

**Committee:** International Labour Organisation

**Subject:** Does technology help or hinder working conditions?

**Author:** Japan

Through the last four decades, technology has constantly changed the labour industry introducing machinery, equipment's, digitating processes and increasing the safety for workers. From the industrial age to today, it has had a big impact on the world, and the way workers across every industry do their jobs change constantly due to that. These new forms of working are increasing efficiency, improving productivity and creating a rise in innovation.

Japan believes that innovation will resolve the issues we face in the future partly because technology and innovation are a foundation of Japan's competitive edge. So, to keep the title of one of the most advanced countries in terms of technologies and the first country in terms of robot technology, Japan has been giving a huge importance to the youth: Japan spends around 3.59% of GDP (Gross Domestic Product) of public spending on education. And among 34 OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) countries, Japanese students performance levels rank second in mathematics and first in science.

Our country has also been cooperating with the US since 1981 in Equipment and technology. The "Mutual Defense Assistance Agreement between Japan and the United States" provides the framework for mutual cooperation in the area of defense between the two countries.

US and Japan are steadily implementing joint research on advanced technology such as fighting vehicle propulsion technology. And we are actively promoting prospective joint research. An agreement between the European Union and the Japan Government on science and technology has also been made in 2011 concerning the rapid development of scientific knowledge and promoting cooperation in science and technology.

Japan's involvement in industry 4.0 is a relevant point as well in the importance of technology. Industry 4.0 that comes from the term "Fourth Industrial Revolution" and refers to digitalization of production was first introduced in Germany. Today Japan is introducing the idea of Society 5.0 which looks at digitalization from a societal viewpoint and will led to a "Super Smart Society". Our country believes that Information Technology (IT) and Artificial Intelligence (AI) will change many things in everyday life as in working conditions and achievements.

Now taking into account the current situation, Japan had more than 78 000 cases of coronavirus and almost 1 500 losses due to this pandemic, so we had to impose a quarantine like most of the countries this year. That let the country to a great loss of economy and working efficiency.

Fortunately, all the technological instruments which we benefit up at the moment have allowed us to keep a balance. Thanks to the technologic existence we could keep sending information, make virtual meetings and get in contact with each other. That's why Japan thinks that technology has helped us so much and still has much things to give to humanity, especially in the labour sector.

Japan has supported innovation and technology along with United States or the European Union. We have always promoted innovation and the Government of japan is doing everything it can to encourage various players to come up with new and innovative ideas, and so, provide the world with new solutions. We are therefore looking to contribute to the improvement of technology believing that it strongly helps working conditions.