

**PLENARY ADDRESS BY  
THE HONOURABLE  
PEHIN DATO ABU BAKAR APONG  
MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS, BRUNEI DARUSSALAM  
109<sup>TH</sup> INTERNATIONAL LABOUR CONFERENCE  
JUNE 2021**

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ وَبَرَكَاتُهُ

A very good morning, afternoon and evening to you all.

His Excellency, Mr Omar Zniber

President of the 109<sup>th</sup> International Labour Conference,

Chairperson and Members of the Governing Body,

Mr Guy Ryder, Director-General of the International Labour  
Organization,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen.

First and foremost, I wish to convey my sincerest congratulations to  
Your Excellency, Mr Omar Zniber, on your election as President of the  
109<sup>th</sup> Session of the International Labour Conference.

I am pleased to join fellow constituents in also congratulating the ILO for their innovativeness in constructing, for the very first time in the history of the annual Conferences, a virtual International Labour Conference.

I recount the astute insights of the Report of the Director-General on “**work in a time of COVID**” which underscores the adoption by the Conference in 2019 of the **Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work**. The Declaration’s call to action for all Member States to; advance lifelong learning and education for all, building sustainable social protection, administer adequate protection of workers, decent work and productive employment, remains relevant still as a map in adapting to the challenges we all face in the COVID context.

Mr. President,

We are forging ahead with re-invigorating domestic employment continuity through priorities outlined by the Manpower Planning and Employment Council: in the form of support for private sector businesses; maintaining job security; as well as employment generation.

The Government of Brunei Darussalam is endeavoring to build partnerships and collaboration between industry players, regulators and training institutions to formulate new upskilling and reskilling programmes for locals. We are motivating human resource development through the provision of online as well as hands-on training in Industry 4.0 skills and technical skills.

Mr President,

According to our Labour Force Survey in 2019, Brunei Darussalam unemployment rate is 6.8 percent. Since its inception in 2020, the Manpower Planning and Employment Council has managed to increase local employment to nearly four times compared to previous years with an achievement of 103% or 12,763 jobseekers employed.

The Government of His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam remains cautiously optimistic as we trek the gradual road towards recovery. Nevertheless, we are positively reaffirming our investment into lifelong learning opportunities, supportive curriculums that bridge industry needs and sustain the protection of fair working conditions and occupational safety and health.

On behalf of the Government of Brunei Darussalam, I would like to applaud the ILO's steadfast and unwavering commitment towards advocating for an inclusive, equitable and responsive world of work firmly rooted in economic and human-centered recovery.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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