



## SIXTH ITEM ON THE AGENDA

**Developments concerning the question of the observance by the Government of Myanmar of the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29)****Further action taken pursuant to the resolution adopted in 2000 by the International Labour Conference*****Addendum***

1. Since the finalization of GB.294/6/1, the following additional replies to the Director-General's letters have been received.
2. In a letter dated 1 November 2005, the Government of *Australia* indicated that it had conducted a review of its relations with Myanmar and was satisfied that these relations in no way perpetuated the practice of forced labour. It had received written confirmation from its Embassy in Yangon and AusAID that no Australian Government-funded programmes in Myanmar, which were largely humanitarian in nature, contributed in any way to the practice of forced labour. Further, it had never received any information to suggest any association with forced labour by Australian companies operating in Myanmar.
3. In a letter dated 10 November 2005, the Government of *Canada* indicated that it had taken a number of initiatives subsequent to those outlined in its letter of 6 March 2001. Measures adopted in July 2003 included the denying of visas to members of Myanmar's ruling State Peace and Development Council and senior government and military officials, and the imposition of travel restrictions on Myanmar diplomats in Canada. At that time, its call for the business community not to engage in further investment agreements or commercial ventures in Myanmar had been reiterated. In his intervention at the July 2005 ministerial meeting of the Association of South-East Asian Nations Regional Forum held in Vientiane, Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs had inter alia reinforced the call by Canada for the Myanmar authorities to take immediate and effective measures to eliminate forced labour. Canada had supported and would continue to support the ILO's ongoing scrutiny of Myanmar's forced labour practices. The Government also indicated that it had brought the contents of the Director-General's letters to the attention of Canadian employers' and workers' organizations.

4. The Government of *Finland* indicated by letter dated 9 November 2005 that Finland's economic relations with Myanmar were of limited extent, with imports (1 January to 30 August 2005) valued at €124,700, and exports at €451,100. There were no records of direct investments to Myanmar. The Government also outlined the EU Common Position on Myanmar. It expressed its strong support for the ILO Liaison Officer and the ILO's efforts for the elimination of forced labour in Myanmar. The ILO presence should be able to operate effectively and without hindrance, and anyone bringing complaints of forced labour should be free from intimidation or punishment. It was of utmost importance that the Government of Myanmar re-engaged as soon as possible in a dialogue with the ILO, and Finland would actively seek to promote such an engagement, bilaterally as well as in its capacity of Member of the European Union. The Government also indicated that it had forwarded the Director-General's letters to the representative workers' and employers' organizations of Finland.
5. In a letter dated 9 November 2005, the Government of the *Netherlands* supplemented the information that it had provided in its communication dated 1 November (summarized in GB.294/6/1, paragraph 13). In particular, the Government noted that on 3 November it had held the expert meeting on Dutch relations with Myanmar mentioned in its earlier communication. It recalled that the purpose of the meeting had been to facilitate the exchange of a broad range of information among various stakeholders. It was the first time that a discussion of this scope had taken place in the Netherlands. The meeting had provided an opportunity to explain the Dutch policy of discouraging economic activity in or with Myanmar in greater depth and to urge all parties involved to act accordingly. The meeting had provided valuable ideas and further actions for all parties involved. The Government would see to their follow-up under its Myanmar policy.
6. The Government of *Poland* indicated in a letter dated 10 November 2005 that developments as regards the issue of forced labour in Myanmar were a source of growing concern for Poland. It reiterated the EU Common Position on Myanmar, and also expressed its strong support for the ILO Liaison Officer and condemned the orchestrated death threat campaign against him. Poland was of the opinion that anyone bringing complaints of forced labour should be free from intimidation or punishment.
7. In a letter received by the Office on 9 November 2005 the Government of *Sudan* indicated that it was ready to proceed with further discussions on the modalities for giving effect to the conclusions of the Committee on the Application of Standards.
8. In a letter dated 8 November 2005, the *Confederation of Italian Trade Unions* (CISL) provided information on a number of initiatives that it had taken in the period 2002-05. These included interventions with a number of Italian companies having trade relations with Myanmar requesting them to cease such relations because of the prevailing situation of forced labour and workers' rights in Myanmar; a call on Lauda Air in 2003 to cease its direct flights to Myanmar; interventions with the EU and the Italian Government (including in its role as then-Presidency of the EU) to take a stronger position on the Myanmar issue, including the introduction of targeted economic sanctions; interventions in 2004 and 2005 with the Italian Government in support of United Nations Security Council consideration of the situation in Myanmar, inter alia because of the deteriorating situation of forced labour and labour rights, as well as requests that these concerns be raised with Myanmar's neighbours in the context of talks between the EU and these countries; and an intervention in 2005 with the Italian Government to express concern at increasing Italian imports from Myanmar, in particular timber and textiles. Steps were also taken by the CISL over this period to strengthen its relations with trade unionists from Myanmar and to support them in their work. Interventions were also made in support of humanitarian initiatives in Myanmar and its border areas, in particular as regards HIV/AIDS.

9. By letter dated 9 November 2005 the Government of Azerbaijan transmitted a letter of 21 October from the *Azerbaijan Trade Unions Confederation* expressing the Confederation's support for the activation and intensification of the review of relations with Myanmar by ILO Members and international organizations. While the Confederation did not have relations with a Myanmar counterpart, it would through its representative in the ILO continue to support all efforts to ensure Myanmar's observance of its obligations under the forced labour Convention.

Geneva, 14 November 2005.