

Thank you chair. Before I begin my speech, with heavy hearts I pray for the departed souls, who were victim of plane crash in my city today early morning.

Further, on behalf of SEWA, I take this opportunity today to congratulate each one of us present in the room towards the efforts, commitment and solidarity put forward during last 2 weeks to ensure that workers in the informal economy get their voice visibility and validation of the work and contribution.

The battle that Ela ben Bhatt started 5 decades before, of removing the preset ideas and attitudes towards the workers of the informal economy, now seem to be finding its way forward, when today we have finalized resolutions and conclusions towards formality.

The path breaking ILO's recommendation for the world of work- R204 for formalizing the informal will now surely get some reinforcement. It will allow them to prepare future programs with focus on collection and dissemination of statistics concerning informal economy workers and facilitate evidence-based policy making.

We are particularly happy that the text now acknowledges the Gender inequalities and those that are often excluded from the formal social protection systems. And thus, they lack visibility with increased vulnerability. We also congratulate our group that has enabled a plan of action for Gender-responsive and inclusive policies and regulations to ensure growth and decent work for the women workers of the informal economy.

Climate change issue, that was not part of R204 a decade ago, today has become a greatest concern for all. The General discussion recognized the near permanent adverse impact on the workers and have decided to work upon the resilience building for the informal economy workers.

Last but not at the least, the conclusions also recognized the fact that the transition from informal to formal though complex is a gradual process that needs to address the demands of the informal economy workers and we need to bring about reforms in the policies, laws and regulations that prevents formalization.

I would like to end my speech by asking each one of us to continue to commit to recognize the contribution of the workers of the informal economy, particularly the women and work towards progressive but balance approach towards transition of workers and worker led economic units towards formalization.

Thank you