

Workshop on Just Transition, Green and Blue Jobs – February 26 and 27, Nassau, The Bahamas.

Thursday, February 26, 2026

2nd Session – Social Protection and Labor Inclusion in Green Transitions.

We welcome representatives of the OAS

Mr. Jesús Schucry Giacoman and Mr. Mark Lambrides

Mrs. Maria Claudia Camacho

Representatives of the Government of the Bahamas

Chair of IACML Group 1, Pia Takita

Representatives from CAF, ECLAC, ILO and IDB

Representatives of CEATAL

Representatives of IACML Governments

We welcome this activity and trust that this workshop will be a space for exchange that generates significant contributions, allowing us to make concrete progress on the commitments made by governments in the Declaration and Plan of Action of Bogotá of the IACML.

The effects of climate change are palpable. We see and experience them in every natural disaster, in the increasingly frequent and intense heat waves and cold spells, in the fires that devastate the biodiversity of our countries, in the proliferation of endemic diseases, among other situations that demand urgent attention.

These phenomena compromise the infrastructure and productive capacity of countries, impact employment conditions and opportunities, and motivate some of the large displacements of people who migrate in our continent.

The Government of the Bahamas highlighted the impact of natural disasters on infrastructure.

A just transition is the priority proposal of the trade union movement of the Americas organized in the TUCA in the face of the consequences of the climate and environmental crisis.

This is what the trade union movement of the Americas ratified at the 5th Congress of the TUCA, reaffirming the just transition as a guiding principle of our action, as it puts the necessary articulation between the principles of social justice and environmental justice in the foreground.

A just transition to green jobs must be framed within an integrated approach to public policies that combines: i) sustainable productive development; ii) training and retraining; iii) extension of social protection; and iv) compliance with labor rights.

In cases of extreme weather events, ILO Recommendation No. 205 provides important guidance on how to respond to these events: strengthening prevention, strategic planning and resilience and recovery capacity within the framework of international labor standards.

Two key elements of Recommendation No. 205 that we want to highlight are its guidance on:

- the importance of ensuring the stabilization of livelihoods and incomes through immediate measures for employment and social protection
- and the formulation of responses through social dialogue in consultation with the most representative employers' and workers' organizations, from where it is possible to agree and coordinate more effective actions in the affected territories.

On the other hand, we want to draw particular attention to the effects of high temperatures in the workplace. Excessive heat is a threat to the health and safety of workers.

There are risks for those who work in hot indoor environments or in poorly ventilated enclosed spaces that lack adequate air conditions.

Outdoor work generally presents higher levels of risk because implementing preventative measures is more complex in that environment. Representatives from ECLAC, the ILO, the Brazilian government – which championed collective bargaining – and Jesús Giacoman addressed this issue at the opening.

Construction work, for example, is mostly done outdoors and requires a high level of physical exertion. Something similar occurs with activities like **delivery work in the platform economy**, which exposes workers to harsh weather conditions, largely without adequate rest areas or hydration on hot days. We're talking about heat stress, but also other problems such as heat-related illnesses like skin cancer caused by ultraviolet radiation.

The effective realization of the ILO's fundamental right to a safe and healthy working environment requires taking preventive and protective measures against this problem through the adaptation of working conditions by means of collective bargaining and tripartite social dialogue, and the protection of workers' rights, in particular the right to interrupt a work situation if it entails an imminent and serious danger to their life or health.

Climate change presents multiple challenges for the world of work, but it is possible to address them through the active cooperation of representative actors in the world of work – workers, governments and employers – within the framework of institutionalized tripartite social dialogue and inter-institutional coordination, the cornerstones of decent work.

The challenge of achieving a just transition with green and blue jobs intersects and converges with the challenges posed by other

transitions such as the digital transition and the necessary transition to formalization of economies and jobs in our region.

In particular, informality in the Americas presents itself as a structural problem that perpetuates poverty and inequality among our populations and hinders the implementation, reach, and impact of public policy. Both CAF and ECLAC emphasized the issue of informality. The ILO representative, with reference to social protection, highlighted the paragraph from the Punta Cana Declaration of the ILO 20th American Regional Meeting, the tripartite commitment of, and I quote:

“To 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.”

It must be recognized that the impact of the climate crisis particularly affects sectors whose rights have been historically violated.

I would like to highlight one of the paragraphs from the workshop's foundational document, which is important for us to

keep in mind throughout the discussions during these sessions. I quote verbatim:

“Ensuring inclusion is central to the green and blue transitions. Without deliberate measures, vulnerable groups –particularly women, youth, indigenous populations, and workers in informal or rural economies– risk being excluded from new opportunities in sectors such as energy, construction, and transport (...). Inclusive strategies therefore require targeted access to social protection, training, and financial support, as well as measures to reduce barriers created by discrimination, geographic isolation, or lack of technological resources. By prioritizing inclusion, Ministries of Labor can help ensure that the transition to sustainable economies promotes equity, reduces social disparities, and leaves no worker behind...”

At the same time, there are asymmetries between countries in their capacity to respond to the challenges of climate change, making the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities of social actors relevant.

We wish to emphasize the important role of Ministries of Labor within the framework of national obligations regarding climate change. The International Court of Justice has determined in its

Advisory Opinion that these obligations apply to all states, whether or not they are parties to the main climate agreements.

The Inter-American Court of Human Rights, in its Advisory Opinion OC-32-2025, indicates that States must:

- Include specific provisions in your occupational health and safety regulations to address climate risks.
- Protecting vulnerable workers from tropical diseases exacerbated by climate change.
- Promote a just transition to green jobs with the participation of unions and employers.
- Strengthen social security, including health, income and services in the face of new climate contingencies.
- Supporting informal workers for their integration into the formal economy.
- Promote the creation of green jobs in sectors such as energy, recycling, construction and technology.
- Monitor public policies and ensure access to justice for people whose labor rights are violated in this context.

Tripartite and institutionalized social dialogue, together with the rights of collective bargaining and freedom of association, are fundamental pillars for achieving compliance with the

international and regional obligations of national states regarding climate change.

The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights stated in its 2021 Resolution on Climate Emergency that States must take into account their human rights obligations, including labor and trade union rights, when implementing transition policies in their countries.

These cannot be isolated, sporadic policies, but rather the result of a coordinated and convergent public policy plan. Work with rights dignifies in its entirety.

Despite the ratification of international treaties, implementation is often marginal in contrast to the need for social justice on the continent.

Also reflect on the situation of some countries in the region that, in a denialist current, promote a number of initiatives that dismantle the achievements obtained in previous years.

In the same vein, and in accordance with the commitments made regarding social dialogue by the OAS Ministers of Labor in the Declaration and Action Plan of Bogotá, we wish to recall the

statement made in the “Resolution concerning a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all”, adopted by the ILO in 2023, which affirms that:

“Members should give special attention to respecting, promoting and realizing freedom of association and collective bargaining as enabling rights, which are vital for social dialogue...”

In a region like the Americas, where systematic violations of the rights to freedom of association, collective bargaining and strike are recorded, a greater commitment is needed from Governments and multilateral organizations of regional integration and cooperation to respect, promote and realize the rights to freedom of association and collective bargaining, ensuring consistency in the application of the commitments, responsibilities and obligations that reach the States.

In this sense, we emphasize the importance of strengthening tripartite and institutionalized social dialogue with the full participation of trade unions and employers' organizations.

Director Jesús Schucry Giacoman's remarks on the capacity of tripartite social dialogue to build legitimacy in policies. This

morning, the governments of Colombia and Chile mentioned the importance of tripartite social dialogue in their actions. And Canada spoke about the participation of trade unions. We value these mentions and encourage all governments to adopt and strengthen a tripartite approach in the institutional designs for policy development and coordination throughout the public policy cycle .

Strengthening social dialogue means strengthening the responsiveness of public policy within the framework of just transitions toward more sustainable societies in all dimensions of life, and moving beyond mere debate to the effective implementation of commitments in the Americas. This is what the workers of the region expect, and this is what we are committed to here at the OAS.