

Second Social Partners Forum:
**“Mobilizing Social Dialogue for the Implementation of the
Global Jobs Pact in Africa”**
Ouagadougou, 30 November 2009

DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE

I. Forum Context and Justification

1. The global economy has been shaken by a crisis the likes of which have not been seen since the stock market crash of 1929. Originating in the United States in August 2008, the crisis has spread rapidly throughout Europe and to the emerging countries of Asia and South America.
2. Although it is financial in origin, the crisis has affected the real economy: industrial sites have been shut down, workers dismissed or laid off, job creation opportunities cut back, etc. The United States, Europe and the rest of the world have entered into a recession, with rising unemployment and its corollary, falling revenues and weakened social protection capacities.
3. The developed and the emerging countries have worked to adopt economic stimulus measures, stabilizing the banking and financial sectors through massive intervention and struggling to support plummeting demand. At the same time, they have made considerable efforts to reform and strengthen the international financial system.
4. In Africa, the consequences, which lagged behind the rest of the world, can be summed up in five points: (i) drop in exports of agricultural and mining raw materials; (ii) declining revenues from tourism; (iii) reduced foreign direct investment; (iv) less official development aid; (v) and lower remittances from the diaspora to the continent.
5. In view of its scope and the exceptional measures taken by the developed States to contain it, the financial crisis comes at the worst possible time for Africa, which remains the only continent in which poverty has not receded in the past few years and which has a very limited capacity to react to the risks of globalization. In point of fact, not only does the crisis come on top of a profound food crisis whose impact continues to be felt by the population, it is compromising the continent's efforts of the past few years to redress the situation.

6. Although scaled back to 2.8 per cent in 2009, or less than half the 5.7 per cent forecast in 2008¹, Africa's projected growth stands in contrast to the recession that will strike most developed countries in 2009. One major impact of the crisis on the African continent nevertheless remains the spotlight cast on well-known longstanding shortcomings whose resolution may not have been a State priority during a period of sustained growth. Hence the pressing need for improved governance and productive social dialogue ensuring firm steps towards deep structural reform and the establishment of policies and regulations able (i) to limit the negative effects of dysfunctions in the current crisis, (ii) to give the continent solid mechanisms for managing and preventing similar crises and (iii) to guarantee economic performance and social progress.
7. In this respect, it is important to note that in the immediate aftermath of the crisis, many African States, unlike their Western counterparts, were not in a position to: (i) review and redirect existing economic and social arrangements and programmes; (ii) mobilize financial resources needed to help the most seriously affected businesses and sectors; (iii) take measures to protect the most vulnerable.
8. Indeed, many employers' and workers' organizations have expressed their concerns on the impact of the crisis on their respective members and have proposed recovery strategies, or participated at various forums to dialogue with their governments on recovery measures to mitigate the effects of the crisis. Nonetheless, employers and workers at enterprise level as well as employers' and workers' organizations at bipartite social dialogue level, have shown limited capacity to take initiatives with a view to containing problems relating to enterprise survival and competitiveness, wages and other working conditions, assistance for those looking for work, especially youth, etc.
9. This is why, in an economic and social environment whose capacity to create sustainable enterprises and decent and productive jobs is gradually being eroded, it is a matter of extreme urgency to put the need for genuine social dialogue in Africa on the agenda. The need for such a signal is all the more pressing in that the continent's governments and private sectors are increasingly called into question by public opinion, whose weight has grown in the past few years and which is less and less willing to put up with ineffective poverty-reduction strategies.
10. Africa's social partners are aware of the own responsibilities in the search for effective social dialogue in Africa. Encouraged by the favourable reception given to their appeal launched at the ILO Eleventh African Regional Meeting held in Addis Ababa in April 2007, for the organization of a second social partners forum, the current crisis gives them one more reason to take action by working to promote social dialogue and its key role in the concerted search for solutions to the economic crisis.
11. Thus, the Second Social Partners Forum will be held on 30 November 2009 in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, on the theme, "Mobilizing Social Dialogue for the Implementation of the Global Jobs Pact in Africa". It will be in advance of the 1st African Decent Work Symposium, the theme of which is "Recovering from the Crisis: the Implementation of the Global Jobs Pact in Africa".

¹ According to international institution sources.

II. Objectives of the Forum

12. The Forum will allow African employers' and workers' organizations, in the presence of representatives of civil society organizations and regional and international institutions, to: (i) take ownership of the Global Jobs Pact adopted by the tripartite constituents at the International Labour Conference in June 2009 as a decent work-based response to the present economic and financial crisis; (ii) assert their total commitment to mobilize for the Pact's implementation in their respective countries.
13. Thus, the Forum's **general objective** is to strengthen the social partners' capacity to promote the decisive role of social dialogue in the conception of policies adapted to national priorities, in particular with respect to implementation of the recommendations and policy options set out in the Global Jobs Pact.

The Forum has the following **specific objectives**:

- to cast a critical eye on the social dialogue deficit in Africa;
- to discuss social dialogue and tripartism as constructive processes facilitating the identification of solutions for the economic and financial crisis and guaranteeing that the anti-crisis measures taken to provide a lasting solution to the needs of the real economy will have a strong impact;
- to give workers' and employers' organizations the support they need to make effective use of the Global Jobs Pact, with focus on (i) job creation, (ii) the creation and development of sustainable enterprises, (iii) respect for labour standards, (iv) stronger systems of social protection and protection of vulnerable people, and (v) social dialogue and its mechanisms, which are tripartism and collective bargaining;
- to help the social partners develop strategies enabling them to forge partnerships with sub-regional, regional and international institutions on the Global Jobs Pact and on Social Dialogue.

III. Organization and themes of the Forum

14. The **general theme** of the Forum is "**Mobilizing Social Dialogue for the Implementation of the Global Jobs Pact in Africa**". After a review of the First Social Partners Forum and an introductory session on the Forum's general theme, the core of the discussions will take the form of five concurrent thematic sessions on the contribution of social dialogue to the implementation of each of the four thematic groups of the Global Jobs Pact and on the creation of partnerships, as follows:

- Social dialogue for job recovery, job creation and sustainable enterprises
- Social dialogue to build and expand social protection

- Social dialogue for the strengthening of labour standards
- Social dialogue for consultation and collective bargaining
- Partnerships for improved social dialogue in Africa

These thematic panel debates will aim to highlight the crucial importance of social dialogue in tackling the social and economic consequences of the crisis as well as recovery strategies, as seen through the prism of the thematic groups defined in the Global Jobs Pact. In so doing, they should identify mechanisms for making the link social dialogue – Global Jobs Pact operational.

15. These five themes will be discussed during panel debates that take place concurrently. Each panel will be moderated by an Expert from the ILO Regional Office for Africa and will comprise three discussants, one representing workers, one representing employers and one representing civil society.

16. In view of the above, the Forum will comprise eleven (11) plenary and parallel sessions in all:

- Opening ceremony
- First plenary: Looking back at the First Social Partners Forum
- Second plenary: Mobilizing Social Dialogue for the Implementation of the Global Jobs Pact in Africa
- Concurrent thematic sessions (5)
- Third plenary: Presentation of the reports on the parallel thematic sessions
- Fourth plenary: Presentation, discussion and adoption of the Forum proceedings
- Closing ceremony

IV. Resource persons

17. ILO experts will be asked to present the themes during the plenary meetings. Moderators who are experts from the ILO Regional Office for Africa will introduce the topic and facilitate the exchanges and discussions during the group thematic sessions.

V. Participants

18. The Forum's participants will comprise:

- One representative of the workers' organizations of each African country,

- One representative of the employers' organizations of each African country,
- Twenty civil society organizations invited to attend as observers,
- Guests.

The national workers' and employers' organizations will be those known to be the most representative.

The civil society organizations will attend as observers with the right to take the floor.

The special guests will be:

- representatives of regional and international workers' and employers' organizations,
- the Commission of the African Union,
- the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA),
- NEPAD,
- the bilateral development institutions,
- the European Union,
- universities,
- opinion makers.

VI. Gender equality

19. Special attention will be brought to bear on respect for gender equality. The workers' and employers' organizations will thus be asked to ensure that the participants include women. By the same token, the contribution of women moderators and panellists will be actively sought.

VI. Anticipated outcomes

20. The Forum's anticipated outcomes are:

- Social partners take ownership in the Global Jobs Pact and are resolutely committed to pushing for its implementation in their respective countries in the light of national situations and priorities;
- The decisive contribution of social dialogue to economic performance and social progress is demonstrated and the conditions for effective social dialogue are underscored;
- Social partners are able to promote and make effective use of the Global Jobs Pact with a renewed emphasis on the Decent Work Agenda, the 2008 Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization and the promotion of a productive vision spearheaded by the creation of sustainable employment and

enterprises, the reinforcement and extension of social protection, and respect for labour standards;

- Social partners draft a joint declaration that will be presented to the 1st African Decent Work Symposium on 1 and 2 December 2009;
- the social partners are able to develop strong partnerships on social dialogue and the Global Jobs Pact with sub-regional, regional and international institutions and other stakeholders.

VII. Forum programme

21. The draft programme is appended to these terms of reference.

VIII. Forum budget

22. The budget is being prepared. It provides that the ILO Regional Office for Africa will cover the cost of travel and accommodation for one employer and one worker participant from each country.

IX. Modus operandi

23. A Forum preparatory team of three worker representatives and three employer representatives will be designated. It will receive support from a task force of officials from the ILO Regional Office for Africa, the Bureau for Workers' Activities (ACTRAV) and the Bureau for Employers' Activities (ACT/EMP).
24. The Forum languages will be English and French.