

## WELCOMING REMARKS

PANUDDA BOONPALA, ILO DEPUTY REGIONAL DIRECTOR FOR ASIA AND PACIFIC AT  
THE ILO/ASEAN SEMINAR ON THE FUTURE OF SOCIAL PROTECTION IN ASEAN

AMARI WATERGATE HOTEL, 15:00PM 4 JULY 2019

- Mr. Suradej Waleeittikul, Deputy Permanent Secretary of Labour, Ministry of Labour, the Kingdom of Thailand;
  - Mr Shinichi Akiyama, Deputy Assistant Minister for International Affairs, Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, Japan;
  - Distinguished representatives of Governements, workers, employers from the ASEAN countries;
  - Colleagues from ILO;
  - Ladies and Gentlemen.
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- Allow me to start by thanking the Govt of Japan and Thailand for hosting and providing financial support for this important seminar.

- I am honored to welcome you all to participate in this seminar and discuss such a timely topic – the Future of Social Protection.
- Like many senior Officials and leaders of our TUs and EOs, I attended the International Labour Conference and witnessed a historical moment – the adoption of **the ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work**.
- Its adoption takes place at a time of transformative change in the world of work, driven by technological innovations, demographic shifts, environmental and climate change, and globalization.
- With the adoption of the Centenary Declaration, the member states called the ILO to carry forward its mandate for social justice by further developing its human-centred approach to the future of work.
- As you are fully aware that **social protection is a central element of this human-centred approach**. The Declaration calls for universal access to comprehensive and sustainable social protection, re-enforcing the 2030 for Sustainable Development

Goals “a world where no one left behind”. That goal cannot be attained without social protection.

- **Ladies and gentlemen**, I am very pleased to note that more and more governments in our region place social protection at the core of their development agenda. The ASEAN Labour Ministers Statement on Future of Work, adopted in Singapore in April this year also includes social protection as one of the priorities.
- In reality, we still have enormous unfinished business - the extension of social protection still remains a serious challenge for the region.
- One in ten workers live in extreme poverty, partially led by high levels of vulnerable employment, particularly in the form of informal work without adequate social protection.
- Before closing I would like to share with you 3 points that we consider essential to ensure further progresses in social protection:
- First, Increase the aggregate level of expenditure in social protection to allow a progressive realization of the universal right to social protection.

- Second, Adapt more efficient delivery mechanisms. Indeed, management and governance of social protection needs to be at the core of the efforts to extend social protection.
- Third, Adapt social protection systems to the changing characteristics of labour markets and prepare for the future of work. We need to ensure that we respond to particular challenges faced by workers in informal employment – including those in new forms of work - and their families; migrant workers. Naturally, gender sensitivity is a must responding to specific challenges faced by women in the labour market.
- I expect this seminar will have an in-depth discussion about the opportunities, challenges and innovative solutions to extend social protection in the ASEAN region.
- I would like to wish you all a fruitful meeting today and tomorrow. Thank you.