Reaffirms*, as enshrined in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the right to work, which includes the right of everyone to the opportunity to gain his or her living by work that he or she freely chooses or accepts, and that States should

¹ A/HRC/54/48.

take appropriate steps to progressively achieve the full realization of that right, including technical and vocational guidance and training programmes, policies and techniques, to achieve steady economic, social and cultural development and full, productive and freely chosen employment under conditions safeguarding the fundamental political and economic freedoms of the individual;

3. *Also reaffirms*, as enshrined in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the right of everyone to the enjoyment of just and favourable conditions of work that ensure, in particular, remuneration that provides all workers, as a minimum, with fair wages and equal remuneration for work of equal value without distinction of any kind, in particular women being guaranteed conditions of work not inferior to those enjoyed by men, with equal pay for equal work; a decent living for themselves and their families; safe and healthy working conditions; equal opportunity for everyone to be promoted in his or her employment to an appropriate higher level, subject to no considerations other than those of seniority and competence; and rest, leisure and reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay, and remuneration for public holidays;

4. *Further reaffirms* that States have the primary responsibility to ensure the full realization of all human rights and to endeavour to take steps, individually and through international assistance and cooperation, especially economic and technical, to the maximum of their available resources, with a view to progressively achieve the full realization of the right to work by all appropriate means, including in particular the adoption of legislative measures, in consultation with workers' and employers' associations;

5. *Stresses* that the freedom to choose or accept work, which is included in the right to work, entails the right to pursue professional options under equal conditions, especially for those whose freedom is frequently compromised by discriminatory legal provisions or forced labour, in particular women, young people, older persons and persons with disabilities;

6. *Also stresses* that States, as provided for by the relevant international legal instruments, should prohibit forced and compulsory labour and punish perpetrators for its use in all its forms, and seek to provide appropriate support and access to remedy to victims;

7. *Emphasizes* that the right to work entails, inter alia, the right not to be deprived of work arbitrarily and unfairly, and that States, in accordance with the relevant obligations in relation to the right to work, are required to put in place appropriate measures ensuring the protection of workers against unlawful dismissal;

8. *Calls upon* States to ensure the effective protection of the right to freedom of association with others, including the right to form and join trade unions of one's own choosing, for the promotion and protection of one's economic and social interests;

9. *Underscores* the equal right of men and women to the enjoyment of all human rights, including the right to work, and that equal access to work is pivotal to the full enjoyment of all human rights by women, while recognizing that women are on many occasions subject to discrimination in the context of realizing their rights in that regard on an equal basis with men and are disproportionately exposed to the most precarious working conditions, including work in the informal economy, limited or no legal protection, lower levels of representation in leadership and decision-making positions, lower levels of remuneration and involuntary temporary and part-time employment, and are performing, exclusively or largely, unpaid or underpaid care and domestic work within the household and the family, which may constitute on many occasions a barrier to women's full, equal and meaningful involvement in the labour market;

10. *Also underscores* the responsibility of the State to protect children from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with their education, or to be harmful to their health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development, and to take additional measures to eradicate child labour in all its forms;

11. *Emphasizes* that actions and responses to address climate change in the context of sustainable and inclusive economies and the fast pace of technological advances present

unprecedented opportunities for States to build a better, inclusive, accessible and sustainable world of work that can benefit from the untapped potential of persons with disabilities;

12. *Expresses deep concern* that inequalities are widening and there are not enough jobs, including quality jobs, and emphasizes that full, productive and freely chosen employment and decent work for young people play an important role in their empowerment and can contribute to, inter alia, the prevention of extremism, terrorism and social, economic and political instability, thus contributing to sustainable development and peace;

13. *Stresses* the fundamental importance of equal opportunities, education, and technical and vocational training, including the use of new and emerging digital technologies, especially artificial intelligence, and that lifelong learning opportunities and guidance for all, including for women, young people, older persons and persons with disabilities, are necessary for the realization of the right to work;

14. *Encourages* States to effectively implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including Sustainable Development Goal 8 on promoting sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all, and its targets;

15. *Stresses* that the Sustainable Development Goals and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development promote inclusive and sustained economic growth, higher levels of productivity and technological innovation, and encourage entrepreneurship and job creation, which can be effective measures to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, forced labour, contemporary forms of slavery and trafficking in persons, and that to ensure that no one is left behind, bearing these targets in mind, the goal is to achieve full, productive and freely chosen employment and decent work for all women and men by 2030;

16. *Recognizes* that employment should be a central objective of economic and social policies at the national, regional and international levels for the sustainable eradication of poverty and for providing an adequate standard of living, and emphasizes in that regard the importance of relevant and inclusive social protection measures, including social protection floors;

17. *Also recognizes* the fundamental importance of international cooperation, including through technical cooperation, capacity-building and the exchange of relevant lessons learned and good practices, in advancing efforts towards the full realization of the right to work through inclusive, sustainable economic growth, full, productive and freely chosen employment and decent work for all;

18. *Calls upon* States to put in place cohesive and comprehensive policies and to take the legislative and administrative measures necessary for the full realization of the right to work for all, including women, by, inter alia, considering undertaking policy commitments and measures to obtain full, productive and freely chosen employment and decent work for all, including through the establishment, where appropriate, of institutions for that purpose and by further strengthening tools, such as job services and social dialogue mechanisms, while paying continuous attention to professional and technical training and initiatives to foster small and medium-sized enterprises, cooperatives and start-ups, including those that are owned by women, and considering investing in infrastructure, services and social protection systems to allow for and to promote equitable sharing of care responsibilities between men and women;

19. *Highlights* the vital role of the private sector in generating new investments, job opportunities and financing for development and in advancing efforts towards the full realization of the right to work and the promotion of inclusive, sustained economic growth, full, productive and freely chosen employment and decent work for all, notes the multi-year strategy of the United Nations Global Compact to drive business awareness and action in support of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda by 2030, and also notes the need to promote the implementation of the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and the Women's Empowerment Principles established by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, as applicable;

20. *Recognizes* the important contribution of workers' and employers' organizations, including through strong, influential and inclusive mechanisms of social dialogue in the area of full, productive and freely chosen employment and decent work for all, and the importance of promoting equitable representation, participation and leadership in such organizations;

21. *Underscores* that there is an urgent need to create an environment at the national and international levels that is conducive to the attainment of full, productive and freely chosen employment and decent work for all as a foundation for sustainable development, and that an environment that supports investment, growth and entrepreneurship is essential to the creation of new job opportunities for women and men, and reaffirms that opportunities for all to obtain productive work in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity are essential to ensure the eradication of hunger and poverty, the realization of equality between women and men, the enhancement of working conditions of persons working in the informal economy, the improvement of economic and social well-being for all, the achievement of sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, and sustainable development;

22. *Calls upon* States to continue their efforts to prevent and combat all forms of discrimination, violence and harassment, including sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment at the workplace, including by adopting and implementing laws and policies and through training, awareness-raising and support for women's access to justice with respect to violence, sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment, bearing in mind that these continue to be among the factors that have an adverse impact on the realization of the right to work for women;

23. *Encourages* States to take all appropriate measures to prohibit discrimination in all matters concerning access to employment and job opportunities, including in relation to equal conditions of pay, hiring and career advancement, and to pay particular attention to women facing multiple intersecting forms of inequality and discrimination;

24. *Decides* to organize during its fifty-eighth session a panel discussion on the realization of the rights to work and to social security in the informal economy, in the context of sustainable and inclusive economies, with an emphasis on the importance of international cooperation and partnerships in this regard, to identify major challenges, experiences and best practices, and invites relevant United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, particularly the International Labour Organization and its social partners, and the treaty bodies, the special procedures, civil society, national human rights institutions and other stakeholders to contribute actively to the panel discussion;

25. *Requests* the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to prepare an analytical report on the realization of the rights to work and to social security in the informal economy, based on the panel discussion, and to submit the report to the Human Rights Council at its sixtieth session.

*53rd meeting
3 April 2024*

[Adopted without a vote.]