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The 21st century Artificial Intelligence Revolution is compounding the inequalities between rich and the poor economies, as well as national-scale social polarisations. The rising application of digital devices is reducing the cost barriers associated with establishing and maintaining businesses in developed industries, making them more incentivized to intensively integrate new technologies than lower income nations, who have historically obtained competitive advantages from their vast human workforces, are and thus enabling them to exclusively profit from the associated long-term advantages. In order to withstand the digitalised corporations, business managers in less advanced countries may further their attempts to mechanize their employees. The unethical measures adopted to ensure the uninterrupted flow of output and replicate the low input costs of automation systems contribute towards the insufficient safety protections and non-representative wages of sweatshop workers in the Asia-Pacific region.

With fewer employment positions to fill with human labour, recruitment processes are becoming more selective, with stricter expectations. Therefore, digital transformation of workplaces is having disproportionate consequences for marginalised social and economic groups that face disadvantages within the education system, are not equipped with the same extracurricular experiences and have been deterred from developing critical thinking and argumentative skills, through pressures to remain agreeable and adhere to authorities. The claim that there will be a net zero loss of job positions is not convincing when considering inequalities, as whilst the low-skilled, repetitive jobs are being the first to be replaced by robots, the new career opportunities involving designing, constructing and maintaining automation systems will require professional engineers and computer scientists. Moreover, the Fourth Industrial Revolution is inviting the redistribution of businesses' profits from their employees to the manufacturers of and investors in capital goods. With fewer wages to pay but greater costs associated with the acquisition and ownership of technology, firms' revenue is redirected from the working-class to the already-wealthy multinational corporations supplying the digital devices.

The International Trade Union Confederation's Asian-Pacific regional organisation is concerned with supporting a transformation of the education system, from the teaching of facts to the assisted acquisition of skills. As technology has offered humans constant access to most pieces of information, the importance now lies in developing critical thinking, in order to evaluate the credibility of online sources, as well as confidently utilising new devices and applying programming, statistical analysis and fluent typing skills from a young age. Through group projects, students could have the opportunity to practice abstract thinking, problem solving and effective communication, in the form of discussing and answering open-ended, debatable global questions. Mainstreaming the development of these skills is a crucial component of ensuring comparable future success rates among students of all social and economic backgrounds, as children's later employability would no longer be reliant on their domestic internet access or their families' incomes, free time, and thereby their capacity to fund and provide transportation to extracurricular activities, such as coding clubs. Internet penetration rates vary widely across the region, with Japan, South Korea and Singapore hosting nearly universal access, while Pacific Island countries exhibit limited connectivity. Nationally, ethnicity, gender and income contribute to the digital divide. Member states' governments must collaborate with economists and businesses to provide both upskilling and reskilling courses for workforces, in alignment with shifts in the labour market. Upskilling, involving the teaching of additional skills, would prepare lower-skilled workers for the impending digital transformation of routine tasks, by allowing them to adopt the more complex, safeguarded positions within their sector. Reskilling, which concerns a set of transferable skills that could assist a worker's move into a different field, would be valuable for those who face threats of structural unemployment.

Furthermore, the Asian-Pacific Trade Union Confederation calls for the official agreement that the introduction of new technologies cannot not be made unilaterally by employers but rather must require a mutual agreement and happen in the best interest of the workers, since it is the motivations behind the implementation of automation systems, rather than the technologies themselves, that are the primary issue. Objectives generally entail reduced labour costs and thus expansions

of profit margins, rather than the assistance and easing of the efforts of human workforces. Thereby, job security is being sacrificed and human workers face risks of redundancy, creating paralysing fears that weaken employees' confidence to advocate for better conditions, as well as reducing collective bargaining voices, through the shrinkage of team sizes.

Oppositely, a Universal Basic Income (UBI) could enhance the freedom of workers to engage in our trade union activities. Historically, employers have been able to "bribe" their employees back to work, through their right to refuse to continue to pay the wages of anyone who is on strike, as well as restrict their access to contractual benefits. Yet, whilst businesses fail to recognise a sense of accountability regarding the wellbeing of the protesting workers and virtually reject them as their employees, the state refuses to handle them as unemployed individuals, meaning that they are not entitled to the complete social security benefit schemes. By providing citizens with a foundational source of money, the Universal Basic Income would protect workers who decide to withdraw themselves from labour temporarily against poverty and thus encourage the realisation of freedoms of association and right to advocate for better working conditions among others.

The uncertain future of the workplace is contributing towards stress, anxiety, burnout and job insecurity among workers, due to the threats of un- or underemployment, as well as the burden of completing training programmes alongside primary work. Previously, when contacting others was a more tedious process, people had to be more selective and evaluative of the importance of the information intended to be sent. However, today, colleagues regularly exploit the increased interconnectedness and improved ease of data transmission. Access to communication platforms is resulting in a constant inward flow of notifications, thereby disrupting workers' focus. To compensate for these interruptions, individuals have no choice but to catch up on their assignments after the conventional working hours, which is facilitated by the constant access to work-related digital resources. Additionally, due to the expectation that employees are always available, employers are increasing staff workloads, further contributing to burnout and a loss of relaxing free time. Thereby, the lines between professional and personal lives have become blurred, making it hard for employees to recharge and tend to their mental health. Moreover, digital monitoring of workers' performance is reducing their autonomy and privacy, creating exposures that lead to exacerbated feelings of pressure among employees to precisely follow the outline of a project, meeting every single minor deadline exactly on time. Thereby, workers' freedom to personalise their working paces and select which aspects they would prefer to spend more time on and approach with greater precision is being denied. Ultimately, poor mental health related to the unrealistic expectation to adapt to a standardised working model is peaking.

Yet we must acknowledge the several benefits that workplace monitoring offers in terms of enhancing the psychological well-being of labour forces, one of which being its capacity to identify early signs of mental health conditions, through the assessment of language and punctuation applied by employees in their emails or changes in their productivity patterns. Additionally, by possessing an overview of employees' workloads, business managers can resolve imbalances or overloads of assignments through the reallocation of tasks and the extension of deadlines. Therefore, the International Trade Union Confederation's Asian-Pacific regional organisation proposes for organisations to be bound to the following standards: thoroughly communicating the conditions of the monitoring to and receiving written consent from employees before implementation, limiting monitoring to the agreed scope and seeking a reaffirmation of consent if this scope changes, and terminating the monitoring processes beyond the official working hours.