

Thank you, Chair, for giving the TUAC and IndustriALL the opportunity to comment on the important work of the OECD Steel Committee. IndustriALL brings the voice of 50 million workers in 140 countries, who are very concerned on recent developments in the steel sector during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

We share a lot of the concerns that were raised today. The pandemic still has a tight grip on the industry but even more on the workers in the steel industry all over the world. Despite a weak market and despite the pandemic, global steel **making capacity** again increased in 2020 by over 1.5 %, reaching 2,45 billion tons at the end of 2020. At the same time, actual steel **production** dropped sharply in many regions of the world, namely in North America and Europe.

We see that the impact of COVID-19 has not been felt to the same extent everywhere, and we are extremely concerned to see that overcapacity has increased yet again, even while many regions in the world are still in the middle of the pandemic. Urgent action is needed to tackle global overcapacity which can flood the international market and artificially drive down steel prices. Now more than ever workers call for international action to ensure a fair global level playing field which allows for fair international trade.

The trend to growing overcapacity increases also the pressure on the workers in our industry: job losses are one issue that concerns us very much and must be limited, but also the steady incline of fatal accidents among steelworkers, like lately in India, Spain, South Korea and South Africa. IndustriALL and TUAC encourage the OECD to take the following fact into account: **We are talking about real people, men and women working in the steel industry. So, their working conditions, health and safety situation, livelihoods and communities must always be taken into consideration.** Proper health and safety measures combined with real participation of workers and their representatives are the best way to keep not only COVID-19 virus infection rates low; they also protect workers' lives and put an end to those unnecessary fatalities in the industry.

Respect for existing social dialog structures and joint health and safety committees on all levels are key to achieve this.

The OECD has been vocal during the COVID-19 crisis about the need for sustained and prolonged fiscal support to businesses and workers, in order to mitigate the negative impact of the pandemic and lead the recovery. This includes increasing social safety nets, short-term work schemes and other forms of income support to workers, while orienting the recovery towards a more resilient and greener economic model. The TUAC warmly encourages the Steel Committee to work closely with the Economic Committee and the Employment, Labour and Social Affairs Committee on this issue.

Let me conclude with the following remark:

Steelworkers around the globe should not be punished for this global health pandemic, and TUAC calls on the members of the OECD Steel Committee to work within their remits to ensure fair international trade and safe working conditions for all steelworkers. This includes our demand for a just transition in the sector: A level playing field must consider policies to protect jobs and ensure a Just transition. We urge a tripartite structure as well bringing government, employers and workers' representatives including trade unions to find common solutions to the global challenges that the steel sector is facing today.

We recognize the vital role our industry plays in achieving the goals of the Paris Climate Deal. Investments in clean technology must come alongside concerted Just Transition plans for steelworkers, negotiated with the workforce and its unions.

Thank you for your attention, chair