



FOR INFORMATION

SECOND ITEM ON THE AGENDA

**Operational aspects of the International
Programme on the Elimination of Child
Labour (IPEC)**

As in previous years, the report on the operational aspects of IPEC is made up of the following appendices:

- Appendix I: IPEC action against child labour: Highlights 2006.
- Appendix II: Summary record of the 16th meeting of the IPEC International Steering Committee, 6 November 2006.

Geneva, 24 January 2007.

Submitted for information.

Appendix I

IPEC action against child labour: Highlights 2006

Given the need for this section of the document to reflect the most up to date results, Appendix I will be presented later as a separate publication.

Appendix II

Summary record of the 16th meeting of the IPEC International Steering Committee

(6 November 2006)

1. The 16th meeting of the IPEC International Steering Committee (ISC) was held at the International Labour Office, Geneva, on 6 November 2006 at 11 a.m.
2. The meeting was opened by Mr Kari Tapiola, Executive Director of the Standards and Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work Sector. He welcomed the participants and noted that the ISC remained an important forum for discussing progress in the campaign against child labour. The meeting would be extended, as the members had requested, and would include a thematic discussion. He noted that, following the appointment of Mr Guy Thijs as Deputy Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific, Ms Michele Jankanish would take over the directorship of IPEC from January 2007. He thanked Mr Thijs for the important contribution he had made to the steady growth and many successes of the programme during the 14 years of his involvement.
3. *Mr Tapiola* said that 2006 had been a milestone year for the cause of combating child labour and hence for IPEC and the ILO as a whole. Besides the overall performance of the programme, which continued to show promising progress towards achieving its indicators, he listed a number of noteworthy developments related to the release of the second Global Report on child labour. For the first time in its history the programme had been able to provide trends on the incidence of child labour based on comparable estimates for the years 2000 and 2004. These figures showed that there had been a substantial decline of about 11 per cent in the global incidence of child labour, and an even faster decline of 26 per cent for its more hazardous forms. The Global Report also showed that the policies IPEC had been promoting under the programme had an impact and were worth pursuing if countries were to be successful in relegating the problem of child labour to history. During discussions of the Global Report at the International Labour Conference, participants had welcomed the breakthrough that had been achieved in efforts to eradicate child labour and had largely endorsed the recommendations contained in the Report. The World Day against Child Labour (WDAKL), on 12 June 2006, focused on the results of the Report. During WDAKL, hundreds of partners of the ILO in over 40 countries joined in organizing many events, including debates, marches, competitions and games, to draw attention to the promising results of the Report, but also to the many challenges that remained. IPEC's efforts to respond to challenges in the area of child labour brought about by calamities continued during 2006; funding had been secured for a programme to respond to child labour challenges caused by the earthquake in Pakistan and activities had been initiated. Cooperation with the World Bank, UNICEF and UNESCO, particularly within the framework of Education for All (EFA), had been further enhanced, and the second meeting of the Global Task Force on Child Labour and Education for All launched in Beijing last year would take place during the next high-level group meeting in Cairo later in November. The membership of the Global Task Force had been expanded by including Education International as a member. In addition, in response to the findings of the Global Report that 70 per cent of all working children were employed in agriculture, a new partnership had been established on child labour in agriculture with the FAO, IFAD, WFP, IFPRI, and the workers' and employers' representatives for the sector at global level.
4. There continued to be steady progress on the ratification front, with five new ratifications for Convention No. 138 and five for Convention No. 182 during 2006, bringing the total to 148 and 162 ratifications, respectively. Compared to the 20 new ratifications for both

Conventions recorded during the 2004–05 biennium, those achievements for the incomplete year 2006 showed that universal ratification for both Conventions was within reach. IPEC continued to follow-up on the global evaluation, as reflected in the matrix included in the implementation report for 2006. In addition, new projects had been approved during 2006 providing additional resources to the programme to improve its ongoing work on impact assessment through tracing and tracking of beneficiaries, and a project to improve knowledge management to capture and disseminate lessons learned through the publication of guidelines, tools and the establishment of virtual forums on good practices. While efforts had been made to enhance in particular the active involvement of workers' and employers' organizations in the programme, these had fallen short of expectations when measured in terms of resources delivered through the social partners. Still, the role of the social partners in IPEC programmes was substantial and growing in terms of visibility and influence at the national policy level.

5. The agenda of the meeting was approved as proposed. The summary record of the fifteenth meeting of the Steering Committee (held on 8 November 2005) was also approved.
6. *Mr Thijs*, Director of the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour, welcomed representatives of donors, participating countries, workers', employers' and United Nations sister agencies. He introduced the 2006 implementation report,¹ which was the mid-term report for the 2006–07 biennium, pointing out that facts and figures for the first year of the biennium were still provisional since the year had not yet ended. The year 2006 had been a tremendously important year for those engaged in combating child labour. The new Global Report on child labour provided reasons to be optimistic that the battle against child labour could be won. A good part of IPEC's work during 2006 had been focused on providing inputs and writing sections for the Global Report, the launch of the Report in May and the WDACL activities in June. As always, however, most staff time had been devoted to the "day-to-day" activities related to delivering a programme active in over 80 countries, including the design and start-up of new projects for a total of close to US\$50 million. The high number of ratifications of Conventions Nos. 138 and 182, and the need to assist ILO member States with their implementation, had led IPEC to progressively direct its strategy towards upstream work. However, IPEC also continued to support downstream interventions that demonstrated viable strategies for the prevention of child labour, withdrawal of children, and the rehabilitation of former child labourers, leading to a large number of direct beneficiaries of the programme. These concepts underpinned IPEC's national time-bound programme (TBP) approach for the elimination of the worst forms of child labour, so far implemented by 23 countries with IPEC support. Two of the first three TBPs initiated in 2001 had, after a successful first phase, entered a second phase, in the United Republic of Tanzania and El Salvador. IPEC had also made progress in integrating its TBPs and other work within ILO Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCPs). Working with the ILO's tripartite constituents was important to the programme and built into IPEC's approach from the start in each country where it had operations. Governments should be the driving force behind the elimination of child labour, but that goal could not be achieved without the active participation of employers' and workers' organizations.
7. In terms of project delivery, expenditures for 2006 were conservatively projected to remain at about the same level as in 2005, about US\$70 million. It was important to note that 2005 was a peak year with the highest ever absolute delivery for the programme in its lifespan of 14 years, and that further growth was likely to be marginal. As of 30 September 2006, donors had pledged close to US\$45 million to IPEC, and on the basis of pending

¹ ILO: *IPEC action against child labour: Highlights 2006* (Geneva, 2006).

negotiations it was expected that the total for the year would amount to about US\$60 million. IPEC was responsible for ensuring Outcome 1a.2 of the ILO's Programme and Budget for 2006-07 ("Member States undertake targeted action against child labour in line with fundamental ILO Conventions on child labour [...]"). The programme and budget set the target of ten additional member States to undertake such action against child labour. That target for 2006-07 would be easily reached: two additional member States had already implemented two or more interventions and seven had implemented one intervention. It was to be noted that 48 of the countries already mentioned in the 2004-05 implementation report continued with additional interventions during 2006 as well. IPEC continued to collect information on the number of beneficiaries it reached – even though this was no longer an indicator in the programme and budget. Those numbers would be reported by the end of the biennium. Ensuring high quality and learning appropriate lessons remained an important priority of the programme. Fifty-two evaluations had been completed during 2006 and a similar number were anticipated for 2007. Together, that would represent a 25 per cent increase over 2004-05. IPEC's Design, Evaluation and Documentation Section continued to consolidate experience on project evaluations, to implement new approaches to evaluate TBPs, and to work on impact assessment methodologies on policy development, institution building and social mobilization. Impact assessment studies were now also regularly included in final evaluations to give a broader picture of a given project's long-term impact. From a management perspective, follow-up to the various audits and reviews of the programme carried out in 2004 and 2005 continued to be an area of focus in 2006 and would remain so for the remainder of the biennium. IPEC continued with follow-up to the findings and recommendations from the global evaluation in 2004, the review of its business processes in 2005, and the recommendations offered in the various project audits undertaken by the internal and external auditors in 2005. IPEC had activities in over 80 countries and a worldwide staff of 474, some 11 per cent of whom worked at headquarters in Geneva. Even with the relatively small proportion of headquarters staff, there was concern that the need to secure staff resources for headquarters through projects added to the management costs of field projects and reduced IPEC's competitiveness.

8. Part II of the implementation report provided information on three topics of importance to IPEC in the current biennium 2006-07. Firstly, the report discussed the significant challenges associated with eliminating child labour in agriculture in the light of the 2016 target for the elimination of all worst forms of child labour worldwide. Second, the report described to what extent workers' and employers' organizations had participated in efforts to eliminate child labour, and suggested additional areas where the ILO's social partners could contribute. The report also reviewed the effects of conditional cash transfer schemes in reducing child labour in Latin America and discussed their potential for adaptation in other areas of the world, particularly Africa. In view of his upcoming transfer to Bangkok as Deputy Regional Director, Mr Thijs thanked the ILO's senior management and the constituents for their confidence. He wished his successor, Ms Jankanish, and all IPEC colleagues success in the continuation of their work.
9. *The spokesperson for the Employers' group* (Mr Tabani) thanked Mr Thijs for all his work for IPEC, and welcomed the incoming IPEC Director, Ms Jankanish. The Employers were pleased to see the continuing growth and expansion of IPEC, and felt encouraged by the trends indicated by the global estimates presented in the 2006 Global Report. Nevertheless, there were still some 218 million children engaged in child labour, many of them in the worst forms. Although it was an ambitious objective, the Employers fully supported the goal of eliminating all worst forms of child labour by 2016. They valued the fact that ILO instruments had helped to raise the visibility of the issue of child labour. They regretted, however, that the Global Report had not provided new estimates on the unconditional worst forms of child labour, and looked forward to new estimates in that respect in 2010. Referring to the proposed Global Action Plan 2006-10, they welcomed the recognition of

the fact that effective elimination of child labour could be achieved only at the country level. They also welcomed IPEC's TBP approach and the attention given to child labour in national poverty reduction efforts. The Employers were pleased to see that IPEC had started various advocacy tools in order to deepen and strengthen the worldwide movement. They also supported IPEC's increased attention to children working in agriculture, and the increased collaboration with international agriculture organizations. They looked forward to WDACL 2007 in this respect.

10. *The spokesperson for the Employers' group* also noted the financial data provided in the report, and was pleased to see the long-requested breakdown of the allocation of resources to the different social partners and NGOs. The Employers did not understand why it was that, while IPEC stated that governments had to be the driving force behind the elimination of child labour, far greater allocations had in fact been made to NGOs. More specifically, only a tiny fraction of resources had been allocated to employers' organizations. They reminded the ISC that employers continued to play a key role in fighting child labour, and that the Office should make a greater effort to involve them in its activities against child labour. An illustration of the important contribution that employers could make was the Norway Framework Agreement, under which ACT/EMP acted as a catalyst and enabler in helping national employers' organizations to plan and implement their own programmes aimed at eliminating child labour. Employers could also form partnerships with trade unions and educational institutions in areas such as vocational and skills training. With regard to youth employment, the Employers reiterated their view that the issue should be treated separately from child labour. They also called on IPEC to provide more detailed information on successful experiences and share it with the ISC. Concerning the section on conditional cash transfers, the Employers wondered why no mention was made of the role of employers. Lastly, they proposed that the ISC meet in March in order to study the full implementation report, instead of doing so at the November meeting, which was based on an interim report. The November meetings could be maintained for thematic discussions.
11. *The spokesperson for the Workers' group* (Mr Steyne) congratulated Mr Thijs on his new appointment, and looked forward to working with his successor, Ms Jankanish. Turning to the implementation report, he said that the Workers welcomed the decline in child labour, but expressed concern at the almost exclusive focus on its worst forms. Focusing on the worst forms should not be disconnected from the broader aim of eliminating all forms of child labour. They agreed that IPEC and the donors needed to focus on sub-Saharan Africa and to meet the specific challenges of that region. They welcomed the recognition that sustainability could be effectively achieved only if child labour concerns were mainstreamed in socio-economic development frameworks. The measures proposed to strengthen the worldwide movement were also welcomed, in particular the move to strengthen advocacy on child domestic work. The Workers suggested that the topic could be the subject of a thematic debate during the March session of the Governing Body, and wanted to receive more information on the synergies between the Global Task Force on Child Labour and Education for All and ILO work on child domestic work. Turning to the forthcoming International Conference of Labour Statisticians in 2008, the Workers reiterated that the development of statistical criteria on child labour should not lead to a reinterpretation of the child labour Conventions. While they welcomed the integration of child labour activities in the DWCPs, they also stressed that the involvement of the social partners in such programmes was crucial, and requested more information on the issue in future IPEC reports. The Workers further welcomed the increasing cooperation between IPEC and the Bureau for Gender Equality.
12. *The spokesperson for the Workers' group* said that, while the high level of ratifications of the child labour Conventions was a source of satisfaction, the Workers failed to understand why a number of prominent countries – Australia, Canada, the Czech Republic, Estonia, India, New Zealand and the United States – still had not ratified one or either of the

Conventions. The Workers further deplored the low level of core funding available to IPEC, which resulted in a high staff turnover with all the related extra costs, and wanted more information on costs associated with the recruitment of temporary staff over the last four years. The Workers further called on IPEC to provide more training on tripartism for existing and new staff, and requested a list of national steering committees, with a view to assessing their tripartite nature. Commenting on the success story presented on the Sialkot soccer ball industry during the 2006 WDAFL, the spokesperson mentioned growing evidence that child labour was once again on the rise in that sector, in addition to violations of the right to organize. The Workers regretted the abject failure to establish effective social dialogue in Sialkot.

- 13.** Regarding the thematic highlights, the Workers' spokesperson welcomed increased allocation of resources to address child labour in agriculture, which had hitherto received only limited attention. Agriculture was one of the most hazardous sectors, with major decent work deficits. Promoting decent work for adults in that sector, coupled with free access to universal compulsory education and freedom of association, would be the key responses aimed at eliminating child labour in agriculture. The Workers also requested more information on the sectoral alliances in the banana, cocoa and tobacco sectors. As to next year's WDAFL, the theme of which would be agriculture, the Workers hoped that its organization and implementation would fully involve the relevant workers' organizations. On conditional cash transfers, they considered that more research was needed into the ways in which such schemes could benefit the fight against child labour. Finally, the Workers suggested moving the ISC session to March in order to allow discussion of the final version of the 2006 implementation report.
- 14.** *The Government representative of Guatemala* complimented Mr Thijs on his important contribution, and welcomed his successor, Ms Michele Jankanish. She expressed her gratitude for a very comprehensive report that reflected the crucial contribution of IPEC to the fight against child labour. IPEC had provided important assistance in facilitating national action in Guatemala, and had represented important financial and technical support to the Ministry of Labour. Thanks to IPEC, the child labour issue had gained significant attention at the governmental institutional level, and many key institutions had undertaken joint initiatives to exchange information, resources and useful knowledge with a view to eradicating child labour. Together with other key social players, the country had acknowledged the magnitude of the phenomenon and the cultural and social factors that caused it. The activities carried out by IPEC and the Ministry of Labour had generated essential information on child labour that would give direction to national policy. With regard to progress achieved in the legislative field, different consultations among social actors had led to the establishment of a list of activities which, because of their nature and the associated working conditions, had to be immediately targeted for elimination. That also provided a legal basis for child labour monitoring and the integration of public and civil society efforts. New legislative tools were the "Regulation of Labour Protection for Child and Adolescent Workers" and the "Regulation for the Application of Convention No. 182". However, there were still more than one million child and young workers in Guatemala, and efforts had to be extended beyond the legislative instruments to national integrated action-oriented public policies. The speaker indicated several initiatives carried out by the Government with the support of NGOs and international cooperation, including IPEC. There had been an active process of exchange with different countries in the region with the aim of improving the knowledge base on child labour. Thanks to IPEC-ILO, it had been possible to establish an Action Programme for the Prevention of Child Domestic Work in Indigenous Communities, the first time the ILO had relied entirely on a governmental institution to implement a project. The Government was satisfied with the results obtained by Latin America in the fight against child labour, but nevertheless, millions of children below the minimum age were engaged in forms of work contrary to

Convention No. 182. Lastly, the speaker supported all initiatives to reinforce IPEC and enable it to achieve its goals.

15. *The Government representative of the Netherlands* commended IPEC on an excellent report, and thanked the ILO for agreeing to turn the meeting of the ISC into a one-day meeting. The Netherlands was committed to the progressive elimination of all child labour, and wanted the focus to be on the full implementation of the two child labour Conventions. She proposed a massive information and promotional campaign to eliminate child labour in agriculture, with a particular emphasis on Africa, and expressed her Government's support for the new global action plan. She stressed the importance of basic education, with special attention for vulnerable and disadvantaged children, and reaffirmed her country's commitment to the Education for All (EFA) initiative and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The important role of the social partners in combating child labour was now recognized, but the action points in the thematic section on the role of employers' and workers' organizations were somewhat vague and could be more specific. Her delegation was somewhat cautious on the idea of conditional cash transfers; she noted that more research was necessary and that these schemes were expensive. IPEC could possibly concentrate more on a facilitating role on that subject, through information and communication. The Netherlands had always been a strong supporter of ILO action against child labour, and that had been most recently underlined by the extension of its cooperation programme through 2010, with a contribution of €32 million for the implementation of the Decent Work Agenda, including action against child labour.
16. *The Government representative of Turkey* thanked the IPEC team for an excellent report. He noted the rapid ratification of Convention No. 182, which showed the general importance now attached to combating child labour. Turkey, one of the first six beneficiaries of the IPEC programme, had decided, together with the social partners, to eliminate child labour by 2016. That goal formed part of the national development agenda, and also featured in the national action plan submitted to the European Union (EU). Various government agencies, trade unions and employers' associations were now involved in the programme, and 11 departments were implementing time-bound measures to eliminate child labour completely by 2016. In addition to programmes supported by Germany and the United States, a new project supported by the EU was now being implemented by the Government.
17. *The Government representative of Nepal* expressed his Government's appreciation for the report. While there were hopeful signs of a decline in child labour worldwide, he noted that in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa child labour continued to have a significant presence. He welcomed the emphasis placed on mainstreaming child labour concerns in national and global development frameworks. IPEC had succeeded in placing child labour on the agenda, and the TBP approach, initially launched in three countries, including Nepal, had proved to be successful from his Government's perspective. He was glad to note the continued growth in donor support for IPEC programmes. Referring to IPEC's work in Nepal, TBP approaches had been implemented in 22 districts, and the first phase had been concluded in 2006. The TBP had coincided with Nepal's master plan to eliminate the worst forms of child labour by 2009 and all child labour by 2014. Nevertheless, a number of child labour problems persisted owing to various socio-economic and political factors, including the problems facing children freed from the *Kamaya* bonded labour system. All stakeholders therefore considered a second phase of the TBP to be crucial.
18. *The representative of the European Commission* welcomed the increasing cooperation with the ILO, including with IPEC. Referring to Annex IV of the implementation report, he noted that the approved funding for Turkey (US\$6.4 million) and Zambia (US\$255,000) underlined the important potential for expanding that cooperation, in particular the forthcoming TACKLE project on EC–ILO/IPEC cooperation in ACP countries

(€15 million). While there were some technical delays at EC level, he hoped that the programme could commence soon. Combating child labour was part of the EC's future thematic programming for 2007–13 on "Investing in People". This would include not only combating child labour, but also the promotion of youth employment and the overall Decent Work Agenda. Combating child labour was also part of the European Consensus on Development adopted on 20 December 2005 by the European Commission, the European Parliament, and the Council of Ministers. That European Consensus would be included in the 2007–13 country and regional programming. Combating child labour was also part of neighbourhood and enlargement policies. The European Commission, recognizing the need to involve workers' and employers' organizations in its programming, had included the social partners in the elaboration of 2005–06 policy documents on development and technical cooperation. The challenge was now to ensure that workers and employers were effectively included in projects and programmes. In that respect, the proposed breakdown of the TACKLE budget reflected the active involvement of civic society, including workers and employers.

- 19.** *The Government representative of Italy* reaffirmed her Government's strong commitment to worldwide efforts against child labour, including the work of IPEC. Italy currently contributed financially to the Global Campaign to Raise Awareness and Understanding on Child Labour, the research project "Understanding Children's Work", the collaboration between IPEC and the ILO's International Training Centre in Turin, and a programme on the prevention and elimination of child labour in South Asia. A number of other activities were supported through bilateral cooperation. Italy was also contributing to IPEC cooperation and advocacy with multilateral organizations, the social partners, United Nations agencies, academic institutions, NGOs through SCREAM, the "12 to 12 Partnership Initiative" and the "12 to 12 Community Portal", which had been very successful in fostering inter-agency cooperation. She stressed the importance of addressing the socio-economic dimensions of child labour by placing the issue in the broader context of children's rights, the Decent Work Agenda, and the MDGs.
- 20.** *The Government representative of Egypt* thanked the IPEC team for the report, and the workers' and employers' spokespersons for their valuable comments. Thanks to IPEC, significant progress had been made in Egypt in eliminating child labour, in particular in the urban informal economy. She called upon IPEC to continue to allocate resources for programmes in Egypt, because much more needed to be done, especially in the field of agriculture. She expressed her Government's gratitude to donors for their support thus far, in particular the Government of Italy. Egypt was making an important effort to improve working conditions through labour legislation and by promoting decent work, in close collaboration with the social partners. Child labour needed to be recognized as a major obstacle to the attainment of the MDGs. She called upon IPEC and UNICEF to coordinate their activities more effectively, so as to facilitate the inclusion of child labour concerns in development frameworks and the MDGs.
- 21.** *The representative of UNESCO* announced the creation of a new division called the Division for the Coordination of United Nations Priorities in Education. The Division in question was responsible for coordinating UNESCO's work on three major challenges: EFA, including the two MDGs on education; the United Nations Literacy Decade (2003–12); and the Decade for Education for Sustainable Development (2005–14). She reiterated UNESCO's commitment to full cooperation with the ILO and IPEC on the Global Task Force, and thanked the member States and the workers' and employers' representatives for their support for EFA. All three of the priorities referred to were important in preventing excessive workloads for children. It was UNESCO's conviction that ensuring the right to education for all girls and boys, from rich or poor environments, in rural or urban contexts, and with special attention to the most vulnerable, was essential for ensuring all other human rights. The fact of having 100 million children out of school,

the majority of them girls, and some 800 million adult illiterates, was seriously hampering development efforts. The world map of illiteracy coincided with the world map of poverty. UNESCO each year produced a global monitoring report on the different goals of the Dakar Framework for Action on EFA. Despite steady advances in some of the world's poorest countries, the pace of progress was still too slow. The report included the EFA development index, ranking countries according to their progress towards the six EFA goals set at the World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal, in 2000. The goals were still achievable, but achieving them would require an immediate acceleration of activity in developing countries and an approximate doubling of the international community's aid to basic education. This year's report was on pre-school education, one of the EFA goals, which indicated the comprehensive approach to education followed in the context of EFA. The world's ministers of education meeting in UNESCO in 2005 had pledged to use EFA aid more effectively. They had also agreed to "intensify efforts" to increase national education budgets and, "as adequate funding becomes available", to begin to abolish school fees and other charges in primary education. They had recognized that the world had missed the first EFA target of gender parity in education by 2005, and had recommitted themselves to "remove obstacles and strengthen efforts to ensure without delay equal access to schooling and learning opportunities for girls and women". Member States had long understood that access to education was not enough; relevance and quality were needed to prevent children from dropping out, with serious consequences for the individual and for society. There was no short cut to relevant, high-quality education. A comprehensive, long-term and serious effort was required, with a focus on the content of curricula and teaching materials, the language(s) of instruction and, not least, the training and status of teachers. She reiterated UNESCO's continued commitment to following up as a priority the joint ILO/UNESCO Recommendations concerning the status of teachers and other teaching personnel.

22. *The Government representative of Portugal* thanked Mr Thijs for his work in IPEC, and welcomed Ms Jankanish. She was pleased to see that the implementation report included information regarding the Conference on "Combating Child Labour in the Portuguese-Speaking Community", held in Lisbon in May 2006 and co-organized by IPEC, the Government, and the Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour in Portugal (PETI). She referred the ISC to the web site www.peti.gov.pt, where the outcome documents of the Conference could be found.
23. *The Government representative of Kenya* congratulated the Office on a detailed report, complimented Mr Thijs on his good work and assured the incoming Director, Ms Jankanish, of his Government's support. The Kenyan Government was committed to combating child labour, in particular its worst forms. Work was now under way in the context of a TBP in 15 geographical areas and focusing on four themes: agriculture, domestic work, commercial sexual exploitation, and street children. Through the TBP, some 22,000 children would be withdrawn from the worst forms of child labour. A national plan of action had also been issued. The use of the SCREAM methodology had proved to be effective in the celebration of the WDACL. He thanked the Government of the United States for its continued support to IPEC and its work in Kenya, and the Canadian Government for providing funding for vocational skills training.
24. *The Government representative of Switzerland* noted the high quality of the report and its sound thematic points. He welcomed three key points in the IPEC report: the strengthening of collaboration between IPEC and the Bureau for Gender Equality; the documentation of good practices in combating child domestic labour; and the organization of the most recent WDACL, which had focused on the findings of the Global Report. He expressed satisfaction at the trends towards a decline in child labour, in particular in Latin America, and commended the contribution of IPEC to these positive trends. However, he deplored the increase in the number of working children in Africa and suggested that Africa be

considered as a priority in the future work of IPEC. The mainstreaming of child labour issues in development frameworks would be a positive step. He welcomed the increased efforts to collect more data on children in hazardous work, but noted that in some countries where IPEC operated, the situation of children in hazardous work was not adequately understood. He therefore encouraged IPEC to continue data collection. He noted the positive feedback received from the Swiss–ILO project in Pakistan. He encouraged the ILO to keep strengthening its cooperation, in particular with regional governmental agencies, and hoped that the ILO would be receptive to his Government’s interest in launching an all-encompassing programme for vulnerable children in Pakistan’s North West Frontier Province. He also welcomed the ILO’s contribution to the United Nations Secretary General’s study on violence against children, and would be interested in the follow-up that would be given by the ILO to that study.

25. *The Government representative of the United States* congratulated Mr Thijs on his new appointment, and welcomed Ms Jankanish. She reaffirmed her Government’s strong support for IPEC. While she noted the great importance of good statistical data collection, the work of the International Conference of Labour Statisticians, due to take place in 2008, to come up with a statistical definition should in no way imply a reinterpretation of hazardous child labour as defined in the Conventions. The linkage between education and combating child labour was crucial, and the United States Government fully supported IPEC’s work in that respect.
26. *The Government representative of the United Kingdom* thanked the Office for its comprehensive report. Noting the importance of an integrated and sustainable approach to the problem of child labour, he regarded the United Kingdom’s future support to IPEC through the DWCPs as the main opportunity for informed action at the country level, linked with poverty reduction programmes, and with the involvement of other United Nations agencies. Increasing the capacity of the social partners would be crucial to the success of the DWCPs.
27. *The representative of UNICEF* highlighted two issues in the implementation report: the United Nations Study on Violence against Children; and the positive experiences of the joint project “Understanding Children’s Work”. The United Nations Study, its recommendations and their implementation, would be essential to UNICEF’s future work. She commended the Office for its contribution to the United Nations study, and said that IPEC’s work with the private sector, the social partners, and teachers’ organizations, offered great opportunities to address the problem of violence against children. Referring to the upcoming 2008 International Conference of Labour Statisticians, she said that UNICEF would be hosting a meeting in New York to discuss new statistical definitions with partner organizations. She believed it was important to include household chores and third-party domestic labour in that discussion.
28. *The Government representative of Nigeria* thanked IPEC for the comprehensive report and commended the excellent work of IPEC in eliminating child labour. His Government attached much importance to fighting child labour, and had received assistance from numerous donors, in particular from the United States and European countries. The major areas were trafficking for domestic service and universal primary and secondary education. He reflected on the lack of distinction between children doing useful work in order to acquire skills, and forms of child labour which needed to be abolished. Skills were transferred from one generation to the next in the clan or family at an early age in many sectors, from weaving to hunting; such skills were not taught in formal schools but at the family level. Conceptual views should not be imposed in a way that might hinder the training of children. Negative forms of work were those that impacted negatively, for example, on health and schooling, and should be prohibited.

29. To that point, *Mr Tapiola* responded by saying that all forms of child labour should be seen within the framework of Conventions Nos. 182 and 138.
30. *Mr Thijs*, replying to the various comments made by the members of the Steering Committee, welcomed the guidance they had provided. He said that overnight changes to a large programme like IPEC were not easy, but the overall progress made in tackling child labour showed that IPEC and its partners were on the right track. Regarding data collection, he agreed with the remarks made about focusing on methodologies for collecting data on the “unconditional worst forms” of child labour in the next global estimates. That was a very difficult task, in particular, if the aim was to have comparable data sets and establish trends. Nevertheless, the Office had been investing resources and time in improving methods to collect data on the worst forms of child labour, in collaboration with other United Nations agencies. Referring to the International Conference of Labour Statisticians in 2008 which, it was hoped, would adopt standard criteria on the collection of child labour data, he noted that all the preparatory work for the event was tripartite in nature. Regarding the comments relating to the need to take action against all forms of child labour, it was clear that countries had started to take hazardous child labour more seriously, and that additional efforts were needed to ensure that all forms of child labour were covered. The approach in the TBP was to ensure that all policy, advocacy and legal work was directed at all forms of child labour, and to establish priorities on extreme forms of child labour only in the direct action undertaken. The reason was that there was a need to focus on those most at risk, within the context of resource constraints. On education, IPEC welcomed the emphasis placed on the importance of education in efforts to combat child labour, and not just on primary education. It was widely known that, in order to meet the goal of the child labour Conventions, education up to the age of 14 or 15 years was a minimum requirement. The ILO’s role in the EFA Initiative was therefore to promote the principle that compulsory education should go beyond primary education. The Global Task Force established in December 2005 had expanded its membership by inviting a range of donor and “fast-track” countries to participate, as well as Education International. He appreciated the inputs provided on the section on conditional cash transfers (CCTs). It was clear that IPEC could not take a lead role in implementing CCTs, but it was necessary to look at the potential such schemes might have in efforts to eradicate child labour. Many CCTs did not have child labour as an indicator, nor did they evaluate their impact on child labour. IPEC’s task could be to promote an examination of that linkage, which some studies had clearly established, and the involvement of both employers and workers in the process would be welcome.
31. With regard to agriculture, he was pleased to note the strong support for a focus on the topic. As far as workers’ and employers’ involvement in the new partnership on agriculture was concerned, the IUF and IFAP were part of the task force. He welcomed the support for additional focus on child domestic work, which had been the focus of WDAFL in 2004. An excellent workshop had been held in early 2006 with trade unions, highlighting the topic. Developments in India were also very promising in that respect. With regard to the involvement of workers and employers in IPEC’s work, the breakdown of figures had been made available in three languages and widely distributed. NGOs absorbed considerable resources because the services required under many projects related to education, counselling, income generation and the like, which were not always the areas of expertise of workers’ and employers’ organizations.

Thematic debate

32. *Mr Thijs*, Director of the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC), presented a working paper entitled “The role of employers’ and workers’ organizations in combating child labour”, a summary of which was also included in Part II,

Chapter 2, of the 2006 implementation report. He explained that the working paper aimed at exploring the scope of activities against child labour by employers' and workers' organizations, highlighting issues that needed to be addressed, and outlining potential ways of action to strengthen their partnership with IPEC. The issue had to be placed in the context of the 2006 Global Report on child labour, which highlighted the key role of social partners. The continued commitment of the social partners was required, and challenges remained in building their capacity, with particular emphasis on the informal economy, avoiding duplication of effort and defining their comparative advantages, and in addressing IPEC's own capacity constraints.

33. The paper contained four main sections concerning: (1) the central role of social partners in the worldwide movement, looking into areas of comparative advantages; (2) the types of engagement, covering a wide range of good examples of activities carried out by social partners against child labour; (3) the challenges facing social partners; and (4) building an action plan – including how to advance the relationship between IPEC and social partners practically and effectively. While the Global Report underlined the priority of greater involvement of social partners in the elimination of child labour, the IPEC paper proposed some key areas of action to achieve that goal, namely: communications, capacity-building, advocacy, resource mobilization, and policy coherence on child labour and young workers in the informal economy. Thus, for each of those key areas, strategic components were proposed in the document. Mr Thijs then presented a few illustrative examples of effective involvement of workers' and employers' organizations in combating child labour. To follow up the issue, it would be necessary to improve systems of communication and dialogue with social partners, to build on positive experiences of exchanges through various forums and workshops, and to involve social partners more systematically in IPEC programmes in the context of the recommendations of the Global Report. All partners had to work more closely and effectively together to achieve the aims set forth in the Global Report.
34. *The spokesperson for the Workers' group* welcomed the paper as a framework for discussion, although it had been made available rather late. While it was gratifying to see many good examples of employers' and workers' activities against child labour, which should be broadened and replicated, there remained concern over problems facing sustainable alliances and situations in which social dialogue was lacking. A key challenge was the fact that trade unions could play their full part only if workers' rights to freedom of association and collective bargaining were fully respected. Governments should be the driving force in the struggle against child labour, but that could not happen in the absence of the rule of law and democracy. There was an absolute need for social dialogue between free and independent partners. Trade unions had been struggling throughout their history against child labour, but also for the right to organize and bargain collectively; the latter struggle was continuing for the majority of the world's workers, especially those in the informal economy, agriculture, public services and export processing zones.
35. The ACTRAV/IPEC workshop in Chennai was a good example to learn from. Agriculture and the informal economy accounted for most child labour. Trade unions' comparative advantages lay in their participation in national policy development, as well as in reaching out to increase the free and democratic organization of workers in those areas. However, there were obstacles in many countries, which might include, for example, the murder of a plantation workers' leader or a farmer threatening a labour inspector with a shotgun. The right to organize freely and bargain collectively was also essential for teachers to enable them to play their role in the struggle for universal education. Ensuring workers' rights in feminized sectors was also crucial, not just for eliminating child labour but also for equitable social development.

36. The speaker emphasized that the elimination of child labour was not a charity and could not be achieved by paternalistic, unilateral interventions; it was indivisible from the other fundamental principles and human rights. That was reflected in the incorporation of the child labour issue in the Decent Work Agenda and DWCPs. All the tripartite constituents of the ILO were committed to that goal under the 1998 Declaration, in addition to the treaty obligations of ratifying States. Social dialogue therefore had to lie at the heart of any sustainable rights-based approach to eliminating child labour. That was why the Workers had expressed profound concern over the denial of trade union rights in Sialkot, where a major IPEC project had been implemented. CSR approaches also had to be anchored in social dialogue and mature systems of industrial relations. The other matters – capacity, coherence, avoiding duplication, and IPEC resources – all came after those fundamental rights.
37. In conclusion, *the spokesperson of the Workers' group* suggested continued discussion of a strategic paper on IPEC and social dialogue, with clear proposals for a policy integration approach, more details on staff training, and clear indications of allocations of responsibility. Regarding NGOs, he noted that, while the reason for allocating a large part of IPEC funds to NGOs was their delivery of transitional education, experiences varied greatly. NGOs might be able to advocate, but could not replace elected workers' representatives in bargaining with employers. Firm alliances should be built on the comparative advantages of different actors.
38. *The spokesperson for the Employers' group* quoted from page 13 of the implementation report: "There is still a need to integrate more employers' and workers' organizations in IPEC's work," and commended IPEC's recognition that more needed to be done for cooperation with employers' and workers' organizations, as shown by the paper presented. Indeed, a much more extensive effort should be made; discussion needed to continue with the social partners; and more cooperation was needed with them. If there were constraints on what social partners could do, it should be recalled that organizations of employers derived income from membership and therefore had to service that membership. How could that be directed towards the elimination of child labour? That was where training and IPEC's help were needed. One suggestion was to have training courses for focal points of national-level social partners in collaboration between IPEC, the ILO's Turin Centre, ACT/EMP and ACTRAV.
39. Employers' and workers' organizations could play a significant role where DWCPs included the elimination of child labour, since they were the signatories of the programmes. Social partners, however, needed enhanced capacity for such action, especially as the scale of action increased. As to NGOs, there were good NGOs, but they were ad hoc and temporary partners, while employers and workers were the permanent partners of the ILO. Furthermore, some NGOs were not transparent in financial terms, while social partners would ensure good accounting.
40. *The spokesperson for the Employers' group* concluded by suggesting that more consultation with the social partners was needed, and could take place during the next Governing Body meeting. It should be institutionalized in systematic steps, since the figures presented showed that participation by social partners had not been significant. He suggested that consultation be continued and progress in terms of extra efforts be reported in 12 months' time.
41. *The Government representative of the Philippines* said that increased participation by the social partners was an important challenge. She pointed out the capacity constraints and time pressure to implement action programmes. The involvement of the social partners should be properly monitored with quantifiable indicators and evaluation.

42. *A representative of the Employers' group* (Mr Anand) highly appreciated the presentation given. No one could replace the role of the social partners. However, the important question was still how that worked out in the field, in particular in the informal sector, where the largest number of working children were found. Children worked in agriculture often in the context of family work. They still needed education – adapted to their needs – and a decent life. Multiple strategies were necessary, including, for instance, strategies on the issue of land ownership. If the informal economy was expanding, there had to be a reason, and that needed to be studied extensively. Collaboration was necessary with the FAO and other actors.
43. Referring to how the ISC had worked and changed itself over the last five years, he suggested looking at state-level functioning of IPEC national steering committees (NSCs) and asked whether there had been changes. Some governments wanted to go their own way, keeping out social partners, and not really involving them beyond project endorsement. There was a need to upgrade the functioning of national-level NSCs. Guiding governments in this field was an obligation of social partners. He also underlined the importance of the gender perspective, as shown in the example of Bangladesh in box 3 of the implementation report. Girls needed to be given proper career opportunities. IPEC's work in that respect should be replicated in other sectors with multiple strategies.
44. *A representative of the Workers' group* (Mr Ahmad) added to the comments made by the Worker spokesperson concerning the social partners' role and social dialogue in the context of freedom of association and collective bargaining under the terms of Conventions Nos. 87 and 98. ILO/IPEC policy should be to build the capacity of the social partners, in particular of workers, in ensuring rights including the elimination of child labour. He recalled that the labour movement historically had been focused on child labour, as the Preamble to the ILO Constitution showed, but the problem was enormous and required the firm commitment of policy-makers. He referred to page 6 of the paper, which referred to types of partnership arrangements with social partners. IPEC experts should work more closely with trade unions, not only at the global level but also nationally. Improved industrial relations would raise productivity and also help address child labour. Governments and employers should also take a more active role in corporate social responsibility.
45. He expressed concern at the large informal economy, especially in rural areas, where child labour could also be related to forced labour. Access to education and labour inspection could be the key to both issues, in which the State had a prime role. There had been good cooperation, involving trade unions, with IPEC in Pakistan in various sectors. However, the problem of industrial relations persisted, for instance in Sialkot. DWCPs should lead to more cooperation with social partners. He supported the idea of training IPEC staff on cooperating with social partners, and emphasized the importance of the role of the ILO's International Training Centre in Turin. In order to translate the principles of ratified Conventions into action and fill the gaps in implementation, the collaboration of the social partners was essential.
46. *The Government representative of France* said that workers and employers had a major role to play in strategies to eliminate child labour. She highlighted two major areas where that role was especially required: (i) in awareness-raising campaigns to fight child labour and, in general, in promoting fundamental principles and rights at work; and (ii) in strengthening the capacity of social partners through training, in collaboration with, for example, the ILO's Turin Centre, and taking advantage of the good practices acquired by IPEC. The role of the social partners was also important in sensitive sectors such as the informal economy and agriculture, where child labour had long been regarded as a fact of life. She agreed with the Workers' and Employers' groups that employers and workers, as well as NGOs, had an important role in IPEC's work.

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47. *The Government representative of Portugal* said that, if all children were free to choose the sport they played, the international community would be on the right track in its efforts to combat child labour.
48. *A representative of the Employers' group* (Mr Lambert) emphasized the crucial importance for all children to have opportunities for education, since the lack of such opportunities was the root of many other problems. Governments had a responsibility to make those opportunities materialize. Employers had the responsibility to ensure that their members did not use child labour, even in the supply chain. He endorsed the idea of having a team of people for each country to monitor the situation, to be trained in collaboration with the Turin Centre.
49. *The spokesperson for the Employers' group* emphasized the need to integrate the efforts of social partners to focus on agriculture and Africa. He reiterated the importance of training IPEC staff in dealing with social partners. His group agreed to move forward on the four points for follow-up mentioned in the presentation.
50. *The spokesperson for the Workers' group* expressed profound concern at the growing number of unprotected workers in the informal economy as the world grew richer; they did not enjoy freedom of association and social dialogue. The challenge of the informal sector was that, while it had the largest number of child labourers, it was the sector where social dialogue was most difficult. The coming debate on rural employment and the decent work deficit in agriculture was welcome, and bringing in United Nations agencies such as the FAO and IFAD was essential and legitimate. While it was important to develop the national capacity of the social partners, that would not replace proper labour inspection systems, which were the responsibility of governments. It would be a coherent approach to focus on child labour in agriculture and domestic labour as a top priority in the next biennium, on the basis of social dialogue and capacity building for the social partners. Thematic discussions should continue to help bring IPEC forward and showcase good practices for replication.
51. *Mr Tapiola* offered some concluding observations. He noted that there was a clear consensus that concerted action against child labour was needed – immediate action against the worst forms of child labour, as reflected in the adoption of Convention No. 182 in 1999, and longer term action against all child labour. Tripartite action in the ILO had brought about all of that, and yet the debate continued on how it would be taken further. Certain elements appeared obvious: capacity building and awareness raising; involvement in action; and establishing focal points. The logic of the DWCPs would necessarily bring in the social partners; they were negotiated among the three partners and should take everybody's concerns on board, including child labour. It was fairly clear how to use standards in tackling child labour. Similarly, more reflection was needed on how social dialogue was to be used in the fight against child labour. IPEC was the largest programme in the informal economy, where all four fundamental principles and rights at work were strongly relevant. There seemed to be an agreement to focus on child labour in agriculture, and clearer ideas were needed on how social partners could contribute to that goal. There were some good examples that showed the potential of alliances. Collaboration between ACT/EMP, ACTRAV, TURIN and IPEC had been suggested for capacity building, and it needed to be determined what was needed in terms of tools and other aspects. Proper dialogue with governments was also needed, so that they were involved and convinced that there were good programmes to invest in.

General concluding remarks

52. Finally, concerning the future format of the ISC, *Mr Tapiola* suggested that consideration could be given to the possibility of discussing the final and full implementation report of IPEC at a March session of the Governing Body for half a day in a formal manner, with a less formal thematic discussion in November, also for half a day. However, such a matter would require compatibility with other arrangements and would require guidance from the Officers of the Governing Body. In the absence of items to discuss under “Other business”, he thanked all present for their interest and participation and declared the meeting closed.