



► 20th American Regional Meeting

1–3 October 2025, Punta Cana

► Punta Cana Declaration for democracy, peace, decent work and social dialogue: Uniting the Americas for a future with sustainable development and social justice

(adopted on 3 October 2025)

Preamble

1. We, the delegates of the governments, employers and workers of the Member States of the International Labour Organization (ILO) in the Americas, meeting in Punta Cana, Dominican Republic, from 1 to 3 October 2025, on the occasion of the 20th American Regional Meeting of the ILO, adopt this Punta Cana Declaration. We express our gratitude to the Government of the Dominican Republic for its valuable contribution as the host country of the meeting, whose impeccable organization and warm hospitality have been crucial to the success of the tripartite social dialogue.
2. The 20th American Regional Meeting took place against a backdrop of profound transformations, marked by accelerating technological changes, climate change, the weakening of democratic institutions and persistent structural inequalities. In this context, governments, workers and employers have agreed on a motto that summarizes the fundamental values needed to address these challenges: “Democracy, peace, decent work and social dialogue: Uniting the Americas for a future with sustainable development and social justice”. We reaffirm that only through strong democratic institutions and effective social dialogue can we move towards a more just and equitable future of work. To this end, it is important to defend multilateralism as a key tool for social justice and lasting peace.
3. We recognize the progress made since the 2018 *Panama Declaration for the ILO Centenary: The future of work in the Americas*, but we also warn of setbacks and the emergence of new risks, many of which have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. The region continues to face challenges which we have identified as priorities that require urgent and coordinated responses. These priorities were discussed during the four thematic sessions as challenges requiring policies that promote decent work, sustainability, the reduction of structural gaps and the strengthening of democratic institutions.
4. Faced with a world of work that is in transformation, driven by technological advances, demographic changes and the climate crisis, we reaffirm our commitment to just transitions that put people first. This requires strengthening vocational training, productive innovation and tripartite dialogue. Lasting peace can only be achieved if it is based on social justice, labour inclusion and the absence of any form of discrimination. It is therefore essential to consolidate institutional forums that promote these transitions with a forward-looking approach, where respect for sovereignty is a key factor in achieving development, decent work and social inclusion.

5. The ILO must continue to exercise strong, inclusive and visionary leadership, reaffirming itself as the legitimate forum for tripartism and international cooperation. We renew our commitment to multilateralism, the strengthening of the system of international labour standards and the design of human-centred policies. This document sets out clear priorities for the ILO and its constituents in the Americas in line with the ILO's Strategic Plan for 2026–29, with the aim of promoting inclusive and sustainable growth, reducing informality, closing structural gaps and ensuring social justice for all people in the region. Inspired by the ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work (2019) and the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (1998), as amended in 2022, we affirm that only through democracy, cooperation and solidarity can we move towards a more inclusive, sustainable and resilient future of work in the Americas.

Priorities for a regional agenda for decent work and social justice

6. Guarantee the protection of the fundamental principles and rights at work: freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining; the elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labour; the effective abolition of child labour; the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation; and a safe and healthy working environment. To make progress towards this goal, it is essential to align national labour legislation and practices with international labour standards, strengthen labour administration and inspection, and ensure swift and effective access to justice, together with robust mechanisms to prevent and resolve labour disputes. This requires strengthening the capacities of the competent authorities to secure compliance with the law and ensure modern and effective labour inspection.
7. Promote an institutional, economic and social environment that, as part of the digital transition, drives inclusive and sustainable development, generating full and productive employment in support of decent work. This requires integrated policies on formalization, promotion of sustainable enterprises and support for innovation and private investment; the adoption of new technologies; improvements in the systemic productivity and competitiveness of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) and their better integration into value chains; the strengthening of labour skills; and the adoption of new models of production within a framework of decent work for the benefit of workers, enterprises and society.
8. Ensure comprehensive and sustainable social protection through systems based on the principles of universality, solidarity, equality, equity and non-discrimination, alongside policies on the transition from the informal to the formal economy.
9. Advance comprehensive public policies for the respect, promotion and realization of the fundamental principle and right to a safe and healthy working environment through a system of defined and differentiated rights, responsibilities and duties. Consolidate a culture of prevention based on tripartite social dialogue with the effective participation of governments, employers and workers.
10. Strengthen wage policies, including the operationalization of living wages, in accordance with the conclusions adopted by the Meeting of Experts on Wage Policies, including Living Wages held in February 2024, through wage-setting processes and collective bargaining.
11. Strengthen democratic institutions and the rule of law by revitalizing continuous institutionalized, effective and robust social dialogue through the effective participation of the most representative independent organizations of employers and workers, as a legitimate mechanism for strengthening governance of the world of work while guaranteeing fundamental rights, and for building consensus and designing inclusive public policies.

12. Promote a just transition towards societies that are resilient to climate change, combining environmental, economic and social sustainability with productive dynamism and decent work. This transition must generate green jobs, encourage innovation and business investment – particularly by MSMEs – and facilitate the adaptation of the fabric of production. At the same time, it must protect those most affected by natural disasters and promote inclusive and sustainable pathways for development.
13. Bridge skills gaps, which requires modernizing vocational training systems, promoting comprehensive public policies and public-private partnerships, facilitating skills certification and ensuring that training responds to the real demands of the fabric of production and promotes the labour market integration of young people, women, persons with disabilities, migrants and other marginalized populations.
14. Close the digital divide as an essential means of ensuring an inclusive future of work. This requires strategic investment in infrastructure and connectivity, public policies that promote innovation and collaboration between sectors, and digital skills programmes that ensure equitable access to technology. Taking advantage of digital transformations must be framed within a decent work approach and respect for the fundamental principles and rights at work, ensuring safe and equitable working conditions, taking into account the ongoing standard-setting discussion within the ILO on decent work in the platform economy.
15. Integrate gender equality as a cross-cutting theme in all labour policies, promoting concrete measures to reduce wage gaps and participation gaps, guarantee equal access to training and leadership, and recognize the value of care work.
16. Renew the tripartite commitment to strengthening regional policies, national legislation and effective social dialogue, including collective bargaining, in order to prevent and eliminate violence and harassment in the world of work, in accordance with the Violence and Harassment Convention (No. 190) and Recommendation (No. 206), 2019.
17. Strengthen, develop and implement integrated and coherent national care policies and systems that promote decent work and gender equality.
18. Encourage the ratification and effective implementation of the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169), to safeguard the rights of indigenous and tribal peoples.
19. Promote fair labour migration in the Americas; strengthen coherence between employment and migration policies; promote bilateral and multilateral agreements on safe, orderly and regular labour migration; ensure fair recruitment; and facilitate access to decent work for migrant workers, refugees, asylum seekers and returnees, especially women and young people.
20. We reaffirm our commitment to the prevention and elimination of child labour and the protection of young people who have reached the minimum working age, in accordance with the fundamental principles and rights at work.

Lines of future action

21. The guidelines contained in this section are not exhaustive. Therefore, other relevant elements may be incorporated or taken into account in the regional implementation plan, to the extent that they contribute to the achievement of the aims that guide this Declaration.
 - (a) Promote transition strategies to formalize informal employment, using the Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy Recommendation, 2015 (No. 204), as a reference for national policies and combining business incentives, proportionate

regulatory frameworks and universal access to comprehensive, adequate and sustainable social protection systems, including the Formalization Strategy for Latin America and the Caribbean (FORLAC 2.0).

- (b) Advance safe, orderly and regular labour migration policies, in accordance with the fundamental principles and rights at work, which are applicable to all persons regardless of their migration status, in order to progress in the implementation of the Regional Strategy on Labour Migration and Human Mobility 2023–2030, in coordination with consultative processes and regional integration mechanisms, as well as the promotion of a tripartite forum on labour migration in the Americas in the 2026–27 biennium.
- (c) Promote technical and vocational training frameworks that recognize prior learning, encourage labour mobility and respond to digital and ecological challenges, including the Skills Passport supported by the Inter-American Centre for Knowledge Development in Vocational Training (CINTERFOR).
- (d) Recognize the Latin America and the Caribbean Free of Child Labour regional initiative as an example of cooperation that should continue to lead efforts towards a region free of this phenomenon.
- (e) Move towards a culture in the world of work that incorporates gender equality, inclusion and diversity as strategic elements for sustainability and innovation.
- (f) Promote fiscal investment policies and productivity ecosystems for decent work.
- (g) Foster enabling environments for sustainable enterprises, particularly MSMEs, as the main generators of quality employment.
- (h) Strengthen employers' and workers' organizations as guarantors of democratic participation, stability and social resilience.

Call to the Office and follow-up

22. We request that the Office:

- (a) develop, in consultation with constituents, a regional implementation plan with clear targets based on the priorities set out in this Declaration to enable follow-up of the Organization's work in the Americas, to be presented to the Governing Body at its 356th Session (March 2026);
- (b) promote coordination with the United Nations system, development banks and regional mechanisms to advance the creation of opportunities for decent work in the Americas, strengthening democratic multilateralism and the consolidation of the Global Coalition for Social Justice;
- (c) continue to support constituents by building their capacity to influence progress on labour, economic, social and environmental matters and to promote democratic, peaceful, resilient and inclusive societies.