

The speech of Mr. Erion Manohasa in the 1st Tirana Gas Pipelines Safety Workshop.

Hello to everyone,

First, I would like to thank you for the invitation to participate in this workshop on safety in the construction of TAP, as well as the improvement of safety standards.

One of the challenges remains MMSR job safety and health protection of workers against the effects of unfavorable working. In this field, MMSR influences in the normative aspect as well as the applicability of legislation as part of the labor inspection process.

I do not think that needs to be explained in detail the importance of safety and health at work in terms of accidents at work and occupational diseases. All of us understand the negative consequences and the necessity of prevention. I would like to emphasize that the safety and health at work plays a vital role in increasing the competitiveness and productivity in enterprise and contributes to the social protection systems because it results in reduced costs for accidents, incidents and diseases at work and increases motivation and welfare of employees.

World statistics show that every year over 300,000 people die because of accidents at work and 2 million because of work-related diseases. The European Union recorded more than 8,000 accidents at work with death, annually, 140,000 because of illnesses.

I would like to emphasize the fact that one of the most important tasks of the Albanian government is to provide economic development, taking into consideration not only promote employment in quantitative terms but also in qualitative terms.

OSH is an important element of social protection of workers against the negative aspects of work, accidents at work and occupational diseases improve the quality of work and strengthen the functioning of the labor market and the quality of human capital. On the other hand, poor standards of health and safety at work, industrial injuries, loss of life, and occupational diseases, create a heavy burden on the national economy, because of social rewards, hospital costs, retraining and replacement of employees and loss productivity.

The Constitution of the Republic of Albania containing provisions that emphasize the obligation to protect the health and safety in the workplace, in Chapter IV "The Rights and economic freedoms, social and cultural" (lawful employment, social protection and health insurance).

We have taken many steps forward to establish the appropriate legal conditions for safety and health at work, ranging from the approval of the Law on safety and health at work in February 2010.

Pursuant to Law No. 10237, dated 18.2.2010: 15 rules transposing 15 individual directives are approved by the Council (for the use of work equipment at the workplace, personal protective equipment in the

workplace, minimum health requirements and safety in the workplace for exposure to chemical agents, biological, carcinogenic or mutagenic in the work of electromagnetic fields, optical radiation, the risk of noise, the risk comes from vibration, minimum security requirements in health related to work force loads on the minimum safety and health requirements for work with devices with screen, protection of pregnant women, fishing vessels, the exposure of explosive atmospheres and six other regulations transposing 6 individual directives on the protection of workers in the extractive mineral industries through drilling, in the surface and groundwater, the protection of young workers), which are prepared from a group of experts from ministries, in support of the project IPA 2010.

Law on safety and health at work, together with the series of regulations already adopted or to be adopted has as subject to ensure the safety and health of employees and responsibilities of employees to achieve an adequate level of protection of health for the risks at work drafting coherent measures, coordinated and effective for the prevention of risks at work. The law is transposing fully the Directive 89/931.

Lately, Albania received the candidate status in the European Union, where we take responsibility to achieve European standards in all-important fields, including working conditions and safety at work. Albanian government cannot fulfill its commitment without the free role and active support of all relevant state institutions, social partners and all Albanian citizens. The work field has a strong tripartite basis.

Lately, two health service work regulations and the approval of the list of occupational diseases was approved by the Council of Ministers during the first half of 2015 and the health surveillance at work is expected to be approved by the end of 2015.

In order to ensure protection of workers from injuries and illnesses related to work as well as the prevention of accidents in the industry, it is very important to draft the documents and the legal infrastructure for the creation of favorable conditions of work and adapting them to the needs of employers and employees in order to increase the motivation of both parties (employers and workers) in accordance with those rules, contributing like this to higher efficiency at work.

Although many things are already done and many improvements have been made in the area of OSH, such as the creation of the basis for the new legislation for OSH and the ratification of relevant international standards, strengthening of the labor inspection, the campaigning to raise the awareness on OSH, many challenges have not been addressed yet and much more work remains to be done in this direction.

Therefore, our Ministry has taken the initiative of writing the Action Plan for Safety and Health at Work 2015-2020 where are involved all the stakeholders to take responsibility in the implementation of new strategic political tasks for OSH, which is expected to be approved in the Council of Ministers by the end of 2015, and will be part of the strategy for employment and skills in 2015 -2020, adopted by the Council of Ministers

The strategic goals of the policy document on safety and health at work are focused on a comprehensive legislative system, minimizing the accidents at work, improving working conditions, raising awareness of employers, employees and the reduce informality.

In this context, the vision for the future of the new policy document will be:

"Decent jobs, more productivity, less informality."

Three columns provided are as follows:

- Column A: Improvement of labor protection through effective policies and legal framework of OSH;
- Column B: Creation of decent working conditions and safer places to work;
- Column C: Ensuring of transparency and efficiency of the system and institutions of OSH.

The overall goal of this document is to guide the country towards the use of a systematic approach and coordinate the administration of the security services and health at work, to create worthy working conditions and stable and the continuous reduction of disasters at work at least 10% over the next five years.

The implementation of these strategic activities is not a simple task. He wants to change the mentality of common employees - to the high-level executives, from schoolchildren - to high-level professionals, members of a family - to inspection, etc. Change of access, change of habits and change of the work culture is of high importance in this process.

The safety preventive and the health culture are not easily to achieve immediately in all sectors of employment at national level, for this our work should focus on the implementation of specific programs on safety and health, sensibilization campaigns, the success of which is achieved only through a high commitment and active participation of workers, for this in this field the role and involvement of social partners is of particular importance.

Important is the education and training regarding the issues of OSH-in to create and develop professional knowledge, attitudes and desired behaviors by employers, employees and self-employed persons. Specifically, in connection with the properly introduction of OSH issues in a continuous system of education that is related with professional education, deepening and improvement of qualifications, retraining, further education and acquisition of new skills.

By congratulating you for this initiative and thanking you that you made us part of it, I wish you all the best and closer cooperation in the future in order to achieve our common objectives.