

Holiday Villa's Azman Shah takes over as IOE president

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GENEVA: The chairman of the home-grown Holiday Villa Hotel group, Datuk Azman Shah Harun (*pix*), yesterday took over as president of the International Organisation of Employers (IOE) which is based here.

Azman succeeded Wiseman Lumkile Nkuhlu of South Africa.

This is yet another recognition for Malaysia internationally as the IOE represents the interests of business in the labour and social policy fields. It consists of 150 national employer organisations from 143 countries – Africa (42), America (33), Asia (39) and Europe (42).

Azman holds several senior positions in employer and hotel-related trade organisations and is a member of Pemudah – the government-appointed task force to facilitate business towards enhancing Malaysia's competitiveness. Its vision is to achieve globally benchmarked,



customer-centric, innovative and proactive public service in support of a vibrant, resilient and competitive economy.

The IOE, Azman said in an interview, promotes and defends the interests of employers in international fora, particularly in the International Labour Organisation (ILO). It works to ensure that

international labour and social policy promotes the viability of enterprises and creates an environment favourable to enterprise development and job creation. At the same time it acts as the secretariat to the Employers' Group at the ILO International Labour Conference, the ILO Governing Body and all other ILO-related meetings.

Azman said one of the challenges facing the labour market globally is the extensive use of information technology which has reduced employment opportunities. Where previously four or five people were

needed to carry out a specific task, it can now be done by one or two people with technology.

Hence, he said, while technology helps cut costs, it is also at the expense of the labour market. Therefore, there is a need to engage all parties which are affected by such changes.

As the voice of business is heard at international and national levels, the IOE is actively engaged in the creation and capacity building of representative organisations of employers, particularly in both the developing world and countries in transition to the market economy.

The IOE is the permanent liaison body for the exchange of information, views and experience among employers throughout the world. It acts as the recognised channel for the communication and promotion of the employer point of view to all United Nations agencies and other international organisations. The voice of employers is represented by IOE at relevant international debates on labour and social policy. Such discussions are now occurring in an ever-increasing number of international fora both within and outside the United Nations system.