

I'm pleased to know that our colleagues at MIT are reaching out to people all over the world to engage them in this important discussion about the future of work. We are launching our own future of work initiative here at the ILO. And this course will fit very well with our initiative.

Look, I think that our future of work initiative responds to two essential things. One's got to do with need. One's got to do with opportunity. The need comes from the fact, and we're all conscious of this in our everyday lives, that there is massive change taking place in the world of work, transformative change at a pace and at a depth that we don't really have experience of in the past. So we think that we need to study these big changes to understand them better as a way of working out what we should do about them in order to make sure that the world of work responds to the ILO's ideas of social justice fairness of work.

And then there is the opportunity. And the opportunity comes from the fact that in three years time, in 2019, the ILO will celebrate its 100th birthday, its centenary. So what better opportunity-- they don't come round that frequently-- what better opportunity than that to have this in depth reflection about the direction that the world of work is taking and what we can do to shape it, to move it, towards these ideals of social justice.

We are proposing to amend the states that they structure their national dialogues around four conversations. And very quickly, one is to do with work and society. Sounds a bit philosophical, but I think there are some really deep questions out there about what work means to each and every one of us in terms of, not only of earning our living, but also of self-realization, of what our lives mean, and how we want to proceed with them.

Secondly, and it's a most frequently asked question that I at least get about the future is decent work of tomorrow, the decent jobs of tomorrow. Where are those jobs coming from?

We're having to create 40 million jobs every year just to absorb the new people coming onto the labor markets. And frankly, we're not able to do it at the moment. So we have to be able to discuss the nature and the origin of work in the future.

The third item is about the organization, the organization of work in production. We're seeing the digital economy take off. We're seeing the way that the internet is mediating work in entirely new ways. Maybe, the enterprise is going to look very different in the future from what it looks like today.

We're seeing the fragmentation and globalization of production systems in global supply chains. We need to understand what the full implications are of this new organization and global division of labor.

And the fourth point-- and this is the culminating point of the whole thing. We have to say, well, what are the

consequences of these changes for the ILO's mandate for social justice? How can we shape, manage all of these changes, so that we keep the world moving in this direction of social justice?

So let me end by encouraging everyone to join us in using the ideas and the information presented in this course to improve the future of work for people all around the world.