

**REMARKS BY UNITED NATIONS RESIDENT COORDINATOR, ON
OCCASION OF COMBINED EVENTS FOR “ILO AT 90”
CELEBRATION, AND “WORLD DAY FOR SAFETY & HEALTH AT
WORK”, 28 APRIL 2009**

PROTOCOLS

AS THE RESIDENT COORDINATOR OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM IN ZAMBIA, IT IS A GREAT HONOUR AND PRIVILEGE FOR ME TO BE WITH YOU HERE TODAY TO CELEBRATE THE 90TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CREATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION (ILO) – THE OLDEST MEMBER OF THE UNITED NATIONS TEAM IN ZAMBIA, AND A RESIDENT AGENCY IN ZAMBIA SINCE 1ST MAY 1968.

WITHIN THE UN SYSTEM, WE OFTEN JOKE ABOUT THE VARIOUS “HEADS OF AGENCIES” BEING THE “CHIEFS”, AND THE RESIDENT COORDINATOR BEING THE “PARAMOUNT CHIEF”. THEREFORE, IN THE ABSENCE OF THE ILO REPRESENTATIVE, WHOSE DUTIES HAVE TAKEN HIM TO MY OWN HOME COUNTRY, IT IS APPROPRIATE THAT THE PARAMOUNT CHIEF SHOULD STEP IN.

THE ILO IS WHAT IS TERMED A “SPECIALIZED AGENCY” WITHIN THE UNITED NATIONS (UN) FAMILY, SPECIALIZING IN EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR MATTERS. HOWEVER, WHEN I THINK OF THE SCOPE AND RELEVANCE OF THE ILO’S MANDATE ON EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR, IT TRULY TOUCHES EVERY PART OF LIFE IN ZAMBIA.

IN THE CONTEXT OF THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS (MDGs), THERE CAN BE NO POVERTY REDUCTION (MDG-1) WITHOUT JOBS AND INCOMES. WE CANNOT HAVE AN EFFECTIVE PROVISION OF HEALTH, EDUCATION AND OTHER VITAL SOCIAL SERVICES WITHOUT THE EXISTENCE OF A PRODUCTIVE, HEALTHY AND WELL-MOTIVATED WORKFORCE. THE SCOURGE OF HIV & AIDS PARTICULARLY AFFECTS THOSE OF WORKING AGE, SO WE NEED EFFECTIVE POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES TO COUNTER HIV & AIDS IN THE WORLD OF WORK.

AS THE ILO BELIEVES, THESE JOBS MUST BE DECENT JOBS AND PREMISED ON THE PILLARS OF THE GLOBAL DECENT WORK AGENDA: VIZ, RIGHTS AT WORK, DECENT AND

PRODUCTIVE EMPLOYMENT; SOCIAL PROTECTION, AND SOCIAL DIALOGUE.

IN A PRACTICAL MANIFESTION OF THE ILO'S DECENT WORK AGENDA, TODAY ALSO MARKS THE OCCASION OF THE WORLD DAY FOR SAFETY AND HEALTH AT WORK. AS THE THEME FOR THE WORLD DAY STATES, OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH IS A HUMAN RIGHT, AND THE ENTIRE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM IS FOUNDED UPON REPECT FOR AN ADHERENVCE TO HUMAN RIGHTS IN EVERY ASPECT OF OUR LIVES.

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MAY I SAY THAT I LOOK FORWARD TO THE NEXT 10 YEARS OF THE ILO'S LIFE WHEN WE CAN ALL CELEBRATE ITS 100-YEAR CENTENARY. I TRUST THAT WHEN THAT TIME COMES, WE WILL BE ABLE TO LOOK BACK ON THE CONTINUING RELEVANCE AND CONTRIBUTION THAT THE ILO HAS MADE IN COUNTRIES SUCH AS ZAMBIA, AS WELL AS ELSEWHERE GLOBALLY, IN MAKING DECENT WORK A REALITY.

I THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR ATTENTION.