



The Director-General

9 – APR 2020

Dear Prime Minister,

In a communication dated 3 April 2020, the European Trade Union Confederation, BusinessEurope, CEEP and SMEunited, requested the ILO's urgent intervention with a view to the withdrawal of new regulations granting your Excellency the power to dismiss members of the Social Dialogue Council at will during the COVID-19 epidemic. I understand that the Polish social partners made a similar joint request upon the parliament's adoption of the law.

I must express my deep concern that the weakening of the autonomy of the social partners on the Social Dialogue Council, and thus the Council itself, could be considered as a measure that would assist in the prevention and eradication of the COVID-19 virus.

Allow me, your Excellency, to bring to your attention that the 100 years of experience of the august Organization that I have the honour to represent have demonstrated that social dialogue is the key to any meaningful and sustainable crisis response. Whether it be for protecting workers in the workplace, stimulating the economy or supporting employment and incomes, social dialogue is an irreplaceable tool for balanced crisis management and the determination of effective mitigation and recovery policies.

The Polish Social Dialogue Council, welcomed by the ILO supervisory bodies at the time of its creation in 2015, has demonstrated its value as a useful forum for continued dialogue on national policy responses.

Yet social dialogue, if it is to be effective, must be based on the full respect of freedom of association as both a human right and an enabling right to which all ILO member States have committed themselves. Governments must therefore recognize that the value of their cooperation with social partners, especially in challenging times as those we are currently encountering, is dependent upon respect for their freedom and independence, including the autonomy to appoint their representatives on consultative bodies, as provided in article 3 of the Freedom of Association Convention No. 87.

Mr Mateusz Morawiecki
Prime Minister
WARSAW