

G20 Employment Task Force  
October 2, 2012

Ms. Ronnie Goldberg  
Chair, BIAC ELSA Committee

- Brent has provided an overview of our key points for quality apprenticeships. My job is to put these in a broader context. I would like to address three questions in this regard:
  - Where do apprenticeships fit in the context of youth employment;
  - Why is this a critical opportunity for G20 engagement;
  - What are IOE and BIAC doing specifically with respect to the B20 commitment made in Los Cabos to scale up opportunities for both internships and apprenticeships?
- The longstanding problem in many countries of youth unemployment has been exacerbated by the recent financial and economic crises, including the on-going crisis in the Eurozone and slow or slowing growth in many G20 countries. Low skilled and disadvantaged youth are especially hard hit, and the long term prognosis for their future prospects is not optimistic.
- The G20 initiative to focus on strengthening apprenticeship programmes constitutes an important opportunity for concrete, practical action to create and ensure more productive pathways for youth into work.
- However, let us not kid ourselves. Apprenticeship programs are neither a panacea nor a global solution. The underlying causes of youth unemployment cannot and will not be redressed in isolation from the underlying issues of economic growth and job creation generally. Nor is there a single youth employment crisis amenable to one size fits all interventions. The causes and solutions lie at the national level, and will differ not only among countries, but within countries. At the G20 level, we should be identifying practical suggestions and ways of implementing them. Working apprenticeship systems will not appear overnight. But none of these caveats should discourage us. Apprenticeships are an important vector for creating employment opportunities and raising skills.

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- An additional contribution of apprenticeship programs is to develop the adaptability of young people – to instill a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship that will enable individuals to not only fulfil specific job requirements, but to develop a proactive approach and attitude towards their own careers.
  - That brings me to my second point – from a business perspective this project on apprenticeships is an opportunity for the G20 to demonstrate value by driving forward concrete solutions to address a critical economic and social problem. We welcome this action and dialogue and reiterate that business is an important and committed actor in this process.
    - By helping to produce concrete results on the ground, G20 can enhance the social acceptance necessary for ongoing political support of its mandate and activities.
    - This will require a narrowing of focus, i.e. restricting the number of issues on the G20 Labour process agenda so as to focus on investing in solutions where concrete results can be achieved.
    - These concrete results must be deliverable in the short term. This means that national governments must be prepared to actualize their G20 commitments.
  - Finally, I would like to describe the actions being taken by IOE and BIAC to take forward the B20 commitments made in Los Cabos
    - At the invitation of the B20 Employment Task Force Leadership, IOE and BIAC have agreed to implement a project designed, in the words of the final communique, “scale up the number, quality and image of internships and apprenticeships for young people.”
    - We have jointly contacted our members – including the major G20 employers and industry associations, to provide us with best practices examples of apprenticeship and internship programs in their country. We are also working through our networks to directly contact companies, both to better understand their existing levels of involvement in such programs, and to secure their interest in working with us going forward.
    - We are in the process of compiling results. Our idea is to engage with interested Employer Organizations and companies to support additional initiatives they might undertake in these areas and to disseminate information that can be useful to all parties. We look forward to sharing this information with you, and to identifying next steps.
  - In conclusion, IOE and BIAC again thank you for the opportunity to be here today and to contribute to this initiative on apprenticeships. We will be pleased to work with all of you under the Russian presidency.