

Resolution concerning future ILO activities in commerce

The Tripartite Meeting on the Employment Effects of Mergers and Acquisitions in Commerce,

Having met in Geneva from 7 to 11 April 2003,

Noting that commerce is a major economic activity worldwide, and that it is often the single largest sector of employment in industrialized and developing countries;

Noting that although small and medium-sized enterprises continue to predominate, there has been a marked trend towards concentration and globalization in commerce;

Noting that the leading commerce companies are increasingly among the biggest employers in many countries;

Noting that the commerce sector is a key factor in the formation of increasingly integrated global markets, with commerce companies playing a growing role in decisions on the location of production, the supply and quality of goods and services and their distribution over global networks in response to consumer and client needs;

Noting that commerce is an important source of employment, including for youth and women;

Considering the need for training and lifelong learning opportunities for commerce workers related to the needs of business and workers;

Considering that a number of the challenges in commerce are specific to the sector and require sector-specific approaches;

Considering the importance of promoting the principles and rights enshrined in the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-up and the ILO Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy;

Recalling the resolution on the establishment of a small tripartite forum to convene regularly and as often as possible for dialogue on global developments in commerce and their implications for employment, working conditions and labour relations, adopted by the Tripartite Meeting on the Human Resource Implications of Globalization and Restructuring in Commerce (25-29 October 1999);

Noting with satisfaction that the tripartite forum has been established and, having met in November 2001, started work on a handbook of guidelines for social dialogue in commerce;

Adopts this eleventh day of April 2003 the following resolution¹:

The Tripartite Meeting on the Employment Effects of Mergers and Acquisitions in Commerce invites the Governing Body of the International Labour Office to:

- (1) allocate resources to the activities and actions of the ILO concerning the commerce sector, so that they are made commensurate with the size of the economic activity, the scale and specific nature of the social and labour challenges facing it, its increasingly global structures, and its importance in international economic relations and for sustainable development;
- (2) continue to support the work of the small tripartite ILO forum in commerce which may, as appropriate, recommend tripartite regional and subregional meetings for the commerce sector.

¹This resolution has not yet been examined by the Governing Body of the ILO in accordance with established procedures and therefore cannot be considered as definitive.