

**Item 2. Strategies for building a healthy, protected and productive workforce in Asia and the Pacific 6 Sept'22 8.30 to 10.30 IST (10 – 12 Bangkok Time)**

Thank you Chair. I voice my concerns related to India but applicable to South & East Asia too from the perspective of a researcher and advocate for the rights of older people representing my NGO Development, Welfare and Research Foundation.

What seems important to me is that while there has been progress in building a healthy, protected and productive workforce yet we need to introduce many livelihood opportunities for ageing populations and a variety of social protection schemes in the informal sector where a substantial proportion of ageing populations work and who pertinently need focus on alleviating poverty, inequality and improving household consumption from a healthy ageing perspective and with a gender sensitive focus. The emphasis on life cycle schemes for working age segments taking care of older ages is the need of the hour.

Last 2 years experiences during covid pandemic times indicates that certain measures were taken to protect and enhance social security but these had more of welfare tokenism rather than being a development oriented strategy. There is need to put in place secure contractual mechanisms between the workforce and their employers so that those working can get health care provisions which contribute towards their better health status as well as enhance quality of life. The linkages between decent employment avenues with multiple age retirement options, opportunities for mid-life skill development and universal social protection coverage should be strengthened and available to whole of adult population. Protection of working and disability rights at all employment facilities has yet to be put in place as much as regulation of wages, timely delivery of

these and access to universal social security measures have to be streamlined in countries. The gaps between employment and pensions, social security not being at par with standard of living index and not including health security have to be narrowed down urgently. Besides, adult and digital literacy has to be made universal and an empowering strategy for ageing populations in remote, rural and urban areas.

Thank you