

Welcome to the launch of our course on shaping the future of work. Together, over the next seven weeks, we'll explore how to expand the number of good jobs, career opportunities, and workplaces that help us all realize our dreams, our aspirations we have for work. For our family lives and for building sustainable successful enterprises, and for our societies.

But before we talk about that, let's talk about some of the difficulties we've experienced in the last week or so. I want to begin with the statement of solidarity for our colleagues in Europe and in Asia, in light of the terrible tragedies that have occurred in Brussels and in Pakistan. Today, we are all sharing our concern that there have been over the past 18 months, 75 bombings in over 20 countries, killing over 1,300 people. We think about the grief and the pain that so many nationalities and religions and people of different cultures all over the world have been experiencing. And we are with them together.

My fellow of course team members here at MIT and I feel profoundly sad at yet, more acts of violence. We condemn them. We are committed to addressing the causes of violence in our societies and in our workplaces, and to doing everything we can to help resolve these differences before they devolve into terrorism. Above all, this course rests on the principle of respect for diversity in our world, in our work places.

We had planned to show a bit later in the course, a 20 minute video interview with Mary Rowe, one of the world's leaders in managing diversity and workplace conflicts. Mary outlines the ways that we can address these tensions and the anger that they show in our society, and that sometimes do spill over to our places of work. But given the events in Europe and Asia and other parts of the world, we'll post that interview this week so we can start discussing these issues now.

So we invite you to watch Mary's interview and use it in the discussion forum to comment on how issues of diversity, inclusion, and the management of inequities can be addressed in your workplace and in your job experiences. We can design a better future as we help each other shape this aspect of our workplaces in a positive way.

I invite you also to get started by sampling the rich array of other videos that we have posted this week. We have welcoming comments from national and internationally renowned leaders from all over the world. The US secretary of labor, Tom Perez, the director general of the International Labor Organization, Guy Ryder. The secretary treasurer of America's largest union federation, Liz Schuler. And our course team's human resource management expert, Lee Dyer. We include this diversity of voices to show how all of these communities need to work together to shape the future of work for you and for all the parties that have a stake in it.

And don't miss our three minute animated video summarizing 3,000 years of the history of work. I think you'll enjoy it. Then we move on to other videos and readings that discuss the challenges and exciting opportunities, innovations occurring in our workplaces today. These set the stage for a much more in-depth conversation about these issues in the weeks ahead.

We also note in your discussion forum that you already started, that some of you are concerned about how the issues of jobs and the future of work are being discussed in the presidential campaign in the United States. Some of you have lamented that yes, they talk about jobs but don't have a vision for the future of work. Well, maybe it's our job to bring our voices into these conversations as we will try to do, and really lay out a vision for what work could be, what the real needs of workers are, what the real needs of businesses are today. So maybe we can add our voices to this discussion.

So welcome, join us. Look forward to having you engage with us and helping to see if we can use our collective efforts to shape the future of work.