

Meeting: Future of Work (Employment)
Committee: Robot vs. Human Labour
Country: Equatorial Guinea

With the advent of the new Industrial Revolution 4.0, the jobs market cannot stay the same. In recent years, we have already witnessed a significant rise of job losses due to the automation of large segments of operations in many industries. Not only that, we also can see clearly the reduction in the average length of employment contracts; moving from one job to another has statistically become increasingly the norm. It may be hard to believe, but before the end of this century, 70% of today's occupations will likewise be replaced by automation. It is worrying to think that one day robots will be in every work place and there will be less and less jobs available for people.

Undoubtedly, the digitalisation can contribute to the advancement of the countries and the world. However, the delegation of Equatorial Guinea recognizes that without proper preparation, human will have a hard time in facing this revolution. In the past year, Equatorial Guinea has seen an unemployment rate increase of 6.9% and it is the highest rate among these 10 years. In Equatorial Guinea, robots are taking over jobs. It is no longer just the 'dangerous, dirty, and dull' jobs, but robots are also poised to replace white-collar positions, like lawyers, reporters, and financial analysts. Hence, unemployment is a ticking time bomb, which now appears to be perilously close to exploding. Crucial in dealing with the complexities of robot vs human labour issue, government must act to control this problem. One solution being considered is to levy a tax on robots that take up human jobs. There are two crucial tools in the tax design which is the tax levy itself, and tax rebates/credits. The first tool of the tax might manifest itself in the form of a percentage charged on the output produced by the robot, or a flat rate. Thus, robots tax will replace the income tax, one of the most important source of revenue to government.

Equatorial Guinea believes that robots tax can increase in the welfare role played by the government. In this context, government can use the tax revenue to provide the Universal Basic Income (UBI) to the low class society and to those human workers who lose their jobs to machines. This UBI can help the society to access to the basic necessity such as food, health care and education. The delegation of Equatorial Guinea suggests that the rate of the robots tax should be higher than the previous income tax. By doing this, the firms will consider about using machines in their industries as they have to bear the cost due to the high tax rate. As one of the third world countries, Equatorial Guinea takes serious about this issue and we will always support innovative and effective ways of controlling this problem with the aim of truly making life better for everyone.