

Representatives of Central Asian states get together in Astana to mark ILO 90th Anniversary

ASTANA, KAZAKHSTAN – On 22- 23 April 2009 the Kazakhstan capital hosted a conference to mark the ILO 90th anniversary. The conference, that was initiated by the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of the Population, became a regional event as it brought together the ILO constituents from Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, as well as the representatives of ministries, social partners, parliamentarians and international organizations.

Sten Petersen, senior workers activities specialist made an overview of the history of the ILO. The participants spoke highly of the assistance provided by the ILO to Kazakhstan in improvement of its labour legislation, in particular the labor code, employment law and legal acts on targeted social assistance.

The current financial and economic crisis, its consequences in the labour and social sphere and the role of the ILO in addressing these challenges were high on the conference agenda.

Vice minister of labour and social protection of Kazakhstan B. Nurymbetov noted that today employment creation is a national priority in the country. Significant resources have been allocated to stabilize the labour market and to implement the employment strategy. The government together with the federation of trade unions and the organizations of employers initiated the conclusion of collective agreements and memoranda with major companies for the retention of work places and averting of the mass release of workers to soften the consequences of the financial crisis.



The participants to the conference also focused on occupational safety and health issues, in particular on the preparation of national OSH profiles and national programmes to create national OSH systems in the Central Asia.

This year Kazakhstan will successfully complete the Decent Work Country Programme that was started in 2007. Its priorities were the improvement of OSH system, further development of collective bargaining mechanism and the development of the employment strategy. As it was noted at the conference, taking into account the current state of

the world economy and the anti-crisis policy of Kazakhstan, the new Decent Work Country Programme between the ILO and Kazakhstan will be focused on post-crisis development.



The ILO90 conference received wide media coverage. Photo: Senior OSH specialist Wiking Husberg gives an interview to the press.