



Restoring Dignity,
Inspiring Change.

Statement by the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC) at the 109th Session of the International Labour Conference, prepared by Ignacio Alonso Alasino.

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“No one is saved alone”

Mr. President, the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC) is honored to deliver this statement at the 109th Session of the International Labour Conference, in response to the report of the Director-General on the theme of the ILO response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

ICMC is a Catholic Church-inspired, non-profit organization, providing direct humanitarian and other services to uprooted people throughout the world, advocating for and with them for just and equitable migration policies, and networking with other faith-based organizations sharing similar values and actions, including “The Future of Work – Labour after *Laudato si’*”, in which we have engaged collaboratively with ILO and a wide range of CSOs. It aims to protect and serve refugees, asylum seekers, internally displaced people, survivors of human trafficking, and other migrants - regardless of faith, race, ethnicity, or nationality.

During this global pandemic, ICMC is grateful for the efforts and work done by humanitarian workers, frontline responders and essential workers serving the people, healthcare professionals, and many others who risk their lives for others. Many of these service providers are themselves refugees and migrants.

ICMC wishes to focus attention on the following points related to the present pandemic situation:

1. Countless refugee and migrant families across the world are being denied equitable access to preventive measures (including vaccines), as well as diagnosis and treatment of COVID-19. A fully inclusive and person-centred approach is essential to an effective response to this global pandemic.
2. Fundamental labour rights of all workers must be scrupulously respected and promoted while the global community continues to implement effective measures to relieve the economic and social consequences of the crisis. These actions should fully include refugees and migrants, including those working in the informal economy and migrant women workers engaged in care and domestic work sectors.

3. Access to jobs and to decent employment conditions and salaries effects a strong impact on the countries of origin, as well as on the countries of transit and destination, and can facilitate a successful integration for newcomers as integral contributors and beneficiaries in the host societies.

4. Now more than ever, as we face significant geopolitical tension and waning commitment to multilateralism, we must promote positive, comprehensive, and effective cooperation among States, civil society, and other stakeholders. We are convinced that the ILO can and must play a key role defending the dignity of workers and promoting social dialogue between governments, employers' and workers' associations, within the overall context of the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

5. The pandemic is exacerbating inequality, which contributes to the so-called "throwaway" culture, as is frequently denounced by Pope Francis, by favoring the privileged few but leaving the majority of people on the margins and peripheries, without access to basic human needs and rights, including education, health care, and decent work. The lesson learned from this unprecedented crisis should be **"the awareness that we are a global community, all in the same boat, where one person's problems are the problems of all."** (*cf. Fratelli tutti, 32*)

"Once more we [have] realized that no one is saved alone; we can only be saved together" (*cf. Fratelli tutti, 32*). Let us, therefore, maintain a firm commitment to overcome this pandemic with the **"antibodies of justice, charity, and solidarity."** (*"A plan to resurrect"*)

Let us join forces and advance together to the future we want.

Thank you, Mr. President.